



**MINUTES OF THE 31st CESMA COUNCIL MEETING ON 28th MAY 2026,
BILBAO, SPAIN**

Those present:

Captain D. Dimitrov	President, BSMA, Bulgaria
Captain G. Ribaric	Deputy President, ZPU, Slovenia
Captain M. Badell Serra	Vice President, ACCMM, Spain
Captain H. Ardillon	Secretary General, AFCAN, France
Captain D. Lakos	Webmaster, ZHUPK, Croatia
Captain P. Odiaga	AVCCMM, Spain
Captain S. Diaz	AVCCMM, Spain
Captain A. Jauregui	AVCCMM, Spain
Captain J. Zarragoikoetxea	AVCCMM, Spain
Captain S. Stoyanov	BSMA, Bulgaria
Captain I. Paskov	BSMA, Bulgaria
Captain W. Martens	VDKS, Germany
Captain E. Barsingerhorn	NVKK, Netherlands
Captain S. Jurat	ZHUPK, Croatia
Captain B. Kavanagh	IIMM, Ireland
Captain A. Hyde	IIMM, Ireland
Captain A. Pels	KBZ, Belgium
Captain F. Vanoosten	HYDROS, France
Captain G. Lettich	CNPC, Italy
Captain A. Martin	ACCMM, Spain
Captain A. Raggi	USCLAC, Italy
Captain M. Modugno	CTPC, Italy
Captain M. Carobolante	CTPC, Italy

ITEM 1: OPENINGS

We were welcome by Mr. Jon RUIGOMEZ MATXIN, Director of the Itsasmuseum. He presented in few words the museum.

Then Capt. Patxi ODIAGA, President of AVCCMM introduced the Council by saying: "After 24 years, CESMA is holding its annual assembly in Bilbao, and we must thank our colleagues for choosing our association to host it and welcome them. There's a saying in the Basque Country that Basques are short on words but long on deeds, and in my opinion, the same can be said of sailors. Several centuries ago, a captain, after a long voyage of several years, fulfilled his shipowner's orders and returned with a full cargo of valuable goods. Upon arriving in port, the first thing he said to his owner was that he had proven the Earth was round and that his crew deserved fair wages. His name was Juan Sebastian ELCANO, and this year marks the 500th anniversary of his death. Today, as in the past, captains transport goods, lead their crews, and constantly update their knowledge. I conclude by wishing this assembly a successful and productive one."

Just after those words, as we have with us two representatives of Faeroe Association of Captains, and as they are not members of CESMA, President Capt. Dimitar DIMITROV proposed to vote, by hand, if they can assist to the Council as well as to the AGA of tomorrow. Same was accepted unanimously.

After having thanked AVCCMM for their organization, President Capt. Dimitar DIMITROV declared open the 31st Council of CESMA, having no doubt that the discussions will be on important subjects for seafarers and captains.

ITEM 2: APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Members not able to come, due to work, economic or personal reasons. This was the case for CESMA Administrator, Capt. Hans AMMERLAAN – but NVKK President is with us - Finland-HSF, Portugal-SINCOMAR, Latvia-LKKA, Montenegro-UPKCG, Romania-ANCR).

It is noted that as usual IFSMA, EMPA, and NI (Nautical Institute) were invited for the AGA on the 29th May and that Capt. Andrew COOK for IFSMA and Mr. Walter VERVLOESEN for NI will be with us this year. Unfortunately, EMPA sent apologies for not coming.

ITEM 3: PRESENTATION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

As usual, each council member presents himself and mentions the shipmasters' association and which country he represents.

ITEM 4: RESOLUTIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

As per last year, President Capt. DIMITROV proposed to create a sub-committee for to write the resolutions which could be adopted during the General Assemblies. Proposition was adopted unanimously.

The sub-committee is composed by:

Capt. Bill KAVANAGH, IIMM – Ireland

Capt. Wilhelm MARTENS, VDKS – Germany.

ITEM 5: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda, as presented, was adopted.

ITEM 6: ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE 30TH COUNCIL, LISBON, MAY 2025.

President Capt. DIMITROV reminded that the minutes of 30th Council Meeting had been agreed after the event and already published in CESMA Newsletter and Website. It was sent also by Secretary General few days before actual Council and posted again on the Website, Members area. No remark had been reported and the minutes had been adopted unanimously.

ITEM 7: RENDERING OF FINANCIAL PAPERS.

The financial papers were presented by Secretary General.

a- 2025 Papers

Balance of Accounts – Total of both Accounts (Directors and Savings), the total grow up by 3 600 Euros between the years 2024 and 2025. With no savings done in 2025, it could be decreased by 1 000 Euros because the rent of the office was not paid – demand not received – in 2025.

For quarterly savings' account the interest for the year in more than 850 Euros.

Total shows that we are still above 5 years budget on both accounts.

Assets:

Plaques: After Lisbon, 5 remaining, and all being not in very condition. This is why we ordered a new model of plaque in Bulgaria.

Ties: December 2025, remaining 16. New samples also ordered in Bulgaria, same maker and model than previous time.

Caps: Remaining 10, 5 blue and 5.

Income:

Even if missing one subscription, we are above the figure budgeted. But we have received the ZPU subscription for 2026. We will come back later on the ZPU situation that explains this receipt.

The subscription missing is still from Lithuania.

Saving account: 859 Euros of interests (25 Euros less than 2024). We can note that for the two first quarters of 2026, interests represent already 388 Euros, we can expect less this year.

Expenditure:

Office rent: not paid as already said. Paid 2025 in 2026 (situation on 1st May)

Website: 45 Euros less than what was budgeted. It seems that expenses will not move too much. Already budgeted at 100 Euros for 2026.

Banking fees: Just 5 Euros less than what was budgeted. Budgeted 250 Euros for 2026, the costs increase slowly, slowly, but increasing.

Travel board: Below the budget. Travel costs mainly for ESS Brussels, EMDs Cork and EMSAFE Lisbon.

Board meeting: Few expenses because one board meeting was done at Brussels, the day before European Shipping Summit where we were met by Administrator Hans. Other Board meetings done on video.

AGA: Above what was budgeted. It seems that we are leaving in days where it is harder to find sponsors for organisation of AGA, and fact also that there is inflation in EU zone. Some Board Members are coming to AGA on account of half to Cesma and half to their own association.

Newsletter: Depending of the stamps prices. Printing kept same cost since several years now. In 2025, we have only 3 edition of Cesma News Letter as the December one was paid in January

b- 2026 Amended budget:

Subscription:

Subscriptions: I propose to keep 17 000 Euros. Last year we were above, due in part that ZPU paid two year subscriptions, but I noted that in the declaration of members sent with the subscription, the total of active captains is 100 less compared to 2025.

At 1st of May, 6 associations did not paid the subscription: ACCMM, Spain (done on 8th May); KBZ, Belgium (done on 15th May); ZHUPK, Croatia (done 19th May); BSMA, Bulgaria; UPKCG, Montenegro; and LCC, Lithuania. To be checked beginning of June before a new reminder msg.

Expenditure:

Banking fees 250 Euros.

Travel Board 2 000 Euros as this year CESMA will not go the EMDs in Cyprus

Board meeting 1 500 Euros but probably it will be Nil – if done on video

AGA costs adjusted to have a total expenses same than income value.

Miscellaneous: 2 500 Euros to buy new wall plaques and new ties.

c- 2027 Proposed budget:

Subscription:

Still 17 000, due to amount on saving account, I do not propose to increase the fees. And I do not propose to decrease them.

Expenses:

Travel Board back to 4 000 Euros: in 2027 probably a new edition of European Shipping Summit (every two years) – and the EMDs will be at Santander, Spain.

I propose to increase again AGA, because it seems it is more and more difficult to find sponsors enough to cover the cost of AGA organization.

Subject Travel costs: since at least 2015, the kilometer by car is reimbursed at 0.25 euro. Due to inflation in Europe since 2015 and mainly for the price of carburant, I propose to increase the reimbursement rate at 0.35 euro per kilometer. After discussion on the level up to where to increase the 0.25 Euro, it was voted to apply 0.35 Euro as from 28th May 2026.

To conclude the financial papers had been adopted.

ITEM 8: SECRETARY GENERAL'S REPORT

CESMA was represented in different meetings during the last year 2025.

The year unfortunately got off to a bad start since the first trip was made for the farewell ceremony of Capt. KARNINCIC where CESMA was represented by Deputy President Giorgio RIBARIC.

Then in mid-February in Varna, President DIMITROV took part in the “Green Port Alliance Meeting on Reduction of Emissions from Ship”.

On March 18 and 19, the President and the Secretary General attended the “European Shipping Summit” in Brussels, followed for the President by a meeting with KBZ on March 22 in Antwerp.

At the end of March, the President attended the Ship handling webinar organized by the Nautical Institute in London.

In April the Secretary General participated in a conference on drones in Paris, then again in Paris in May, there was the 1000th session of the “Safety Commission for Ship”.

In mid-May we had our General Assembly in Lisbon.

At the end of May 2025, the EMDs took place in Cork, CESMA attended in the person of the Secretary General and Capt. Trevor Crawley from IIMM whom I thank again.

Same time, the President participated in the 59th EMPA general meeting in Krakow, Poland, which allowed him to meet a member of the Polish captain's association.

In June, Webmaster Damir LAKOS met a Croatian European Parliamentary. The President participated in a conference “on Black Sea Region” in Varna.

In July the Secretary General returned to school for the 1st ENSM summer universities in Le Havre.

An interesting format: conferences in the morning and outdoor activities in the afternoon mainly focused on environmental problems and their technological advances. This made it possible to visit a barge running on hydrogen, and assigned to the transport of goods in pallets rather than in containers in the Paris area, after bringing the goods to Le Havre by large container ships, then by feeders or barges to Rouen and finally only barges to Gennevilliers for dispatch to Paris.

This also allowed him to visit a wind farm, and above all to understand how it works and the navigation restrictions, and that contrary to what is said and repeated by local residents' associations against wind farms, navigation, including for fishing, was authorized even if regulated.

In August the President met a Bulgarian European Parliamentary then attended the biannual general assembly of IFSMA in Torshavn in the Faroe Islands.

Then in September, again in Varna, the President participated in the international Maritime Forum Global Compass. Our Croatian colleagues attended the IMLA conference in Split, the same day the President was in London at a final meeting of IMO Goodwill Maritime Ambassador for World Maritime Day.

Unfortunately, in September, our colleagues from CNPC and USCLAC also represented CESMA at the funeral of Capt Claudio TOMEI, who had organized the General Assemblies in Viareggio and Genoa. No member of CESMA Board was able to travel, the ceremony having been organized very few days after the news of his death.

In October, Deputy President RIBARIC was invited to Trieste for the inauguration of new tugboats. In November, the Secretary General attended the 3rd study day of the ENSM in Le Havre. Study day whose theme was how geopolitics interferes with maritime transport, premonitory day since a few months before the outbreak of the current war blocking the Strait of Hormuz. Then in December, the President and the Secretary General attended the EMSAFE conference in Lisbon.

For almost all of these attendances, you were able to read a report in our magazine CESMA News. And I would have to thank all those who sent a report, a photo, after a participation of a meeting in their own country.

This is very important for several reasons:

- When CESMA is informed, it can be shared via the log book published in CESMA Newsletter or via the article published.
- Same could be noted by another association reading the report or logbook, and then it could give an idea for to organize or to participate to meeting on same topic.
- When you participate in the name of your association, as member of CESMA, you participate also in the name of CESMA.
- Everything presented during a national meeting could be of interest for other European associations.

There is no exhaustive list about the topics CESMA is interested of. Of course the main topic actually is the security. But also green navigation, due to the goal given from EU Commission, and other topics such as cyber security, safety on board at sea and during port stay, as well as in ports and terminals, MASS, unmanned vessels are also on the spots.

About security, it is not very easy to understand and to trust what is saying.

Regarding the Strait of Hormuz, a renowned company, despite “all security and safety” language sent 2 ships to the strait in March. One of them was shot at, warning shots but fired into the hull and containers not in front of the ship, and the other turned back at the injunction of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards. Then 3 weeks later in April, another ship from the same company under another flag passed "in force" but was seriously damaged following shots received with injuries among the crew, the shots having been carried out towards the steering gear room, close to the security citadel. The ship passed but ended up towed to a port for repairs. For what gain?

Red Sea: still under the spot at the conference where Board members were, but the Arabian/Persian Gulf War and Strait of Hormuz closing was not yet in force.

Black Sea: nobody spoke about. Too far from West Europe?

Baltic Sea: same, even if the shadow fleet exists with the associated risks to the environment, and some vessels (tankers or gas carrier) stop by military forces.

Unfortunately, well being of seafarers is not on the spot. It is true that actually it is their life, not the well being which is the most important. But we cannot forget that what is happening currently in the Arabian/Persian Gulf will not be attractive for the young people who want to have a carrier at sea. It was also heard, on some media, that the war in Arabian/Persian Gulf is something better than good for the seafarers, as they have double wages, and that there are a lot of voluntaries to go in this area.

Criminalization of seafarers or captains, except some time a question about the shadow captain on a vessel of the shadow fleet, there is no mention of captains or seafarers being arrested or condemned.

ITEM 9: CESMA WEBSITE

Webmaster Capt. LAKOS, ZHUPK, reported that the website is working well. Could it be foreseen for CESMA to be on LinkedIn that would give CESMA to be better known in maritime sector?

ITEM 10: STATUTES AD BY-LAWS

No change was proposed this Council on the Statutes or By-Laws.

ITEM 11: MEMBERSHIP

- 1- Capt. GARDALIDO (Faeroe Association) presented his association to CESMA. He expresses also the feeling that it could be a good idea to be member of CESMA. Thus it is decided that Secretary General will send all documents for application to be member to Capt. GARDALIDO.
- 2- ZPU (Slovenia): Deputy President Capt. RIBARIC confirmed that ZPU is closed since December 2025. The subscription for 2026 was paid in 2025. Capt. RIBARIC has to resign from his Deputy President Function. However he will stay in CESMA as an individual member, as from January 2027. After discussion, and in order to minimize exchanges with Netherlands Administration where CESMA is registered, it is decided that Capt. RIBARIC will stay in the Board till its renewal scheduled for next Council (May 2027). A formal vote gives result that Capt. RIBARIC will be nominated as CESMA Honorary Vice President.

ITEM 12: COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

- 1- CESMA has some contacts with EMPA, IFSMA, NI, EMSA, EU Commission, and very few EU Parliamentarians.
- 2- For Capt. BARSINGERHORN (NVKK), CESMA has not enough connections with EU Institutions. In fact there is an exchange of letter, but it could not be considered as a physical connection with members of EU Committees or Commissions.
Same with ECS with whom CESMA has no formal meetings.
- 3- Capt. RAGGI (USCLAC) proposed to send a message to DG Move in order to organize a physical meeting on the seafarers, to be done if possible after the summer period.
- 4- Capt. LETTICH (CNPC) made a statement on the PIANC (Permanent International Association of Navigation Congresses) Italy, where CNPC is since this year.
PIANC is an international organization that provides guidelines and recommendations for the design of port approach channels and maneuvering and anchoring areas within ports, as well as defining restrictions within a channel.

ITEM 13: MEETINGS

President Capt. DIMITROV made a small review of the Council Meetings done on video since January. Usually there is one representative from almost each association, however as there is no limit of attendees, there can welcome more members of associations.

Should we continue these meetings? And on which base? Quarterly or more or less?

Up to now it is organized soon after the edition of the CESMA Newsletter. But it could be organized for another reason if judged interesting.

Capt. MERTENS (VDKS) asked if it could be possible to have a schedule for those meetings in advance. It was proposed to have the meeting on the 3rd Thursday of the month which follows the edition of the CESMA Newsletter (means in January, April and October at least). For the June edition, July being a summer month, it could be postponed to September.

As actual procedure for such meeting does not allow the recording, Board members will have to check the cost to have a better mean.

ITEM 14 & 15: RESOLUTIONS (PAST FROM 30TH AGA & NEW PROPOSALS).

Past year resolutions were discussed, same for the introduction of resolutions. A new resolution is necessary, subject Arabian/Persian Gulf war, and the total number of resolutions to be minimized to 4 (four) in order to be better read.

The final text is presented below the minutes.

ITEM 16: INVITATION FOR THE NEXT AGA.

For 2027 VDKS, Germany, intended to organize the 32nd AGA in Hamburg. Short presentation was done. Of course details remain to fix, and Capt. MERTENS (VDKS) and Secretary General will be in touch for such organization. Date are expected the second week of May 2027 (13th and 14th), however it will be notified clearly by end of 2026.

For 2028, ZHUPK, Croatia, proposed to organize the 33rd AGA in Split, Croatia.

For these two proposals, Council gave agreement.

ITEM 17: OTHER MATTERS

Some following subjects were discussed just after the Secretary General report, but all discussions are reported in this item. Several subjects were discussed:

- 1- Shadow fleet: it is a situation of great concern for Helsinki Shipmasters Association. It generates problems for the crews on board those vessels, as they are manned often with substandard crews (VDKS). Belgium has arrested one vessel, but without any cargo (KBZ).
- 2- Strait of Hormuz (SoH): today there are still 180 Croatian seafarers trapped in the Arabian/Persian Gulf. Several vessels trying to transit the SoH were fired. All vessels are not under the same condition: for some owners or flags there is very few or not help for seafarers on board vessels, that means problems of supplies (water, provisions, fuel), and for crew reliefs.
- 3- President Capt. DIMITROV came back on the case of Phoenician-M C/officer Ali Albhokari and on a letter received from HSM (Helsinki on the subject). CESMA should be able to give assistance in that case.
- 4- Tax for seafarers: VDKS, Germany, pointed out the subject as it appears that in EU, seafarers are not under the same tax regime in EU Countries. Same was also stated by KBZ, Belgium.
- 5- IIMM, Ireland, spoke about workshops on accidents where CESMA should be present.
- 6- NVKK, Netherlands, also mentioned that seafarers are often underpaid, minimum wages not being at a good level. Same was confirmed by IIMM, Ireland, representative.

ITEM 18: CLOSURE BY PRESIDENT

Council was closed at 17:00 by President Capt. DIMITROV after a very fruitful day of debates.

Capt. D. Dimitrov
President

Capt. H. Ardillon
Secretary General