BALTIC WINTER NAVIGATION

On 5th / 6th November Helsinki saw the launch of the Swedish, Finnish, Estonian project known as WINMOS, co-financed by the European Commission.

This is a project that aims to safeguard efficient winter navigation in the European Union’s northernmost fairways by safeguarding icebreaking resources in a medium and long term perspective and to develop the winter navigation system as a whole in the Baltic Sea.

Functional maritime transport all-year-around is of the utmost importance for trade within the European Union. 15% of the world’s maritime transport, or more than 750 million tonnes, is moved in the Baltic. Around 2,000 vessels are under way in the area at any given time. Sea ice causes huge problems for transport and trade and it is understood that during a normal winter, there are about 10,000 calls to ports which have ice-obstacles.

The situation in the world is continuously changing. Increasing size and number of vessels; rising fuel prices together with demands for measures to improve environmental performance, for example the SECA-directive concerning content of sulphur in fuel and the Energy Efficiency Design Index where maximum engine power is regulated, will all have a significant impact on the winter navigation system in the future.

WINMOS consists of seven different sub-projects that are in line with the Motorways of the Sea* (MoS) concept. WINMOS will develop a new technique aiming to improve environmental performance on existing engines. This is expected to reduce emissions and fuel consumption significantly. Desired information regarding icebreaking service logistics will be made available for stakeholders within maritime transport.

A new icebreaker will be built within the project. Simulator training facilities and training programmes in winter navigation for officers will be elaborated. The project will be completed by the end of year 2015 and its total project budget is €138 million; the contribution from Ten-T’s Motorways of the Sea (MoS) budget is €29.6 million.

* The Motorways of the Sea concept is the maritime dimension of the trans-European network which intends to concentrate on flows of freight on sea-based logistical routes. MoS may also include projects which have wider benefits such as winter navigation and icebreaking.
About WINMOS: WInter Navigation Motorways Of the Sea

WINMOS consists of seven sub-projects:

Investigation of the next generation of icebreakers and future needs for icebreaking resources.

Lifetime extension of a number of older icebreakers.

Development of fuel injection technology (common rail) to reduce fuel consumption and emissions.

Further development of management systems for winter navigation and icebreaking.

Development of simulator training for officers.

Construction of a Finnish icebreaker.

The Swedish Maritime Administration (SMA) issued this information and offers modern and safe shipping routes with a 24 hour service. As it says, “We take responsibility for the future of shipping.”