10 Average number of weeks St Lawrence is closed to shipping in winter

Spliethoff sees growth in the Great Lakes

themed issue Netherlands themed issue

> Andrew Spurrier

Europe

The Cleveland–Europe Express, which links the US Great Lakes port of Cleveland to the Belgian port of Antwerp, is a modest affair for the moment.

The monthly service, billed as the Great Lakes' only scheduled international container/breakbulk service, is operated by a single ship, the 8,620gt geared general cargo ship *Fortunagracht*.

However, it will be joined by another at the start of the 2015 navigation season on the Great Lakes St Lawrence Seaway System, and Spliethoff, the Dutch shipping group operating the line, is already starting to explore the possibility of other lines in the Great Lakes region.

Amsterdam-based Spliethoff opened the Cleveland–Europe Express in April on behalf of the port of Cleveland, which is looking to develop its general cargo throughput as a means of breaking its traditional dependence on steel imports for the automotive industry.

The port is financing the line by chartering the *Fortunagracht* from Spliethoff at a cost of about $850,000/month and has an agreement with the shipping company to share profits when they occur.

Spliethoff's Atlantic department director, Bart Peters, told *IHS Maritime* that he saw "huge potential" for the new service but that a second vessel was needed to make it more attractive for time-sensitive container traffic.

Fortunagracht leaves Antwerp for Cleveland in April 2014

The current monthly frequency of the service was not enough to attract shippers that have the option of sending their cargo to the Midwest Lakes region using regular lines serving US East Coast ports and then overland, he said.

ABS

> Comment: Tom Kirk, director of environmental programmes at ABS and IACS representative at MEPC 67

Measuring fuel consumption: how best to collect the data

The spotlight from last month's MEPC 67 has shone brightest on the approval of the environmental issues in the Polar Code and continued progress in the Ballast Water Management Convention. But work also continued on enhancing energy efficiency within the industry.

The committee was asked to consider the development of a data-collection system to monitor the fuel consumption of ships, including the identification of such a system's core elements.

In line with the old adage that you cannot manage what you don't measure, a better understanding of fuel-consumption trends will give the industry and other stakeholders more clarity on the fuel consumed on international voyages, while providing shipowners with the information to build a more energy-efficient fleet.

The challenge, as ever, is to find a common solution that leads to a meaningful measure of fuel consumed with as small an operational burden as possible. While resolve is strong at the IMO to demonstrate improvements in fuel consumption, there is also consensus that any goals must be achieved pragmatically, even in the face of growing external pressures.

For example, the committee received a paper from a coalition of seven of the world's biggest shipping industry bodies welcoming present efforts to improve the understanding of the factors surrounding industry emissions. But the authors were concerned that any imposition of mandatory operational standards may impose a de facto 'speed limit' on international shipping.

Similarly, feedback from a European industry body cautioned against extending the current discussions on continual operational measurements of CO_2 emissions to include NO_X emissions, which would add significant complexity.

A non-governmental group preferred to emphasise non-operational matters in a submission that outlined the relationship between transparency and economic growth. Transparent regulation, which it surmised to be almost as important as efficient regulation, maximises the uptake of new technologies and practices, while driving down costs. "Information capture influences outcomes," it said. "Lack of transparency discourages participation."

On the face of it, there may appear to be a disparity of purpose. But the undercurrent at the IMO is one of resolve, steeled by evidence such as that recently found in the third IMO GHG (greenhouse gas) Study.

This report estimates that, for 2012, international shipping accounted for 2.2% of global CO_2 and 2.1% of GHG emissions on a CO_2-equivalent basis (CO_2, methane, and nitrous oxide). Four of the study's five 'business-as-usual' scenarios projected that CO_2 emissions from international shipping may increase by 50% to 250% by 2050, assuming that fossil fuels remain dominant.

To monitor and abate these trends a robust system for collecting and reporting fuel-consumption data is needed. F

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