

New inland waterways limitation regime



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Strasbourg Convention on the Limitation of Liability in Inland Navigation 2012 (CLNI) – Seminar held in Bratislava, February 2013, The ‘Strasbourg Convention’

After some years of discussions between the various member states, the final act for the adoption of the Strasbourg Convention 2012 on the Limitation of Liability in Inland Navigation was signed on 27 November 2012, which will ultimately replace the current 1998 Strasbourg Convention. The Diplomatic Conference for the adoption of the convention, organised by the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) was attended by representatives of 13 states and several accredited associations of the CCNR including IVR (International Association of the Rhine Ship’s Register).

The new convention introduces an enlarged scope of application (the previous convention was restricted in its application only to the River Rhine and Mosel) and is now open to the Danube countries. The new convention introduces increased limits, particularly in respect of injury and death of passengers, and damages arising from the carriage of dangerous goods.



Seminar

A seminar was arranged by IVR for 7 and 8 February 2013 in Bratislava to introduce the new convention to the inland waterways shipping community in the Danube region and to expand its scope and promote the benefits of a limitation of liability regime and its application.

The seminar was dedicated to developments in the field of the law of the carriage of goods and passengers on inland waterways, focussing in particular on the changes to the CLNI Convention and the legal implications for shipowners and charterers.

The speakers from Germany, The Netherlands, France, Hungary, Ukraine and the United Kingdom delivered presentations on:

- the new CLNI Convention;
- its application and legal implications;
- the effect on insurance, and
- the practicalities of setting up a Limitation Fund under the revised convention.

Advice to members

The application of a limitation of liability regime is essential for shipowners; such a regime allows insurers to calculate the maximum exposure for any one claim or event. In the absence of such an agreed regime unregulated environments will create uncertainty and potentially higher insurance costs.

