

The New Voice of Industry

At the end of the year 2005, VNSI published its strategy report 'Dutch LeaderSHIP 2015', which gave a clear view on the choices of the shipbuilding industry, inspired on the LeaderSHIP document published earlier by CESA. In the same period, Holland Marine Equipment association (HME) came with its strategy paper 'Innovation 2020', also a view forward, also based on international developments in the maritime sector.

Although the angles and premises were not entirely the same, it was remarkable that both associations shared the same strategic priority. This priority was to increase co-operation between shipyards and marine suppliers within The Netherlands. Both VNSI and HME concluded that major improvements in the shipbuilding process could be reached by sharing information and building trust. This could lead to better ships and equipment at lower costs, thus creating a better competitive position for the Dutch maritime industries.

At that moment in 2005, nobody could have foreseen that only two years later the two trade associations would merge. But it happened indeed, thanks to the flexibility and trust of all the members of VNSI and HME. In other European countries they could not believe what happened here. Especially in the United Kingdom, where industry had been talking for years about co-operation without any tangible result, or in Germany, where there is still competition between the marine industry associations.

In January 2008 the new association 'Scheepsbouw Nederland' (Holland Shipbuilding Association) has seen daylight. It represents a total maritime turnover of € 6 billion, an export volume of € 3.5 billion, and a combined direct workforce of over 25,000 people.

The power of the new combination will be noticeable to all stakeholders. First the member companies: they will get more value for their money. Services will be further professionalized, influence will grow, and the professional network will be given a boost. The second winner will be government: with one voice of the entire maritime industry, it will be much easier to co-ordinate with the sector. The same counts for the press relations, other trade associations and our international contacts: they will all benefit from the new voice of industry. I look forward to work on this challenge, together with my highly motivated colleagues in Zoetermeer and Rotterdam.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Martin Bloem.

Martin Bloem
General Director Holland Shipbuilding Association



Ship Building

i n d u s t r y

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Cover photo: Stern view of the 9,000 m³ trailing suction hopper dredger Breydel at the IHC Merwede Shipyard in Kinderdijk, the Netherlands. Photo courtesy of IHC Merwede (Photography: Van der Kloet Foto & Videoproducties).