



## **ROUND TABLE**

**ORGANISED BY ANGOPI**

**European Boatmen's Association (E.B.A.)**

**International Boatmen's Linesmen's Association (I.B.L.A.)**

# **“Shore-Sea integration of the mooring service and relationships with the Public Administration”**

*(for recognition of professional levels agreed upon and achieved within various States and to ensure that safety is protected from cut-price competition between and within ports)*

*Introduction by the President of Angopi  
Cesare Guidi*

**Reggio Calabria, 12 September 2014**  
Altafiumara Resort & SpA

Dear Colleagues, Illustrious guests,

I'm delighted to extend the heartfelt greetings of the Italian Boatmen and Mooring Men as well as the profound appreciation of Angopi which represents them.

It is a real pleasure to host and to take part in this joint EBA/IBLA Conference, an event of great importance to strengthen synergies, to share experiences and to enhance the significance of the debate. And it is important that it is being held in Italy, the land of classical antiquity, from the great epoch in which the dawn of modern civilization emerged, and above all here in Calabria, that because of its geographic characteristics, including 750 km of coastline, favours the port environment thanks to its distinctiveness as a peninsula within the peninsula of Italy.

As boatmen/linesmen for us it was not just a coincidence that the meeting was held here, because it allows even those outside our borders to become more informed about the dramatic situation that this part of our country is going through. We must also point out that it is southern Italy, and Calabria in particular, which is paying the biggest price for the current crisis in our country. These areas have been plagued by and continue to be besieged by real economic, social, production and employment problems. Here there are evident signs of a particularly alarming and critical economic crisis: industrial desertification, a resurgence of emigration - above all of young people, a decline in birth rate and GDP, employment at its historically lowest levels, a doubling of poverty in just a few years and an increase in the gap with the north.

However, we cannot allow ourselves to give up and sit by passively as such events take place. Calabria benefits from its central location with respect to maritime traffic flows in the Mediterranean basin, a tourist destination and trade area, as demonstrated by the results achieved in the port of Gioia Tauro, one of the world's most important transshipment freight operating centres. And within the vast and varied Calabrian port world we must also mention the port of Reggio that, along with Villa San Giovanni, is an important maritime hub with connections with Sicily: an island that from here it seems you can almost touch.

What's more, these facts demonstrate that this region has the resources and capabilities to overcome the difficult situation that it finds itself in today. And I'm referring in particular to:

- the professional skills and abilities utilised in July by all the various players during the delicate operations involving container ships carrying gas abandoned by the Syrian army;

- the Antonio Monaco Industrial Technical Institute of Cosenza, that took first place at the “Robocup 2014” World Championship of Robotics and which received, over these last few weeks, a school of excellence award;
- how much this area of Italy is doing relative to the numerous refugees, forced to leave their country of origin, who were rescued at sea thanks to the extraordinary efforts of our General Command and who were taken in by the local populations in a demonstration of what is unquestionably extraordinary solidarity.

Getting to back us and the theme of the conference I would like to point out to all the authoritative observers and the colleagues present, and above all to all those who have come from far away, that the Boatmen and Mooring Men Groups of the Italian ports have the task and are committed to providing numerous economic and social services. They carry out this last function in particular through the performance of a universal, continuous and qualified service to safeguard users and general activities with tariffs - correlated to the type of service carried out and organisation required and based on a decision reached by a third-party authority independent with respect to users and service providers - that are therefore congruous, accessible, non-discriminatory and, in any case, transparent.

Our activity is at the service of operating functions of the port, an environment that we know is very special and difficult, where transits take place in general under delicately balanced conditions that are affected by many factors internal and external to ships. It is based on this objective representation that adaptation to general needs is guaranteed through the development of an organisation that corresponds, from an operational, human, professional, technical and instrumental perspective, to the points of vulnerability relative to the various risk factors involved when navigating in a port.

So, together, I would like to tackle some subjects and, in particular, the concept of maritime safety in ports. And I'm referring to that phase that we can define as “second navigation” and, even better, that part of navigation, paraphrasing Plato, that when the wind stops blowing the strength and efforts of the rower are required.

First and foremost it should be said that when managing ship transit operations in a port, in restricted and congested spaces, it is impossible to assume that there are phases that do not coincide with each other otherwise the entire system would not work. In fact, controlling

navigation in all its various phases, in accordance with the highest quality standards, is of decisive importance. Moreover, it's enough to consider the area in which the activity is carried out and the problems that emerge relative to orographic, hydrographic, morphological, meteorological and structural aspects. In addition, we should keep in mind the various factors involved when ships transit within a port, such as size, age, construction features, typology and quantity of substances being transported, transport conditions, route geometries, breakdowns, damage, human resources, etc.

Safety therefore is an indispensable need that concerns everyone.

And it is in the act of ensuring safety that our intimate link with the Technical-Nautical Services takes place with the aim of preventing and/or mitigating the consequences of any incidents while also being fully aware that they can happen in any case, avoiding, therefore, that our reactions be defined by the losing concept of *post eventum*, i.e. after the accident one learns and seeks solutions.

These are the real reasons why all the Technical-Nautical Service operators, under the stringent control and coordination of the Maritime Authority, have an overall perspective and precise knowledge of the job and relative methodologies not only in relation to operational aspects, but also as regards the actions to be put into effect during an emergency.

For these reasons the Italian normative and legal framework identifies, in a stringent manner, the requirements for becoming a mooring man. This is the required condition to take part in a specific public competition to satisfy the needs – in terms of number and qualifications – set out by the Maritime Authority based on the real operating conditions of each port.

The prerequisites, that correspond to rigorous and uniform criteria applied at a national level, include those envisaged at a European level for “seafarers”, in addition to skills suitable for the peculiar nature of the “amphibious” role of our activity as well as skills corresponding to the characteristics of the specific ports and traffic estimates.

Our service is carried out based on teamwork in an onboard-quayside combination involving direct cooperation of operators. And it is this interaction that makes it possible, on a wide scale, to set up a rational and organised use of men and equipment also when traffic is congested, which, as a consequence, generates all the proper economies. And if we consider its importance in terms of safety, to be guaranteed year round and at any time, there is no doubt that the entire model is an optimisation in and of itself.

That's why, within the context of the IMO, we strongly favour a review of the text of the 2005 “Guidelines”, so that it is consistent with that need to combine the onboard/quayside activity carried out by the mooring service. This highlights the indicated dual status of the shore/sea operator for which the two ship/quayside moments are interlinked (connected) and it is in the interchangeable and multifunctional nature of the roles that we fully embrace the amphibious meaning of our service, where these two natures “are hitched together”.

Just as significant – having reached the common objective of ensuring the conditions for which mooring operations and movements within the port take place safely, guaranteeing, as a consequence, a suitable environment for carrying out all port activities – is the indispensable prerequisite that to be able to perform the service operators must be adequately trained and qualified.

Therefore, serious training, development of skills, and adequate implementation of the life-long learning model are the strategic assets around which to position and re-launch our function.

The definition of European and international professional standards and the procedures for obtaining and maintaining them have been among the items on the agenda during the meetings of the administrative organisms of our international and European associations.

Therefore, today's event, that extends far beyond national interests, will have a positive effect on the logical constructs of globalisation, contributing to the introduction, into the “institutional system”, of rules that will be able to embrace the suggestions coming from the experience and professional skills, like ours, of operators who are directly involved in guaranteeing the safety of ships, systems and people, and that therefore have a direct impact on protecting the environment.

I'm certain that Mr Mandirola and Mr Jansen, presidents of the IBLA and the EBA, will focus on these topics in their reports.

My task is to welcome you on behalf of Angopi and the mooring men groups of Reggio Calabria/Gioia Tauro and Villa San Giovanni, to whom I am particularly grateful for their assistance in organising this initiative and for their active efforts to ensure its success.

I read in a famous correspondence that “twenty years are no more than one day in the great series of historical developments – but there may come days in which twenty years are embodied”.

It is during these meetings, involving a number of associations or individual companies that carry out the mooring service in ports located over four continents, that such an assumption is well suited. In fact, today we realize that this is an extraordinary event in which, for the first time, we are involved in discussions about the operation and function of the ancient art of seafaring that is carried out however using new means – navigation in the 21st century is so much different from how it was carried out in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries – and today’s event becomes even more important because it acknowledges our united intentions to obtain in the maritime sector – regulated by international standards, and therefore by the international organisation that represents it – the full recognition of our role and the professional levels agreed upon and attained within the various countries as a precondition, moreover, to ensure that safety is protected against cut-price competition between and within ports.

I will conclude by saying that in this world tormented by wars and atrocities in which often the victims are children, women and helpless civilians, and by conflicts tarnished by continuous horrors that are quite profitable however for more than a few – and that led Pope Francis, who stigmatises the level of the horrible cruelty taking place by stating that we have begun World War Three, that is being fought however in pieces or in chapters – initiatives like ours help to bring peoples together.

In fact, to counter the cruelty of war we propose a debate that crosses any ethnic, geographic, cultural and religious barrier, convinced that to ensure long-lasting progress it is necessary to abhor fundamentalism, in the same way that violence by the strong is not enough. Peace and happiness cannot last and persevere based on violence but require extensive and numerous resources to ensure that people can live in a dignified manner.

This brings me to the end but first I would like to direct my words to my friend Marco and I will do so by quoting one of the most important thinkers of the 19th century, who stated that: “armies cannot be captains, but captains can be the army” in order to acknowledge the enormous amount of work he has done to make this extraordinary event take place, despite our well-known limitations since, as men of the sea, we are more inclined to do rather than to tell.

I believe that days like these are capable of conveying special energy and impetus and we, colleagues, friends and guests, are the eyewitnesses to this event, that will remain in our memories and in our conscience.

And once again we can say “*I was there*”.

Long live ANGOPI!

Long live the EBA!

Long live the IBLA!