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BLACKFLAG



Initiated by GSHW e.V. – The German umbrella organisation for traditional vessels in operation - www.gshw.de

www.blackflag.eu / info@blackflag.eu

To the operators and lovers of traditional vessels

It is one year since we launched our international ship operators' campaign, so it seems appropriate to take stock now:

BLACKFLAG was primarily aimed at demonstrating to politicians and to the general public that there are serious flaws in the legal regime governing traditional vessels. Also, the campaign was about motivating people to actively contribute to finding solutions to our problems.

We have made an impact in the public sphere!

The problems affecting traditional vessels which operate internationally have been given coverage by a whole array of press products, the print media, specialist magazines and by tv-broadcasters.

Last year the collected signatures from people who supported our petition were handed over to politicians so that the unmistakable message reached its target group.

We have received several enquiries and support from other European countries where people mostly were sympathetic to our course.¹

There are other initiatives concerning traditional shipping that have benefited from the additional awareness that our campaign has brought about.

The Dutch and German umbrella organisations BBZ² and GSHW³ plus the European Association EMH⁴ are continually working towards a constructive solution of the problems in question and try to co-ordinate their efforts wherever possible.

One can sense that administrations have slightly begun to consider again, but concrete solutions will probably take a little while to materialise if past experience is anything to go by.

As a secondary effect, BLACKFLAG has contributed to a sense of solidarity within the community of traditional and sailing vessel operators.

Some of the institutions and ship owners involved kindly contributed to the cost of the campaign so that we have been able to nearly cover our expenses so far.

However ...

it is far from clear what to expect from the enforcing bodies and authorities, among other reasons because things are developing in different directions in Denmark and Germany, the two focal countries.

In Denmark the Supreme Shipping Authority is upholding its tough approach while in Germany there seem to be at least some attempts at finding transitional regimes that are practicable.

The bottom line is that there is still a great deal of legal insecurity surrounding traditional vessels that operate cross-nationally.

In other words, the question mark still hangs over our heads!



¹ www.blackflag.eu, cf. „PDF und Presse“, and „News“

² www.bbz-charter.nl

³ www.gshw.de

⁴ www.european-maritime-heritage.org

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What is the significance of **BLACKFLAG 2010**?

As long as there is no satisfactory solution to the problems affecting European cross-border maritime journeys, flying the **Blackflag** will remind everybody of this unresolved issue.

We will continue to collect the **lists of signatures** of our petition to underline and document public interest in traditional vessels. So please continue to ask people and send us signed lists.

Our **proposals** put forward last year are still valid. The focus is still on the mutual recognition of national administration concepts for traditional vessels. Such recognition should be turned into a binding commitment at the European level as this is the only way to provide for a secure legal environment for traditional shipping.

You can order flags, signature forms and other materials from stielau@gshw.de. Of course, you can also download materials from www.blackflag.eu (cf. „flags“ and „PDF and press“). During Kiel Week and Hanse Sail, like last year, we will have our team of volunteers on the spot (current information if necessary within the Forum – see below).

What else can **BLACKFLAG** offer?

It is only logical that we should offer the BLACKFLAG Website as a forum for cross-border exchanges of views among European operators of traditional vessels.

- ◆ The **Internet Forum** of our website will be available as of now for networking by participants. This will help you organise things (such as the “Marstal Event”) and can act as an exchange and discussion forum. It can even serve as a notice board for people who wish to swap technical infos equipment or to organise crew changes. You can access the Forum after registering with username and email address under <http://forum.blackflag.eu> or at the Website cf. “forum”.
- ◆ A **mailing list** of all Blackflag participants will be drawn up to once more facilitate communication. If you would like to be in it, just register at the Blackflag-Forum (see above).
- ◆ Upon request we will establish **country sections** on the BLACKFLAG-Site where country-specific aspects and infos on traditional shipping can be made available. Unfortunately in several countries – like e.g. Germany - traditional ships increasingly face unsecurities and restrictions by their own administrations. Please send your input for the country sections to info@blackflag.eu.

All this is intended to make the BLACKFLAG Campaign more interactive as participants will from now on be able to actively shape it.

So there now is the potential for an international network used by owners and operators of traditional and sailing vessels.

It is up to you to fill it with life - BLACKFLAG is your initiative!

On behalf of the BLACKFLAG Coordinating -Team,

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