**Single Barge Inspection Scheme for Europe Now Live Following EBIS-SIRE Integration**

XX January 2021 – (LONDON) For the first time, there is now a single barge inspection scheme for Europe following the successful transition of the European Barge Inspection Scheme (EBIS) into the Oil Companies International Marine Forum’s (OCIMF) Ship Inspection Report Programme (SIRE). As of 01 January 2021, users of EBIS, and all EBIS-accredited Inspectors, are now conducting their barge inspections through OCIMF’s SIRE programme, a well-established ship inspection regime used worldwide. The successful integration of EBIS into SIRE fulfils a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the two organisations in June 2020.

Following an extensive period of transition and testing, key elements of EBIS including EBIS9 vessel questionnaire, technical information templates and crew matrixes have been moved into SIRE and are available in English, Dutch, French and German languages. EBIS inspectors who were not already SIRE Category 3 (SIRE Cat 3) certified and wished to engage in SIRE have successfully completed additional training and accreditation and are now undertaking SIRE inspections.

Robert Drysdale, Director, OCIMF, commented:

*“Following a robust management of change process, we are delighted that EBIS has successfully transitioned into our SIRE programme and we are now able to provide a single inspection scheme for all inland and coastal barges in Europe. This will provide consistency, clarity and control for industry as a whole. Alongside quality inspections backed by a strict compliance regime and dedicated resources, EBIS Members will now also benefit from greater access to OCIMF’s specialist knowledge and can actively contribute to OCIMF’s work in the development of best practice publications, programmes and advocacy work in future.*

*“We welcome all EBIS members and inspectors onboard and would like to express our sincere thanks them and to the EBIS Board of Directors and staff for working with us to facilitate a smooth and timely transition.”*

Robert Brook, Chairman, Board of Directors, the European Barge Inspection Scheme (EBIS) said:

*“This is a really significant change for industry, and a positive step for all parties. By integrating EBIS into SIRE, we can ensure a reliable inspection protocol that will continue to adapt to changing risks within the marine industry and support the European barging industry for years to come. While EBIS will continue to support its membership and is continuing to work with OCIMF through 2021, this does mark an end of an era for EBIS. We are heartened to pass on a positive legacy to an organisation wholly committed to protecting the marine industry from harm and would like to thank everyone that has supported EBIS over the past 20 years.”*

The EBIS 8 questionnaire will be retired from the EBIS database and this data will be available in the current EBIS database as a historical document, until 31 December 2021. The EBIS Board of Directors with their membership are expected to terminate its obligations and dissolve the EBIS company in 2022.

***-ends-***

**Notes to Editor**

1. The Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF) is a voluntary association of oil companies with an interest in the shipment and terminalling of crude oil, oil products, petrochemicals and gas. OCIMF focuses exclusively on preventing harm to people and the environment by promoting best practice in the design, construction and operation of tankers, barges and offshore vessels and their interfaces with terminals.

**Vision**
A global marine industry that causes no harm to people or the environment.

**Mission**
To lead the global marine industry in the promotion of safe and environmentally responsible transportation of crude oil, oil products, petrochemicals and gas, and to drive the same values in the management of related offshore marine operations.

We do this by developing best practices in the design, construction and safe operation of tankers, barges and offshore vessels and their interfaces with terminals and considering human factors in everything we do.

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