

Standardization of port call data one step closer



Per Setterberg, STM, Ben van Scherpenzeel, International Taskforce Port Call Optimization, Thomas Christensen, SMART Navigation and Todd Schuett, SESAME2 welcoming participants

Following a successful Industry Input Workshop in May 2018, on 29 November the second Industry Input Workshop was held to discuss and agree on global data standards (GDS) for port call data, allowing machines to understand each other. E.g. to connect the berth planning of the terminal to the navigation information of the ship. Earlier, in September 2017, the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office [UKHO] and the International Harbour Masters Association [IHMA] released an intermediate publication for the functional definitions for port call data, allowing humans to understand each other.

The scope of port call data includes vessel – berth compatibility (safe port) information, and information related to availability of berth, fairway, nautical and vessel services, with the aim to bring existing international industry standards together, allowing for quick endorsement and implementation.

Some 80 attendees attended the workshop representing shipping, ports, suppliers of navigation systems and terminal operating systems as well as representatives of relevant international maritime organizations. This workshop was only the second of its kind in a 5,000-year-old industry.

Shipping lines call on ports all over the world. To optimize port calls it's fundamental to have standardized digital data available, allowing for real time updates in the port call process. Therefore it's imperative to agree on global data standards first.

The need for port call optimization is increasing day by day, especially with the commitment of the IMO to reduce emissions caused by shipping with 50% by 2050. Many articles in various maritime industry magazines have already pleaded for international standards – and now we can see the first tangible results.

Captain Ben van Scherpenzeel, Chairman of the International Taskforce Port Call Optimization:
“All participants agreed that there is a need to digitize, simplify and optimize the maritime industry, to meet current challenges like reducing emissions of shipping. Only moving forward together with a robust set of globally agreed port call standards will assist all parties to invest into solutions”.

Captain Andreas van der Wurff, Maersk Line: *“The use of agreed global data standards is essential for optimizing the port call process and will enhance collaboration between the key stakeholders in a port environment”.*

Per Setterberg, Sea Traffic Management (STM) Validation Project Manager: *“Global data standards are a pre-requisite, but commercial contracts might be a hindrance to more efficient operations. That is why it is so important that BIMCO could present another step forward at the workshop - the STM clause for standard contracts that can be used to split benefits of just-in-time arrivals. 85% of world trade is using BIMCO standard contracts”.*

EHMC, UKHO, GS1, International Taskforce Port Call Optimization, STM, SMART and SESAME organized the first workshop on 24 May 2018, to demonstrate the different initiatives are moving towards the same solution. It was attended by more than 50 people. The first findings identified the need to spend more time to investigate the currently available options for e.g. identifiers of berths and terminals. Action items were addressed by two small expert sessions. In the 29 November workshop the wider industry stakeholders validated and endorsed the outcome of these expert sessions.

Concrete outcomes of the workshop:

Attendees readily accepted the proposed standards as most of them are based on existing ISO or branch standards. The unambiguous identification of locations (e.g. terminals and berths) using the Global Location Numbers (ISO 6523 compliant) in particular is expected to deliver substantial value to optimize port calls. ISO standards are well maintained by a robust organization ensuring investments in adopting the global data standards can be made safely. Next step forward is to carry out a GAP analysis which proposed standards are not yet maintained by ISO or linked organisations. Another step forward is to realize that having standards alone is not sufficient; guidance is needed for ports and terminals how to apply the standards.

Discussion was held regarding standard API's – allowing platforms to connect to one another. Not a concrete outcome yet, but setting the scene of what the ambition of the marine industry should be.

Results will be available in 2 weeks' time on www.portcalloptimization.org