



ANTWERP PORT AUTHORITY

PRESS RELEASE

Port community aims to keep and attract trade

The Antwerp port community will make additional efforts to attract new, conventional trade to the port. For this purpose a series of five covenants was signed on Tuesday, 2 February in Antwerp Town Hall by the Port Authority, Alfaport Antwerpen and five trade associations. The objectives form part of the Total Plan for a more competitive port, with one of the working parties dealing with branding and promotion.

The five covenants cover five types of cargo, namely steel, fruit, forest products, project cargo and ro/ro. Antwerp is **the** breakbulk port in Europe, the leader that other ports seek to emulate. As a port, Antwerp aims to maintain and expand its leadership position in breakbulk and its general position as the second-largest port in Europe overall. The signature of the covenants forms part of this ambition.

Under the terms of the covenants, special efforts will be made in the sectors concerned. The five covenants contain working agreements between Antwerp Port Authority and Alfaport Antwerp, allowing for a joint approach supported by the signatories, in addition to the individual efforts towards promoting the port of Antwerp. The signatories are Antwerp Port Authority, Alfaport Antwerpen, the General Association of Antwerp Stevedoring & Port Companies (ABAS), the Antwerp Shipping Association (ASV), the Royal Belgian Association of Ship Operators, and the Association for Forwarding, Logistics and Freight Interests in Antwerp (VEA).

One of the provisions is for Antwerp to have a stronger presence at events and conferences. In line with the terms of the covenants, the Port Authority will organise trade days in the course of this year, for among others steel, forest products and project cargo. It will also take part in leading international events such as the Steel Logistics Conference, the Breakbulk Conferences in Singapore, Antwerp and Houston, Fruit Logistica, Transport & Logistics Munich, Intermodal South (Sao Paulo) and Intermodal Russia (Moscow). The private companies in the Antwerp port area will also participate more often in conferences and trade fairs in their sector.

The signing of the covenants forms part of the closer collaboration between the private and public sectors of the port as part of the Total Plan, for which 10+1 work groups have been set up. Practical results are being sought already in 2010, thanks to targeted commercial action and energetic measures to deal with various essential preconditions.

The work groups will effectively start their activities as of this week. Progress will be monitored by a steering group of work group leaders and initiative-takers. The work groups will report back to the States General of the Antwerp port community before the summer. From the first reactions of various parties involved, there seems to be great openness and a strong will to collaborate. The initiative can therefore be expected not only to give direction to the joint efforts by the Port Authority and the private sector so as to overcome the recession, but also to give new impetus to the sense of community that is typical of Antwerp. The initiative-takers are confident that Antwerp will be able to further develop its leading role as the gateway to Europe.

Antwerp, 02 February 2010

NOTE FOR THE PRESS (not for publication): for communication concerning the Total Plan, contact Eddy Bruyninckx (Antwerp Port Authority) or Roger Roels (Alfaport Antwerp).