

Panel 1 Introduction

By Mr. Joseph H. Pyne, President, Kirby Corporation

Thank you, Anatoly. I think you've framed the morning panel very well. Good morning to everybody. And let me add my welcome to the 100th Anniversary of the U.S. Section of PIANC. We hope to have an interesting and important discussion today about national and regional transportation plans as they relate to the developing economies around the world.

As Anatoly noted, there are some substantial differences between our U.S. approach, and the approach of our friends in Western Europe. We will explore these differences today, discuss the formulation of maritime transportation plans in the U.S. and in Western Europe, and look at the role of Federal and local governments, and private industry in financing waterway systems around the world.

We have an outstanding panel to accomplish this task. Ms. Doris Bautch, the Chief, Office of Ports and Domestic Shipping for the Maritime Administration will discuss the formulation of U.S. Maritime Transportation policies and how the inland and coastal waterway system relates to other transportation systems in the United States.

Ms. Karin De Schepper, Secretary General, Inland Navigation Europe, will do the same for the European Union. And Mr. Jeff High, Director of Waterway Management for the U.S. Coast Guard will touch on the role of Federal and local government as well as private industry in financing waterways in the United States. But perhaps even more interesting, he will talk about waterway capacity and the development of maritime transportation plans in the U.S.

As we're here today listening to this panel and other panels which will present today, both the United States and Western Europe are in the process of re-evaluating their policies and strategies with respect to their national transportation systems.

In the United States this re-evaluation is being conducted under the framework of the Maritime Transportation System, MTS, with the objective -- at least we hope with the objective of integrating water transportation, both inland water transportation and coastal transportation into overall multi-modal transportation, which includes rail and trucking.

In Western Europe, the European community has a similar objective for setting priorities for the development of various modes of transportation called the Trans-European Network, TEN.

As we noted earlier, the U.S. and Western Europe's approach to defining strategy in many instances is very different. In Europe there appears to be a greater emphasis on water transportation to deal with the difficult congestion and environmental problems

caused by their mature infrastructures.

Europe has recognized that inland and coastal waterways have some distinct advantages with respect to capacity, safety, environmental enhancement, and protection.

In the U.S. our waterway system is for the most part not intermodal and not part of the overall transportation system. We look at it as an independent system.

We've not focused on waterway transportation as a solution to congestion, safety, and environment to the extent that Western Europe has. And in some instances our waterway system is seen as environmentally destructive, not an enhancement to overall environmental quality.

This should be a fascinating discussion today, and I encourage you as Dr. Hochstein also encouraged you to challenge this panel after they finish their presentations to explain the merits of their respective policies and strategies.

