

# EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA

## STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE EFTA STATES

Ref. 17-4894

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### SUBCOMMITTEE II ON FREE MOVEMENT OF CAPITAL AND SERVICES

#### EEA EFTA COMMENT

#### **on the public consultation on reporting formalities for ships (European Maritime Single Window environment)**

**The EEA EFTA States emphasize the importance of national reporting requirements being included in the European Maritime Single Window in order to harmonize all information required for a port call. They believe that if the new framework is introduced through a decentralized infrastructure, i.e. based on a network of national single windows, the principle of reporting only once is ensured, which will reduce the administrative burden and improve the efficiency for maritime transport.**

1. The objective of Directive 2010/65/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on reporting formalities for ships arriving in and/or departing from ports of the Member States is to simplify and harmonize the administrative procedures applied to maritime transport. The Directive sets out an obligation for Member States to establish national single windows for reporting formalities.
2. The Directive is currently undergoing a Regulatory Fitness and Performance programme (REFIT) evaluation. The preliminary results of the ongoing evaluation of the Directive show that the objectives have not been reached. Harmonization has not been achieved and the administrative burden on shipping operators remains high.
3. The EEA EFTA States welcome measures which aim to reduce the administrative burden and improve the efficiency for maritime transport, such as the establishment of a European Maritime Single Window environment. We agree that measures are needed in order to improve the competitive position of maritime transport compared to other transport modes by further simplifying maritime transport and custom formalities.
4. The EEA EFTA States believe that a European Maritime Single Window environment should be based on the principles of the well-established single windows in several EU and EFTA States. A European Maritime Single Window environment should also take into account the existing cooperation between Member States, the European Maritime Safety Agency and the European Commission.

5. The EEA EFTA States' view is particularly based on their experience with developing and implementing a maritime single window. Norway's national single window is well recognized among users and includes reports to all relevant authorities in a single report. Iceland has also developed its own SafeSeaNet reporting system to include various information and services such as to accommodate the requirements made in Directive 2010/65/EU.
6. In order to reduce the administrative burden and improve the efficiency for maritime transport, the principle of reporting only once is essential. The Norwegian maritime single window, SafeSeaNet Norway, also allows for the reporting of national reporting formalities, i.e. reporting formalities arising from Norwegian legislation and not EU or other international legislation. The national reporting requirements include booking of pilots, port fees, border security, vessel position reporting, mandatory ship reporting (MRS) and transportation of statistics data. It is estimated that SafeSeaNet Norway has reduced the number of paper reports to Norwegian authorities by more than 250 000 per year.
7. In light of this, the EEA EFTA States want to emphasize the importance of also including national reporting requirements in the new framework in order to harmonize all information required for a port call. If national reporting requirements are not included, Norway and Iceland as well as other countries which have included national reporting requirements in their maritime single window, will have to continue their national single window alongside the new European Maritime Single Window. Consequently, the result of the EU initiative will be that instead of having one single reporting entry point like today, there will be two or more entry points. In this case the European Maritime Single Window environment initiative will work contrary to its intention, resulting in duplication and new reporting requirements and more bureaucracy for users.
8. The EEA EFTA States believe that if the European Maritime Single Window environment is introduced through a decentralized infrastructure, i.e. based on a network of national single windows, this solution will ensure that the principle of reporting only once is adhered to. A decentralized infrastructure will also facilitate the reporting of both national reporting requirements and reporting requirements based on EU legislation. This solution will also provide flexibility to develop and adapt to changes in national legislation, and add future flexibility to integrate automatic identification systems (AIS) / long-range identification and tracking (LRIT) and other digital features in order to support efficient ship/port transactions.
9. On the other hand, a centralized approach, i.e. based on one common maritime single window, has the potential to disrupt the current business processes in countries where a single-entry point is already established. If a centralized approach is used, the European Maritime Single Window will have to operate parallel to national single windows in order to allow for digital reporting according to national regulations.
10. The EEA EFTA States believe that the reporting only once principle is only ensured if the European Maritime Single Window environment can also be used for national reporting requirements. We trust the Commission to take into account the reporting only

once principle, and take the necessary measures in order to reduce the administrative burden for maritime transport.

11. Finally, Norway would like to offer to contribute with expertise and a testing environment in connection with the development of a European Maritime Single Window environment.