

# **Japan Maritime Daily**

## **Interview**

Mr. Jan Fransen, Deputy Managing Director of the Green Award Foundation, which offers an incentive for quality shipping, agreed to this interview while he was in Tokyo. He explains that if all goes well this year, the Green Award Foundation intend to extend the Green Award certification to chemical tankers.

The Foundation issues Green Award certificates to quality ships (crude oil and product tankers and bulk carriers) and their ship owners receive a substantial discount on port dues amongst other advantages.

### **Question:**

“ Could you explain the current situation?”

### **Reply:**

“With tankers and bulk carriers combined, there are 150 ships holding a valid Green Award certificate. Due to a natural reduction\* in numbers and withdrawals from the system, there was a sharp decrease in the number of certified ships in the first half of last year. However, in the latter half of the year, there was increased participation in the system again and we regained lost ground. This year, we forecast an issue of new certificates to 35 tankers and 10 bulk carriers, based on present estimates.

Regarding ports' involvement in the system, last year Belgium and New Zealand were new participants, which brought the total number of ports, which have adopted the system to 50 in 9 countries.

Furthermore, during the annual meeting of the IAPH and also during other events, positive promotion of the system urged other ports to participate.

The foundation wants to continue working on the development of a network between ports which adopt the incentive scheme.”

## **Participation of Japanese ports within the year**

### **Question:**

“It appears that there are no ports in Asia included in those which participate...”

### **Repy:**

“Last summer, the participation of New Plymouth in New Zealand made this port the first to become involved within the Pacific region. It is thought that this will be the first step towards an expansion as far as adoption of the system by ports within the Asian region. A public announcement as to which port this could be cannot be made; nevertheless one port in Japan is expected to participate in the incentive scheme.

Japan is significant within the shipping industry in the Asian Pacific region. If Japan's ports participate, it will also be easier for the nation's shipping companies to approve of the program.”

Question:

“What about the North American ports?”

Reply:

*\*\* Between 1995 and 1996, we tried once to approach the U.S. but these attempts fell through. The port dues in the U.S. are already low if compared to those in Europe or Japan. Furthermore, due to individual negotiation between the port authorities (as a profit making body) and each enterprise, the set-up of the system was not compatible with the Green Award incentive system.*

On the other hand, Canadian ports are showing a strong interest.”

**\*\*Actual statement made:** “In the U.S., the port authority itself only oversees the fairways and the wharfs are operated by individual enterprises. Due to numerous wharf operators within each port, it was difficult to establish any system of reduced port-dues for GA vessels.”

**Plans for Container ships postponed**

Question:

“Are there plans to extend the scope of the Green Award certification to ship types beyond crude oil and product tankers and bulk carriers?”

Reply:

“During a meeting in November last year, it was decided to postpone our original plans to extend the certification to container ships. Under the tight economic situation, the liner shipping companies demand lower port dues to reduce their cost. The ports therefore, have no extra margin to take part in an incentive scheme. We have, however, had requests from manufacturers for the certification of container ships with regard to concerns for cargo safety and the environment.

This year, the Green Award Foundation will be considering the extension of the scheme to chemical tankers.”

Question:

“Regarding the regional measures taken by the EU on single-hull tankers, in what way will this affect your activities?”

Reply:

“Due to ship owners adjusting to regulations and thus being fully prepared, many of the tankers issued with a Green Award certificate are double-hull so the regulations will have no effect.

As to the Green Award Foundation, whether a tanker is single or double-hull does not come into play. There is also absolutely no guarantee that an accident will not occur with a double-hull tanker. This is a debate which I would like to see developed further within the European Parliament.”

## **Crew Quality Surveys**

### Question:

“What are the challenges you want to tackle from now on? ”

### Reply:

“One of our challenges is to introduce the Green Award system to European Short Sea Shipping. We are already progressing in talks with governments in Europe and this year we expect results to materialize.

The other challenge we have in mind is not only an assessment of the vessel quality but also of the crew quality. This has not been finalised in any detail yet, however by assessing the crew members we believe their motivation will increase which will further raise the industry’s awareness of quality shipping.”