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**MORE SHOOTING INCIDENTS IN GERMANY!**

See updated ECG webpage with reporting form
Fourth ECG Academy Alumni meeting held in Bremen
(Source: ECG, 8th December 2016) The 4th ECG Academy Alumni Meeting took place on 2nd December 2016 in Bremen. The meeting was organised by the ECG Academy Advisory Group (EAAG) with the support of the ECG Secretariat. BLG Automobile Logistics sponsored the event and the social dinner in the heart of picturesque Bremen. The meeting brought together 50 participants, i.e. the representatives from all 10 courses of the ECG Academy, the current 11th Course that held its second module in Bremen and various guests.

The meeting started with three speeches by Mike Sturgeon, Executive Director of ECG, and two ECG Board Members: Ömer Gürsoy from ME-PAR and Michael Bünning, BLG Automotive Logistics GmbH who warmly welcomed all participants of the meeting. Mike Sturgeon briefly spoke about the history of the meetings. Ömer Gürsoy said the ECG Board wholeheartedly supports and encourages that these meetings become regular. Michael Bünning highlighted the importance of the Alumni to come together and create a solid network within the FVL sector. Following this, Jan Vollmer from STVA, presented the ECG Academy Advisory Group, its past and current activities and new projects. Then he focused on the Empty Mileage project, its results and next steps. After that the meeting the election of the new EAAG (for the years 2016-2018) were held. The current EAAG members were re-elected and three new members joined it. The 8 members are: Jan Henning Vollmer, STVA (Chairman); Aleks Časar, Milsped Group; Sándor Gacsó, ARS Altmann; Tanja Mattheis, BLG Automobile Logistics; Attila Novak, Lagermax; Djana Rigbers, GLOVIS Europe; Filippo Rizzi Ariani, Grimaldi Group; Tobias Spannbauer, MOSOLF and supported by Oleh Shchuryk, ECG (Executive Secretary).

The first speech was delivered by Mrs. Monica Schmickler from Daimler AG (pictured on the left), who delivered a presentation on autonomous driving and its impact on outbound logistics (focusing on passenger cars). Then Dirk Stüben from SCANIA Truck spoke on self-driven trucks, platooning and digitalisation in trucks. Prof. Dr. Josef Decker, Dean of the ECG Academy, briefly presented Digital future – challenges and chances for finished vehicle logistics. Then the students of the current ECG Academy Course 11 presented their innovative ideas. Finally, Prof. Dr. Sven Hermann, NBS Northern Business School (pictured below), presented ‘Forming Future – Social Design in Digital Logistics.’

The 4th Alumni Meeting received a very positive feedback from the participants. The official part was followed by a networking dinner offered by BLG Logistics. It was a pleasant occasion to enjoy time with colleagues and to get to know other graduates from different years of the ECG Academy. These Alumni meetings offer not only an opportunity for communication and exchange of ideas with other Academy colleagues, but also encourage...
cohesion and foster networking amongst young professionals in the FVL sector.

**Transport Council discussed the Commission’s upcoming road initiatives**

(Source: Council of the EU, 1st December 2016) The Transport Council was held in Brussels on 1st December. During the meeting the Commission briefed ministers on the road package it is planning to present in the first half of 2017. The French and German delegations, which had requested this item for the agenda, expressed their concerns with regard to the current challenges in the road haulage sector and asked the Commission to address these issues in the upcoming legislative initiatives on road transport. A large number of Member States also took the floor to express their views. Many delegations stated that they were against further liberalisation of road transport, while some were in favour of more market opening. Any abuse and fraud in the road haulage sector are considered unacceptable. A number of delegations mentioned the issue of working and rest times, fraudulent use of tachographs and letterbox companies. Several Member States called for more harmonised inspections. A number of Member States also mentioned the need to facilitate competition, avoid fragmentation and keep the administrative burden minimum. The Commission explained that its upcoming road package will consist of four pillars, which focus on the functioning of the internal market, the social aspects of road transport, road charging and digitalisation and interoperability. It is however too early to discuss specific policy measures that will be included in the package. It will analyse carefully the phenomenon of letter-box companies, which is at the heart of many problems. The Commission will also make an impact assessment to see which rules should apply to light trucks. A smart tachograph adopted in 2014 will be mandatory in 2019 for new vehicles, and that will be an efficient tool.

**AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY**

**Nissan reaches 250,000 production landmark at St. Petersburg plant**

(Source: Automotive Purchasing, 5th December 2016) Nissan is celebrating the production of its 250,000th vehicle at its manufacturing plant in St. Petersburg, Russia. The landmark vehicle was a blue Nissan Qashqai 2.0 litre 4WD CVT, the latest milestone for the plant workforce, who this year celebrated the 10th anniversary of the St. Petersburg site with the launch of the new Nissan Murano. With models like this Qashqai engineered specifically for Russian driving conditions, Nissan now manufactures 95% of its models sold in Russia. Congratulating the workforce, Dmitry Mikhailov, Nissan Vice President for Manufacturing in Russia, said: “The progress achieved highlights the growth and development of the youngest Nissan car-making plant in Europe, whose primary goal is to improve its performance with each new vehicle rolling off our production line.” To achieve this landmark, more than 375 million parts, 2,000 tons of paint and 28,300 working hours have been involved since production started in June 2009. Total investment in the plant now stands at €312m, with current production covering the Nissan X-Trail, Pathfinder, Qashqai and Murano. Manufactured in St. Petersburg for the Russian market since October 2015, Nissan engineers in Russia made more than 200 changes to Qashqai for the country's road and weather conditions, including changes in the chassis design, increased ground clearance and localised tyres. In the 13 months since 21,450 Qashqai vehicles have been manufactured in St. Petersburg.
Car emissions: Commission opens infringement procedures against 7 Member States for breach of EU rules
(Source: European Commission, 8th December 2016) The European Commission is taking action against 7 Member States for failing to set up penalties systems to deter car manufacturers from violating car emissions legislation, or not applying such sanctions where a breach of law has occurred. The European Commission decided to act against the Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Spain and the United Kingdom on the grounds that they have disregarded EU vehicle type approval rules. Commissioner Elżbieta Bieńkowska, responsible for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, said: "Abiding by the law is first and foremost the duty of car manufacturers. But national authorities across the EU must ensure that car manufacturers actually comply with the law. For the future, the Commission has tabled proposals to introduce greater European oversight and to make the type approval system more robust. We expect the European Parliament and Council to reach an agreement swiftly." In accordance with Article 46 of Directive 2007/46 and more specifically Article 13 of Regulation (EC) 715/2007, which is directly applicable, Member States must have effective, proportionate and dissuasive penalties systems in place to deter car manufacturers from breaking the law. Where such a breach of law takes place, for example by using defeat devices to reduce the effectiveness of emission control systems, these penalties must be applied. The Commission is addressing letters of formal notice to the Czech Republic, Greece and Lithuania because they have failed to introduce such penalties systems into their national law. The Commission is also opening infringements against Germany, Luxembourg, Spain and the United Kingdom – the Member States that issued type approvals for Volkswagen Group in the EU – for not applying their national provisions on penalties despite the company's use of illegal defeat device software. Additionally, the Commission takes the view that Germany and the United Kingdom broke the law by refusing to disclose, when requested by the Commission, all the technical information gathered in their national investigations regarding potential nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions irregularities in cars by Volkswagen Group and other car manufacturers on their territories. A letter of formal notice is a first step in an infringement procedure and constitutes an official request for information. The Member States now have two months to respond to the arguments put forward by the Commission; otherwise, the Commission may decide to send a reasoned opinion.

Dieter Zetsche re-elected ACEA President for 2017
(Source: ACEA, 5th December 2016) The Board of Directors of the European Automobile Manufacturers’ Association (ACEA) has re-elected Dieter Zetsche, CEO of Daimler, as its President for 2017. 2017 will be an important year for Europe’s automobile industry, with the entry into force of the updated laboratory test for measuring pollutant and CO2 emissions from cars (WLTP) and the first step of a new test (RDE) to measure pollutant emissions under real driving conditions. “Our industry fully supports the need for improved emissions testing,” stated Dr Zetsche. “However, we ask policy makers to reconsider the proposed time line giving us only a few months to comply. Because if there is one defining principle of our industry, it’s this: We are used to tackling technical challenges – provided reasonable lead-times are observed.” Alongside emissions-related issues, connected and automated driving will be a priority topic for next year. “The increasing ability of cars to exchange data with the outside world holds great potential to revolutionise the driving experience,” said Zetsche. “With the right policy framework, we will seize these opportunities for our customers – here in Europe and around the globe.” ACEA’s President is elected for a year-long term, once renewable, from the CEOs, Presidents or Chairmen of its member companies.
ECG FORUM

Creating a tool for better communication among ECG members was the rationale behind the creation of the ECG members’ Forum. As the ECG Secretariat often received questions from members that were of general interest, we decided to launch a tool where members can raise an issue and directly share it with other members.

What is the Forum for?
- Sharing best practices among members
- Seeking for advice from other ECG members on legal, operational, quality issues or even on regional topics
- Giving feedback on topics that are of interest to other members

How it works?
- You should have your personal login for the ECG website
- If you don’t yet have a personal login, please ask for one from the ECG Secretariat
- The personal login is needed as the post on the Forum will be linked to your name
- Please read the legal disclaimer before using the Forum
- The language of the Forum is English

We hope ECG members will start using the Forum on a regular basis!

If you have any suggestions on how to improve the Forum, please contact the ECG Secretariat with your ideas.

EUROPE

Grimaldi Group confirms vertical storage unit at Valencia
(Source: Automotive Logistics, 5th December 2016) The Grimaldi Group has reaffirmed its commitment to build a vertical storage facility at its Valencia Terminal Europa, on Dique del Este, at the Mediterranean Port of Valencia. Mario Massarotti, MD of the group’s Spanish operation, said the new facility was required to improve the quality of service it offered in the port, based on increased imports of finished vehicles by Fiat and exports by Ford. In 2015, Fiat imported more than 100,000 units through the port for the first time, compared to just 66,000 units the previous year. Space restrictions in 2015 resulted in many Ford units having to be exported via Sagunto, meanwhile. Grimaldi operates a 200,000 m² site in Valencia which handles both finished vehicles and other goods. The firm already operates its own terminal in Barcelona, which was opened in July 2013 and is claimed to be one of the most modern and efficient in the Mediterranean. “For the moment, the group has no other plans to invest in more terminals in [Spain],” said Massarotti. Massarotti went on to say that although 2016 had been something of a year of consolidation for the company, the finished vehicle export business had registered a major increase this year. By contrast, the semi-trailer Ro-Ro sector had produced little in the way of change, he said. He also revealed the Grimaldi Group had recently put into operation a new vessel, the Atlantic Sea, which is its third G4 fourth generation Ro-Ro ship and belongs to group member Atlantic Container Line (ATL). In addition to 3,800 containers, it has a further 28,900 m² of space for trucks and up to 1,300 vehicles. ACL operates routes between Europe and North America. Grimaldi also recently introduced the Eurocargo Salerno in Spain, which operates the Barcelona-Savona route. The company currently operates services to and from the Ports of Barcelona, Bilbao, El Ferrol, Santander, Valencia and Vigo.

British ports call for special zones
(Source: Multimodal, 5th December 2016) In response to potential administrative complications that could arise from Brexit, the British Ports Association (BPA) is calling for the government to classify port areas and surrounding clusters as ‘special port zones’. BPA Chairman Rodney Lunn and Director Richard Ballantyne met with John Hayes, the minister of state at the Department of Transport to address concerns that Brexit could bring increased frontier and customs activities at ports. There are concerns that these added processes could discuss cargo and logistics flows, making UK ports less competitive and adding costs to the freight industry, noted a statement from the BPA. To tackle these issues, Ballantyne stated: “We envisage a system whereby port areas and surrounding clusters might be classified as ‘special port zones’ with fast tracked planning and licensing systems. Such zones could safeguard against restrictive environmental designations, which can often limit port growth and development.” Ballantyne also highlighted his wish that government activity at UK borders do not disrupt freight and passenger gateways. In any case, the specific conditions of Britain’s post-Brexit trading relationship with the European Union will only become known following the UK government’s triggering of Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty and a subsequent negotiation.

Mathias Maedge to lead IRU Brussels Delegation
(Source: IRU, 1st December 2016) IRU is pleased to announce the appointment of Mathias Maedge as the new IRU General Delegate to lead the work of its Brussels office. He brings extensive experience of working within the transport sector in a leadership role, and will take up his new function early next year. Matthias Maedge is currently the Secretary General of NGVA Europe, the Brussels-based stakeholder, which promotes natural gas and bio- and synthetic methane alternative fuel used in the road transport sector. Matthias, 37 years old, holds a Master’s degree in Political Science, Media & Communications and in
addition to his native German, speaks English, French, Spanish and Italian. Umberto de Pretto, IRU’s Secretary General, said, “I am extremely pleased to be able to welcome Matthias Maedge to the IRU family. His is an excellent candidate to lead the work of IRU’s EU office. I am sure that he will bring his strong capabilities to the role from day one and further strengthen IRU’s advocacy on behalf of its passenger and goods road transport members.” Matthias Maedge added, “I am delighted to join IRU to head its work in Brussels. Now is a vitally important time for the road transport sector as it continues to face numerous challenges in Europe and gears up to address the European Commission’s Road Initiatives now and in the months ahead. I look forward to starting this exciting work.”

Infrastructure investment & trade facilitation the keys to unlocking silk road potential
(Source: IRU, 30th November 2016) China’s major policy programme ‘One Belt, One Road’ (OBOR) offers significant opportunities for European road transport operators, but needs to be supported by investment and development of transport infrastructure and the use of trade facilitation tools, such as TIR. These were the main findings of the 5th IRU/EU Road Transport Conference – ‘One Belt, One Road – consequences for Europe’. The conference participants identified a number of challenges and solutions that exist in Europe if the potential of the OBOR policy is to be maximised. Umberto de Pretto, IRU's Secretary General, said, “The new silk road between China and the EU has the potential to increase trade, stimulate economic development along its route and reduce transport times. Trade facilitation tools are an essential element of this increased trade. With China recently acceding to the multi-modal TIR Convention the tools are in place to properly support the overland transport links between the two trading block and their partner countries in between.” Jan Nemec, who currently leads IRU’s work in the EU said, “It is clear that there needs to be significant EU investment in transport infrastructure, such as multi-modal transport hubs, if Europe is to fully benefit from the opportunities on offer from increased overland trade between China and the European Road transport has a major part to play in spreading those opportunities to European businesses and consumers.”

Increases in transport efficiency and travel times, along with the ability to connect new business zones and land locked countries with major European and Chinese markets, were also identified as major opportunities resulting from the OBOR initiative. The conference was supported by the Slovakian Presidency of the EU and brought together 300 of Europe’s leading transport professionals and representatives of the Chinese Mission to the European Union.

European hauliers ‘face new cabotage threat’
(Source: Lloyd’s Loading List, 5th December 2016) European hauliers face a new emerging threat, as “cut-throat competition” from Eastern European players operating commercial vehicles of up to 3.5 tonnes, in some cases pulling trailers, rapidly expand their operations within EU domestic road freight markets. It is a trend that “urgently” needs to be addressed, according to Yves Fargues, the president of France’s leading freight transport and logistics trade body TLF. “Our feedback shows the majority of them are from Romania, but we have little way of knowing whether they are part of legitimate firms or are ‘rogue’ or ‘cowboy’ outfits,” he said. “But their activities are growing rapidly in both France and in Germany in the express and urgent transport market, as well as in vehicle chartering.” “These operators fall through the regulatory net. Their vehicles are not ‘lorries’ so they do not have to respect the rules governing cabotage or others relating to HGVs, and the drivers are carrying out commercial activities on a standard driving licence.” “They are basically operating in impunity and also represent a risk to road safety. It is a European problem and although the Commission is aware of these activities, it is doing little about them. There needs to be regulation, and urgently.” Fargues, whose career in the sector spans more than 40 years – including a spell as head of French logistics group GEFCO – is
the European Commission launched its AEO programme in 2008. The well-attended workshop brought together public and private partners and was the first of its kind since the EU domestic markets, not just international freight movements. CNR recently published an EU study highlighting huge disparities in the wage and labour costs relating to the employment of lorry drivers in 15 countries that give eastern bloc hauliers a significant competitive advantage over operators in the west. “One of its main conclusions is that it costs roughly three times more to employ lorry drivers in France than in Poland; and in other states, such as Romania and Bulgaria, the differential is even greater,” said Fargues. He believes there is little prospect of the operating cost gap narrowing between hauliers in the east and west, as this would require harmonisation of lorry drivers’ pay and conditions and of employer contributions that fall within the realm of fiscal and employment affairs where the EU as yet, at least, has no scope for intervention. Nevertheless, Fargues does support moves for the setting up of an EU road transport agency to better regulate road haulage and the creation of a ‘European lorry driver status’ – a kind of official recognition or quality label in the EU for lorry drivers that would provide scope for harmonisation or consensus on issues such as driving hours and rest periods. “But I have to say I am rather pessimistic that we can get everybody to agree,” he said. “When Germany and then France tried to impose their minimum wage on lorry drivers from other EU states (notably from eastern Europe) carrying out cabotage, they had their knuckles rapped by Brussels – who saw this as an infringement of ‘single market’ principles. Of course, one could argue such unilateral initiatives amount to nothing but political posturing anyway, being largely impractical to enforce. For example, how can it be verified with any certainty whether a Romanian haulage firm is paying its drivers the minimum wage of Germany and France when working in these countries?” he asks. For the present, Fargues calls for more effective provision to ensure that the existing legal framework relating to cabotage is respected in order to protect domestic markets from unfair competition. “This demands greater resources on the ground to monitor any illegal activity and to sanction it,” he points out.

IRU has called for the implementation of fast Green Lanes for accredited Authorised Economic Operators

(Source: IRU, 7th December 2016) Green Lanes would significantly reduce inspections and waiting times at EU external borders and would be particularly beneficial for smaller businesses operating in the road freight transport sector. Facilitating faster border crossings, Green Lanes would ensure that these enterprises remain competitive. The system would also guarantee that transport operators derive enough benefit through participation in the Authorised Economic Operators (AEO) to outweigh the administrative burden of applying for and maintaining AEO status. AEO is an internationally recognised quality mark indicating that the role of the accredited transport operator in the international supply chain is secure, and that its customs controls and procedures are efficient and compliant. Carriers that operate under TIR and send their pre-arrival information electronically, using TIR-EPD, are treated as AEO compliant for the purpose of using Green or fast lanes. The call was made at an EU AEO Programme Workshop in Senec, Slovakia, organised by the Taxation and Customs Union Directorate General (DG TAXUD). The well-attended workshop brought together public and private partners and was the first of its kind since the European Commission launched its AEO programme in 2008. IRU presented at the workshop on the needs of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), which form the majority of AEOs. It advocated for the setting-up of an “EU AEO SME helpdesk” where companies can seek advice on AEO programmes and their functioning in different markets – including a fast lane concept at borders.
Nissan introduces driverless towing system at Oppama Plant
(Source: Automotive Supply Chain, 5th December 2016) Nissan has announced the introduction of Intelligent Vehicle Towing (IVT), a fully automated vehicle towing system, at its Oppama Plant in Japan. Nissan has worked on making the relationship between people, cars and society more exciting under its Intelligent Mobility vision, a framework for how cars will be driven, powered, and integrated into society. This new project, which utilises mapping and communication technologies to link an intelligent and all-electric car to infrastructure, is a step towards the realisation of Nissan Intelligent Integration. The IVT system uses a modified Nissan LEAF to autonomously tow trolleys carrying finished vehicles between designated loading and unloading points at the plant. Unlike conventional automatic guided vehicle systems for transporting parts, which often require the installation of rails or extensive use of magnetic tape, this system does not need any special infrastructure to operate. The towing car is equipped with an array of cameras and laser scanners that detect lane markings, curbs and potential obstacles or hazards around the vehicle. By cross-referencing this information with map data, the towing car calculates its own location, negotiating the route to its destination unaided. The towing car travels within the speed limits of the factory, and automatically stops if it detects an obstacle or hazard ahead, before setting off again when it has determined that the road ahead is clear. The towing route can easily be altered to accommodate changes in production processes or vehicle transport routes. All driverless towing cars

REST OF THE WORLD

Rail Forum Europe seeks measures for competitive freight transport
(Source: Rail Forum Europe, 6th December 2016) Adequate framework conditions should be put in place for rail freight to unleash its enormous potential and increase its attractiveness to customers. Rail stakeholders and legislators, at national and EU level, should leave personal interests behind and co-operate on this issue. This was the main message of Rail Forum Europe's dinner debate held in Brussels on 5th December and sponsored by CER, ERFA and UIRR. Sylvie Charles (CEO of SNCF Logistics Rail & Intermodal Division) highlighted the imbalances that European rail freight undertakings suffer from under the present regulatory framework across Europe and the consequent stagnating share of rail freight. She stated: “Over the past years there has been strong progress in terms of productivity improvements and customer-focused services in the context of an open rail freight market. Despite the sector’s efforts, the competitiveness of the rail freight is still facing critical hurdles including the lack of a level playing field with road and cost-intensive regulatory requirements for rail freight undertakings”. Paul Hegge, (Head of public affairs of B Logistics) highlighted the issues related to infrastructure funding and financing and stressed the need to improve quality access, transparency and accountability. He said: “Public budgets and European taxpayers cannot afford to finance all the rail infrastructure upgrades that society and the economy need. Consequently, regulatory framework conditions must be created to enable private capital to invest in rail infrastructure”. Matthew Baldwin (Deputy Director General of DG MOVE), described the actions being carried out by the Commission to improve conditions for rail freight. In particular, the Rotterdam Ministerial Declaration and Sector Statement on rail freight corridors, the implementation of the 4th Railway Package, the deployment of ERTMS in the framework of digitalisation as well as actions aimed at reducing rail noise prove that rail freight is high on the Commission's agenda: “The development of rail freight remains a top priority for the European Commission, in the context of transport decarbonization and of the implementation of the 2011 Transport White Paper,” he said. Intervening in the open discussion, Carlo Borghini (Executive Director of the Shift2Rail Joint Undertaking), pointed out that innovation is key in the process of shaping the future of rail freight: “The Shift2Rail programme has a dedicated Innovation Programme for rail freight, aimed at addressing all issues currently faced by this segment. The industry should innovate and digitalise, in order to modernise the European rail system,” he said. Pauline Bastidon (European Shippers' Council) provided a feedback from a customers' perspective on the status of rail freight: “Many customers would love to make more use of rail freight, but rail freight needs to deliver in terms of reliability, cost-attraction, speed, and flexibility. Ensuring that customers have access to the rail network by investing in last-mile infrastructure is also key.” Libor Lochman (CER), highlighted the importance of increased co-operation between Railway Undertakings and Infrastructure Managers to improve the development of rail freight: “We encourage the European Commission to facilitate regular meetings bringing together the RU Dialogue and PRIME members in order to identify and execute joint solutions for key challenges enabling an increased efficiency of rail freight.” RFE Chairman Michael Cramer thanked participants and concluded the debate: “Time is up for self-pity: today we want to hear solutions, tomorrow we want to see action, and the day after tomorrow we want to benefit from the results. Like it or not, the world is changing at very high speed and stakeholders should take radical measures to make rail freight an attractive solution. European and national authorities as well as operators, infrastructure managers and industry should all play on the team. Other transport modes are not waiting, why should rail freight?”.
are connected to a central traffic control system, which can monitor the location, driving speed, remaining battery and operational status of each vehicle. When two driverless towing cars meet at an intersection, the control system's algorithm determines which car should be given right-of-way, and in case of emergency, the system can stop the vehicles remotely. The Oppama Plant's existing logistics system requires finished vehicles to be transported from the end of the production line to the facility's dedicated wharf by a team of drivers, at which point they are loaded onto ships. Introducing IVT will allow Nissan to improve production efficiency. Since trial operations of the system began roughly a year ago, more than 1,600 test runs have been carried out at the plant. The data acquired has been utilised to ensure that the system can operate reliably within the plant's premises. A safety system and a fail-safe system have been developed to counter potential risks or unexpected conditions the IVT system may face during autonomous driving, including adverse weather and low light conditions. Nissan will continue to test the system at its Oppama Plant, and will examine the possibility of implementation at other manufacturing facilities both in and outside Japan.

**Daimler may build electric vehicles in China to boost Mercedes sales**
(Source: Automotive News Europe, 6th December 2016) Daimler may make batteries and Mercedes-Benz electric cars in China as part of a drive to manufacture more products locally and to try to boost sales, according to the automaker's market chief Hubertus Troska. Sales of the German company's luxury cars in China have grown 28% so far this year after Mercedes spruced up its designs to give its cars a sportier and upmarket feel, gaining traction with drivers in the world's largest car market. To keep the sales momentum, Mercedes is considering local production of electric cars and batteries. Building a battery factory in China is "among the options," Troska said, adding that no decision had been made. He declined to say whether Mercedes had set a date to start production of an EV based on the Generation EQ concept in China. The concept, which previews an almost production-ready SUV, was unveiled at the Paris auto show this year. Mercedes aims to have more than 10 all-electric vehicles as part of an EQ subbrand by 2025 and has pledged to produce its Generation EQ model by the end of the decade. The SUV is based on a C-class platform which is already being made in China and local authorities are encouraging production in the country. "The strategic plan by the authorities is to push battery electric vehicles. We continue to invest in both battery electric cars and hybrid," Troska said, adding the lack of battery charging infrastructure meant hybrids would be an alternative in the interim.

**PSA to invest $320m in Argentina**
(Source: Automotive News Europe, 6th December 2016) PSA Group agreed to invest $320m in Argentina with the aim of producing more cars to be sold on the local and international markets starting in 2019. Carlos Gomes, Head of Latin America for PSA, made the announcement to President Mauricio Macri during a meeting, the government said in a statement. The plant is already located in the suburbs of Buenos Aires and the investment will enable it to expand production. Macri has been betting on investment to pull Argentina's economy out of recession, but a year into his term growth is still elusive. Data released on 8th December showed automobile production grew 3.3% in November from a year earlier, after falling for various months amid recession at home and in neighbouring Brazil. Exports also rose 15.8% from November 2015, the data from the Association of Automobile Manufacturers (Adefa) said.

**PRESS RELEASES**

**Klaas Koopman joins family-owned Koopman Logistics Group**
(Source: Koopman Logistics Group, 1st December 2016) Klaas Koopman joined Koopman Logistics Group, the company of his family, as Manager Technique & Facilities. After cousin Edwin and brother Harm, Klaas, who is the son of shareholder Jan Koopman, is now the third descendant who will devote his talents and energy to the family-owned company.

Koopman Truck & Trailer Service
Klaas Koopman has a vast technical and commercial (management) experience due to his background at Mercedes-Benz Nederland and Stern Trucks. At Koopman Logistics Group he will take over the management of the buildings and the premises from his father. Besides that he will have the overall responsibility for the workshops of Koopman Logistics Group.
Regarding Koopman Logistics Group
In 1930 blacksmith Siebe Koopman decided to change course and to start a new career as a milk driver. In 2016 the one-man-business from the past presently has grown to one of the larger logistic service provers within the Benelux. Over 950 employees provide an annual turnover of approximately 150 million Euro. The family owned company Koopman Logistics Group has offices in the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium. The Automotive-division is the largest player in the Benelux regarding car transport, vehicle storage and additional services related to vehicle handling. The General Cargo-branch transports a wide range of products, from parcels to full truck loads within the Benelux and part of Germany. Koopman provides also Warehousing and other logistics services.

The Grimaldi Group received the Top Logistics Provider Award by CNH Industrial
(Source: Grimaldi Group, 7th December 2016) On 1st December, the Grimaldi Group was awarded as Top Logistics Provider in the Ocean Carrier category by Chase New Holland (CNH) Industrial, the industrial Group specialized in the design, production and sales of agricultural and construction equipment commercial vehicles and powertrains. Dror Noach, Vice President Transport Logistics for CNH Industrial, participated at the event.

The prestigious prize, given during a ceremony held at the CNH Industrial Village in Turin, rewards the Neapolitan Group for its outstanding performance achieved in the transportation of CNH Industrial whole goods (Iveco, Magirus, Astra, etc.) worldwide. The Grimaldi Group was recognized for its reliability, collaboration, flexibility and performances in line with the expectations and quality standards of CNH Industrial.

"We are honoured to receive this award, as a result of the fruitful collaboration with CNH Industrial," said Costantino Baldissara, Commercial, Logistics & Operations Director of the Grimaldi Group while collecting the prize. "We appreciate having been chosen as the best logistics services provider and we are proud of this achievement, which is a demonstration of the professionalism and dedication of our work," concluded Baldissara.

With 70 years of experience, the Grimaldi Group is specialised in the operation of Roll on-Roll off vessels, car carriers and ferries, owning a fleet of more than 120 vessels. It is a consolidated provider of integrated logistics services based on maritime transport to the biggest vehicle manufacturers. Particularly, the Neapolitan Group offers logistics services for the transport of vehicles between Northern Europe, the Mediterranean, West Africa, North and South America.

Horst Mosolf GmbH & Co. KG lays the groundwork for further successful decades
(Source: MOSOLF, 5th December 2016) Horst Mosolf GmbH & Co. KG, one of the leading vehicle logistics and service providers for the automobile industry in Europe, is laying the groundwork for further successful decades in terms of its structure and organisation.

The company’s official operating name has changed to MOSOLF SE & Co. KG since 1st December. The company’s legal identity remains unchanged. The new general partner is MOSOLF Verwaltungen SE.

At the same time, separate subsidiaries have been formed for the automobile logistics company’s four business units: MOSOLF Transport Solutions, MOSOLF Logistics & Services, MOSOLF Retail Solutions and MOSOLF Releasing Solutions. MOSOLF SE & Co. KG looks after the management and control functions for the MOSOLF Group. The aim is to focus even more intensely on customers’ needs in a rapidly changing market with a much more flexible corporate structure and a unified presence both outwardly and inwardly.
The SE’s management board consists of Dr Jörg Mosolf (Spokesperson for the Board and CEO, pictured), Gregory Hancke (Deputy CEO and COO), Wolfgang Göbel (CSO) and Dr Kersten Ruoss (CFO).

“We’ve been operating in the automotive business across Europe in a very successful manner for more than 60 years. As a pioneer of vehicle logistics, we have repeatedly set milestones. However, this creates a sense of responsibility to act on behalf of our customers, our employees and our business environment – both now and in future. We're more than happy to assume this responsibility together with all those involved. The newly created structures provide the necessary basis for this,” Dr Jörg Mosolf explains.

**BLG Logistics Automobile SPb and LLC Fenix “Port Bronka” to sign long lasting cooperation agreement**

*(Source: BLG Logistics, 9th December 2016)* The German automobile logistics provider BLG Logistics and LLC Fenix, owner and operator of Port Bronka, signed a long lasting co-operation agreement for the handling of automobiles via the Port of Bronka.

Starting with a terminal capacity of 6,000 units, BLG will move their terminal activities in Russia from the City Port in St. Petersburg to the newly build Port Bronka at Lomonossov District, which is also a part of the “Big Port of St. Petersburg”.

The state of the art terminal at Port Bronka was opened in December 2015 at a total area of approximately 120 hectares.

With a direct connection to the ring road and six berths for sea going vessels as well as a direct rail connection at the terminal, Port Bronka offers ideal conditions for the import and export of automobiles and other kinds of RoRo cargo. The joint activities of BLG and Fenix are initially based on automobiles of Volkswagen Group Russia, which recently nominated BLG for port handling services in Bronka.

BLG and Fenix agreed upon starting the automobile business at a 12 hectare area and 25 truck loading / unloading bays and to consequently develop the scope of service offered at Port Bronka.

With start of the operation BLG will also increase the number of employees and will hire new employees mainly from Lomonossov District.