



## **Sea and Water**

### **Business Plan**

**2007-2009**

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## Introduction

Sea and Water was established to provide a representative voice for the inland waterways, short sea and coastal shipping industry, and to promote water freight as a viable alternative to the movement of freight on the UK's roads. Sea and Water provides information to its members, communicates the case for modal shift to other stakeholders, highlighting its benefits to the environment, economy and society, and addresses the barriers that prevent the greater take up of water.

At its inception in 2003, the organisation faced the challenge of bringing together a largely fragmented industry. Therefore in our first three years we have focused very much on supply side issues (the operators). We have helped to promote knowledge within the sector, and understanding by Government of the sector and its difficulties and needs.

Going forward there is a need to build on this core achievement by turning our attention to the promotion of water freight. We have therefore set ourselves two additional challenges: to encourage users and potential users to choose water freight solutions, and to address and influence policy decisions affecting the sector. At the same time, we cannot turn our back on the on-going need to increase the numbers of our supporters and establish critical mass.

Therefore, Sea and Water has moved into a new phase of its development, marked by restructuring within the organisation. Over the next three years, our new principal objective is to reach out to a wider community, encouraging potential users of water freight, principally the major multiples and other heavy users of freight transport, to change behaviour.

Sea and Water must continue to act as a conduit between Government and the sector, communicating effectively with both to ensure that policy is shaped in a way that is supportive of water freight. It must also maintain its programme of research to uncover the information it, its sponsor and others require.

This document sets out the outcomes we expect to achieve through this business plan. These will be the tangible signs of the progress we have made towards achieving our vision.

## **Vision**

Sea and Water aims to be a representative voice for the water freight industry, successfully campaigning and promoting Britain's coastal waters, rivers and inland waterways as a viable alternative to roads for the movement of freight by the UK's private and public sectors for the overall benefit of society and the environment.

## **Corporate Structure**

Sea and Water is a Company Limited by Guarantee and it is not-for-profit. It is funded by the Department for Transport, European institutions, and the business community through subscriptions and sponsorship. To date Sea and Water has attracted a body of over 130 supporters who provide the organisation with the gravitas it needs to be successful when campaigning: it is the only organisation that brings together representatives from the entire water-freight industry.

Overall responsibility for corporate governance rests with the Executive directors, Dr Heather Leggate and Gavin Devine, who make both day-to-day and strategic decisions. The organisation has a high-profile president, Bo Lerenius, who also attends the Sea and Water Advisory Board. That group meets quarterly to advise on strategic issues. Sea and Water is actively looking to widen the Board to include industrialists from the construction and retail sectors.

Sea and Water has also established two committees specifically designed to spearhead short sea and costal shipping and inland waterways' initiatives. These committees highlight issues which can be taken forward by the Sea and Water executive and staff. Members of these committees are also encouraged to represent Sea and Water in a number of fora. Supporters are encouraged to join these committees to drive forward initiatives. The committees also meet quarterly.

Sea and Water employs three full-time staff who report to the Executive directors. The team comprises a researcher; office manager and events co-ordinator; and a communications manager. They are responsible for day-to-day operations.

## Objectives

For the period of this business plan, the objectives of Sea and Water are to:

1. To continue to act as a representative voice of the water freight sector
2. To encourage and promote water freight by raising its profile amongst stakeholders, especially by targeting the users and potential users of freight
3. By communicating with policy makers and others, to help to remove barriers that affect the take up of water as a mode of transport; and to work to encourage a joined-up approach by policymakers to water freight; and
4. To become increasingly financially sustainable, moving towards financial independence of the Department for Transport.

As discussed in this document, although the above makes assumptions of success in our efforts to attract further support from the private sector, it should be noted that we are actively seeking further additional income streams in order to finance more promotional activity and information production. But these are uncertain at the present time and have not yet been included in the base budget.

## Outcomes

We understand our sponsor's need for us to set quantifiable targets against which our performance can be measured. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that representative, member organisations face perennial difficulties in setting truly tangible goals when their goals are qualitative – typically to raise the profile of a particular sector, and to influence the behaviour of stakeholders.

That difficulty is shared by Sea and Water. Nevertheless, for each of our objectives we have set ourselves targets. These are described below.

### 1. Representative voice of the sector

It remains the primary objective of Sea and Water to bring together the inland water, short sea and coastal shipping sectors. This allows the industry to make representations to Government and others about areas of concern; it also allows the Government, and specifically the Department for Transport, to communicate more readily with the industry.

Therefore, to fulfil this objective, we will:

- Develop strategies to maintain and increase our membership from *within* the water freight and related sectors;
- Continue our programme of educational and other events;
- Ensure that our programme of research is continued, and its outcomes used to underpin our other activities;
- Maintain and build on the databank and website which both provide support to our members; and
- Work closely with DfT to improve the information flow, in terms of feeding back the experiences and concerns of our committee members and of our wider membership, and of passing information from DfT to our members.

Our **targets** are to:

- Hold quarterly meetings with DfT officials;
- Develop a strategy to expand and increase the attractiveness of our events programme (see also below); and
- Increase the number of our supporters by at least 5 percent each year (see also below).

## **2. Promotion of water freight**

As discussed, a key challenge for the coming period is to promote further the use of water freight amongst existing and potential users. This challenge is part of our primary purpose as an organisation.

The most important targets for this promotional activity are large freight users who currently do not use, or who under-use, water freight. There is an opportunity at present to reach out to these users, appealing to them on grounds of cost and reliability, but also in terms of corporate responsibility. A particularly key group are retail multiples, aggregates companies and power generators, amongst others.

A focus even within this group will be to promote coastal shipping. This is an area with the greatest potential for modal shift because of the UK's extensive coastline and numerous ports. A challenge here is to encourage ports to develop dedicated feeder services to increase the efficiency of the coastal routes and to highlight the existing opportunities for bulk and container cargoes. We will therefore work within the context set by Government ports policy and by the current Transport Select Committee inquiry to promote and encourage coastal shipping as well as inland waterways.

We propose a twin-track approach to promoting water freight: indirectly, via the media and through political pressure (see below), and directly through letters, meetings, seminars, briefings and so on. Another useful tool is the production of supporting evidence of success, in the form of case studies.

Therefore, to fulfil this objective, we will:

- Build on our existing media and communications strategy;
- Develop and action a programme of directly lobbying key existing users and potential users (NB: successful engagement with Sainsbury's is underway);
- Look specifically at undertaking seminars to help water freight companies to market themselves to potential users;
- Take forward the development of a 'green benchmarking' scheme; and
- Continue to produce and publish case studies making the case for water.

Our **targets** are to:

- Achieve a year-on-year increase in the number of articles, letters and press releases about water freight inspired by Sea and Water;
- Write to at least 30 companies each year to encourage the use of water freight – and to secure at least 10 meetings with such companies each year;
- Specifically, during 2007 to hold a business briefing event for the corporate sector at Westminster, bringing policymakers, suppliers and users together;
- Hold a seminar and/or business briefing to bring together ports, shipping companies, and users to discuss in particular coastal shipping; and
- Produce a minimum of five case studies per year, published on our website.

### **3. Lobbying for a supportive policy environment**

It remains a key task for Sea and Water to make representations to government, both at a national and at a regional and local level, and also to elected politicians and others, aimed at removing policy impediments to water freight, and to ensure as conducive an environment as possible for the sector.

There are particular challenges in planning policy. We will work with government, and through Parliamentary and other supporters, to ensure that planning policy does not inhibit the development of water freight. In particular, we will encourage the identification and designation of a strategic waterways network, subject to some planning restrictions which will allow access for water freight.

The interests of the water freight sector extend beyond our sponsor department, DfT. We will seek to encourage a joined-up approach, particularly between DfT, Defra and DCLG, to allow for a holistic approach to promoting water freight.

We also need to work with DfT to address concerns (however well-founded) about freight grants, and to look at opportunities for pilot projects, imaginative ways of securing financing, and the like. Similarly we need to work closely with the Regional Development Agencies, in particular, building on the work already underway with SEEDA, to ensure that their support is secured. There is considerable support available to the industry, and it is important that the water freight sector takes advantage of it all.

Finally, as already mentioned, we will also have a particular focus on coastal and short sea shipping *alongside* (and as important as) inland waterways issues.

Therefore, to fulfil this objective, we will:

- Develop a strategy of engagement with the RDAs;
- Lobby for planning policy which supports, rather than inhibits, water freight;
- Specifically, seek the designation of a strategic waterways network;
- Bring together those with interests in ports and logistics, as well as users, at events *specifically* relating to coastal shipping; and
- Work closely with political audiences to encourage a joined-up approach to the water freight sector (including through consultations, select committee inquiries, direct contact with political audiences, and so on).

Our measurable **targets** are to:

- Ensure that we contact and meet with a minimum of 2 RDAs each year;
- See engagement by government with the notion of a strategic waterways network within the next 12 months; and
- Achieve a higher political profile for water freight (and for Sea and Water), as gauged by our own

measures, by our sponsors, and by opinion-formers.

#### **4. Finance**

Sea and Water continues to be largely dependent on DfT for its funding. We understand that there can be no guarantee of future funding beyond 2009. It would also anyway help us to fulfil our objectives if we were able to increase our funding from other sources.

In part the activities described above, if performed successfully, will attract additional resources. Nevertheless, we must have fund-raising as a proactive goal.

Therefore, to fulfil this objective, we will:

- Continue to look for and seek to secure grant funding from Government, the institutions of the other UK nations, European institutions, regional bodies and others, both on a revenue support and on a project basis;
- Develop a strategy which enables us to pass on some of the risk of our seminar programme, whilst at the same time increasing their appeal and the range of audiences to which they are marketed; and
- Encourage supporters from both within and outside the water freight sector to fund Sea and Water – again, both on an annual subscription and on a project-sponsorship basis.

Our **targets** are to:

- Put in place a funding strategy to develop sponsorship opportunities and greater investment from supporters;
- Specifically ensure that we increase revenues from supporters by £6,000 between 2007 and 2008, and £12,000 between 2008 and 2009;
- Increase net revenues from events by £5,000 each year.

## **Conclusion: reporting back**

It is most important that we measure thoroughly and regularly our progress against these objectives. We will therefore prepare on an annual basis a report setting out details of actions taken and outcomes achieved in each objective area.

This report will be made available to our sponsor (DfT) and to our advisory board. We will consider making it available on our website.

**Gavin Devine**  
**Heather Leggate**  
Directors, Sea and Water

*December 2006*

## Appendix: Summary of objectives, and those activities with target outcomes

Objective	Activities	Target outcome	Timescale
1. Representative industry voice	Strategy to increase number of water freight members	Increase supporters by 5% pa	End 2007
	Continue educational / events programme	Expand and increase events	End 2007
	Work closely with DfT on information flow	Quarterly meetings with DfT	Ongoing
2. Promotion of water freight	Build on existing media programme	Increase in media coverage	End 2007
	Directly lobby key potential users of water freight	30 letters, 10 meetings pa	End 2007
		Hold business briefing event	By April 2007
	Produce and publish case studies making case for water	Minimum of 5 case studies pa	End 2007
3. Lobbying	Develop an RDA engagement programme	Meet minimum of 2 RDAs pa	End 2007
	Promote the policy of a strategic waterways network	See progress within Govt	End 2007
	Lobby and campaign more generally for water freight	Achieve higher profile	End 2007
4. Finance	Increased supporter funding – from water freight sector and also from others, including potential users	Develop new funding strategy	End 2007
		Supporter revenue up by £6K	End 2008
	Increase revenue from events without increased risk	Events revenue up by £5K	End 2007