



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Trade

Directorate E - Neighbouring countries, USA and Canada
USA and Canada

Brussels,
USA and Canada

Meeting Report

Meeting with M. Heinemann - International Marine Certification Institute 23.03.2015

Participants:

██████████ – International Marine Certification Institute (Recreational Craft Certification Industry)

██████████, ██████████ (DG Trade) and ██████████, ██████████ and ██████████ (DG GROW)

- ██████████ raised concerns against the possible mutual recognition of equivalence of the US and EU technical regulations and standards for recreational craft which given the differences in regulation would create an unlevelled playing field:
 - US technical regulations for RD are established by the US Coast Guard - But are less stringent than the system established by the RCD.
 - In the US there are about a dozen SDOs active in this field, while in the EU there are only two.
 - US voluntary standards (around 50) overlap between each other while in the EU we have a consolidated system (78 standards).
 - The US voluntary system is based on standards mostly made by ABYC (American Boat and Yacht Council) and promoted by NMMA (US National Marine Manufacturers Association). These standards have equivalent level of safety to the RCD but are not legally required. However, many manufacturers operating on the US market follow them to avoid problems in case of court disputes if an accident happens.
 - US SDOs are reactive – developing standards following reports on accidents – while EU standards
- In their view recognising the equivalence of these regulatory systems would lead to massive import of less performing boats to the EU. They are in favour of maintaining the status quo. Unless the US would make these voluntary ABYC standards a part of the US official legislation system
- COMM noted that TTIP negotiations do not envisage recognition of equivalence of standards or technical regulations in this area.