

ACS Hosts Two Day Workshop



Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, March 25th, 2015- As part of the initiative “Interconnectivity Improvement to Trade Facilitation and Short-Distance Maritime Transport in the Greater Caribbean,” which seeks to promote trade development in relation to short-distance maritime transport among countries of the Greater Caribbean, the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), with the funding support of the Mexican Government and Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID), hosted two important workshops on March 24th and 25th, geared towards capacity building and knowledge exchange within the Port and Maritime Sector: (Workshop on the Exchange of Information to Improve Terminal Operating Systems (TOS) of Ports) and (Workshop on the Facilitation of Maritime Traffic and Loading and Unloading Movements at Ports, based on FAL Convention 65).

The Workshops gathered participants from Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, Suriname and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The first Workshop examined Terminal Operating Systems, whose primary functions are to manage the processes involved in maritime cargo traffic and in the loading and unloading of vessels, as well as provide overall support for the planning, operation and positioning of port logistics, including human resources, equipment and storage.

Principal activities included presentations by the Facilitators on the major issues affecting port terminals; automation which can result in greater efficiency and competitiveness; the value-added associated with automation and the management of automation at terminals.

The second workshop focused on the FAL Convention 65, particularly how its application supports port development and port efficiency within the Greater Caribbean Region. The Convention facilitates maritime transport by simplifying and minimizing the formalities, data requirements and procedures associated with arrival, stay and departure of ships engaged in international voyage. To this end, it contains standards and recommended practices. Its main contribution lies with the acceptance of a set of models for standardized facilitation forms for ships to fulfill certain reporting formalities when they arrive in or depart from a port. These standardized forms include, inter alia, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) General Declaration, the Cargo Declaration, and the Crew and Passenger Lists, and Dangerous Goods Declaration.

Participants offered interventions on their national situation and exchange information and experiences. They also expressed their satisfaction with the Workshop, stating that it was highly successful and that they learnt useful information on best practices and information knowledge exchange. They further thanked the Government of Mexico for this initiative and hoped that the Association would continue with similar initiatives as they aid in the development of small ports.