

International alliance - independent of steelworks

The official launch of EURANIMI - the European Association of Non-Integrated Steel, Stainless Steel and Metal Importers, Distributors, Traders and Processors – took place in January. Based in Brussels, this newly-founded interest group includes distribution giants such as Damstahl, Voss Edelstahl and Witte Tube + Pipe Systems. The two founders of EURANIMI, Rob Greve and Christophe Lagrange are also well-known names.

By Christopher Papendorf

According to the two founders Rob Greve and Christophe Lagrange, the establishment of EURANIMI was necessary because “the EU has set up numerous international trade barriers in our world of steel, stainless steel and metals in recent years. These include anti-dumping measures, anti-subsidy measures, safeguard measures, post-Brexit tariff quotas and the carbon limit adjustment mechanism, not to mention the customs treatment according to reports from the EU’s European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF). Finding your way through all of these bureaucratic and ever-changing regulations has become an enormous challenge for importers, traders, distributors and manufacturers who operate in an increasingly complex, costly - and worst of all - unpredictable import environment.”

“The goal of EURANIMI is not the aggressive enforcement of our views with legal measures, but the prevention of legal disputes for our members. Therefore, we initially act in an advisory and negotiation function for relevant decision-makers. Together we aim to represent all importers of steel and metals in the EU,” explains Christophe Lagrange.

Coordinating members actions

Previously, Lagrange headed Belmetal, the Belgian association for steel distributors and stockholders, for seven years. For 25 years he worked in the steel and stainless steel market as manager of a Belgian agency company that supplied China with steel and equipment for the steel industry. “The goal of EURANIMI is to coordinate its members’ actions in relation to European import regulations, and in this way improve the competitiveness of European sales and the downstream



Rob Greve: “Finding your way through... ever-changing regulations has become an enormous challenge.”

metal industry,” said Rob Greve. Greve is General Manager of the Royal Dutch Steel Federation and previously worked for the European Commission for seven years. At the European level, there are well-known organisations that work efficiently for steelworks and metal producers’ interests. However, according to Lagrange, many importers have already experienced that they are at a disadvantage at the European level. “Laws and legal decisions are often enforced by lobbies and made in favour of producers or consumers. The ‘essential middle’ - independent importers, dealers, distributors or manufacturers - could not participate loudly enough in the discussions or did not have the financial resources necessary for legal proceedings to turn things to their advantage,” adds Greve. United in this thought, EURANIMI sees itself as an international alliance of different companies - all independent of steelworks or metal producers - and wants to create



Christophe Lagrange: “When a threat is detected, EURANIMI informs all of its members.”

a platform that gives relevance and influence on a European level. “When a threat is detected, EURANIMI informs all of its members. Those who feel concerned will come together and assess the situation under the guidance of legal experts,” said Lagrange. He added; “If members decide to take joint legal or other action, an appropriate strategy will be jointly identified, a provisional budget estimated and a fair cost-sharing agreement will be made within the group concerned. As soon as the appropriate approval has been obtained from each participant, the agreed measures will be implemented. If the provisions are estimated to be too high, each participant will receive a pro-rata refund. If the provisions were too low, the affected group would decide how to proceed.” EURANIMI also distinguishes itself from other associations in that it will not produce a magazine or press material, general market overviews or statistics, or organise events.