



DET KONGELIGE
NÆRINGS- OG HANDELSDEPARTEMENT

*The Royal Ministry of Trade and Industry
The Minister*

Commissioner Neelie Kroes
Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 200
B-1049 Brussels
Belgium

Your ref

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The Spanish Tax Lease system

The Norwegian Shipbuilding industry has for some time expressed its concern regarding the Spanish Tax Lease system. The industry claims that this system creates distortion of competition for European shipyards.

The Norwegian Government finds fair competition for shipping as well as shipyards of utmost importance especially in critical times with financial turmoil.

It is therefore unfortunate if there does exist a scheme which implies subsidies to the Spanish shipyards exceeding the limits set by the EU state aid guidelines. This would in turn create distortion of competition for European shipyards.

I understand there is an ongoing process in the European Commission regarding the Spanish Tax Lease system and that the Community of European Shipyards Associations (CESA) is contributing in the process.

I would be pleased to receive more information about the ongoing process, including possible actions from the European Commission regarding the Spanish Tax Lease system.

Yours sincerely,


Sylvia Brustad