Transas Simulation User Conference: the future is now

August 15, 2013 – Maryland, USA. From July 15 to July 19, more than 250 maritime professionals from 41 countries gathered in Maryland, USA to discuss the Future trends and New Challenges in Maritime Simulation during the Transas Simulation User Conference (Transas SimUC). For the first time ever, the event ran across two venues, giving attendees an opportunity to experience two of the most unique and trend setting Training Centers in the World.

During the first day at the Maritime Institute of Technology and Graduate Studies (MITAGS), the conference focus was, appropriately, on Research and Development applications of simulation and advanced tug operations, with attendees given the opportunity to tour the extensive MITAGS simulation facilities at their leisure, as part of an open house. The series of papers demonstrated not only the growth in simulation research opportunities, but also the extensive, and wide ranging ability of Transas simulators to be applied for research and development studies, as well as in the most advanced tug operations in practice today.

Upon completion of the day one program, the entire conference moved to the Calhoon M.E.B.A. Engineering School (CMES), on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay, in Easton, with a continued program of conference sessions for the remainder of the week. Prior to the event, CMES’s navigational simulation facilities were fully upgraded to meet the latest regulatory requirements. Additionally, upgraded Techsim 5000 classroom and full mission solutions from Transas were delivered to CMES for liquid cargo handling and Engineering personnel training. The upgraded equipment received very positive feedback from the CMES Instructional team, and Transas SimUC attendees who participated in demonstrations on the new equipment.
The SimUC provided a forum for discussions related to the significant growth and interest in engine room and cargo handling simulation. Chuck Eser, Interim director at CMES noted that; "These areas of training are becoming more and more important for us, as regulatory bodies around the world are trying to keep up with the new technologies that are going aboard ships".

The events success was demonstrated by the positive feedback received from attendees who commented favourably on the interesting, educational, relevant and current session content. In addition to the sessions related to R&D, engine room and cargo handling simulation, further sessions examined e-Navigation, ECDIS training, offshore simulation, dynamic positioning, new engineering regulatory training requirements, Search and Rescue, and asymmetric threat response training, with a mix of papers presented by Transas and delegates. A highlight of the program was a live demonstration of cloud based simulation, with a lively and open debate to follow discussing the potential application of these latest technological trends.

In addition to the extensive conference program, the Transas team offered an effective balance between sessions and informal discussions during social events. One of the key benefits of events like this is the opportunity to meet and share professional knowledge and experiences of our peers. Anders Brodje, Senior Research coordinator at the Swedish Maritime Administration commented: "The conference has been absolutely fantastic. Not only the venues as such: both MITAGS and MEBA have been fantastic. I’ve been able to make lots of new contacts which is very good for the project work that I do".

Omer Akdagli, Lecturer at the Piri Reis University (Turkey) also shared his point of view: "The conference as a whole has been a success story with the precise planning and the perfect execution. Not only the presentations and the split flow of sessions provided the forum to exchange information and ideas but also the social functions have set the scene for people to get to know each other more closely and have given the opportunity to develop very good relations and friendships. Speaking for myself, from the very beginning I felt as a member of the Transas family".
Neil Bennett, Vice President at Transas USA, who was responsible for the conference in the Americas commented that, "We were thrilled by the response to this event, honored that so many of our friends in the industry participated, and extremely pleased that we were able to fill their valuable time with a stimulating conference program. As we reflect on this event, I believe we have all benefited from the experience in many ways, and importantly, Transas is better equipped to support our users to meet the extensive challenges they face in maritime simulation and training in the future".