

Looking back over 2025

By ELEONORA MODDE,
FONASBA General Manager

The 2025 year saw continued increases in FONASBA membership, as both national associations and private-sector shipping companies sought to join a federation that is increasingly recognised for its professionalism, influence and global reach.

We are happy to report a +13% in our overall membership!

Our leadership has placed great emphasis on broadening engagement through the new Extended Leadership Network, introduced earlier this year. The leadership teams within this structure—representing Agency, Shipbroking, Education & Quality looked deep at key areas such as : best practice, regional development, digitalisation, and membership matters—have already begun contributing to a wider and more agile operational capacity. As FONASBA grows organically, its new and well-structured leadership ensures the federation remains responsive to members’ needs and capable of delivering greater value across regions.

Key Events and Outreach Activities

2025 has featured a full calendar of initiatives designed to inform, connect and support our worldwide membership. Highlights include:

ICS Hong Kong Summit

The International Chamber of Shipping invited the global shipping community to Hong Kong to discuss rapidly evolving geopolitical and trade-chain challenges. Among the invitees, FONASBA’s President, Fulvio Carlini, represented the perspective of Ship Agents and Ship Brokers during discussions on supply-chain resilience, trade facilitation, and

the maritime industry’s role in the volatile international landscape. The gathering also provided an important opportunity to meet with partners, members, and friends.

Strengthening Our Commitment to Maritime Integrity!

Singapore Outreach Mission 2025

The mission, conducted in October 2025 by Executive Vice President Botond Szalma and Deputy Regional VP for Asia Therry van Vreden, highlighted FONASBA’s growing visibility in Southeast Asia and opened multiple avenues for collaboration.

FONASBA was proudly represented at the Maritime Anti-Corruption Network (MACN) Members Meeting in Singapore, reinforcing our shared commitment to maritime integrity. Corruption remains a persistent challenge in shipping, affecting operational efficiency, raising costs, and creating unfair competition for ship agents and brokers worldwide. By engaging actively with MACN, FONASBA ensures its members have a voice in combating corrupt practices, as well as access to the guidance, tools, and networks needed to operate with integrity.

A key highlight of the MACN meeting was Therry van Vreden representing FONASBA on the Southeast Asia Working Group panel, alongside leaders from BIMCO, the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers Singapore Branch, INTERTANKO, and INTERCARGO. This collaborative platform enables sharing of experiences, development of practical solutions, and the establishment of industry-wide standards that protect our members’ interests.

The Singapore visits also offered the opportunity to celebrate the 200th Anniversary of Ben Line Group, long standing supporters of FONASBA, and to strengthen relationships with several FONASBA partners.

During the visit, the delegation met with the Singapore Shipping Association (SSA)—including Vice President Lakhbir Singh, International Committee Vice Chair Akansha Batura Pai, and Executive Director Loh Chun How—who expressed interest in formal collaboration despite SSA’s structural limitations as a full member. SSA agreed to propose an MOU/partnership framework, following arrangements they have with other regional organisations.

The team also engaged with Pacific Radiance and Sinoda Shipping, reaffirming local member engagement and regional growth potential, as well as with the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers (Singapore Branch) and the Asian Shipowners’ Association (ASA), where cooperation in information-sharing, cross-publication, event sponsorships, and structured partnerships was discussed.

High-level discussions with Kristian Vandermeert, Group CEO of Ben Line, and Mark Cameron of Ardmore Shipping further reinforced Singapore’s strategic importance for FONASBA to look at Singapore as the Asia region regional hub.

We are thrilled to announce that the 2026 Annual General meeting of FONASBA in 2026 will take place in Japan, Tokyo, Japan, starting from 11th October.

All the contacts in our network confirmed their interest and willingness to contribute keynote papers at the 2026 Annual Meeting in Tokyo.



The mission underscored FONASBA's commitment to strengthening its profile and influence in Asia while advancing the cause of integrity and best practice across the global maritime sector.

EMSWe Membership Webinar

FONASBA hosted a well-attended online seminar delivered in cooperation with EMSA and Magellan Circle, on developments surrounding the European Maritime Single Window environment (EMSWe). The session provided clarity on implementation timelines, technical requirements, and the operational impacts for ship agents and brokers—an area where FONASBA continues to advocate strongly for harmonisation and efficiency.

Annual Meeting in Istanbul

The FONASBA Annual Meeting, was held from 14–18 October 2025 and was one of the most memorable to date. Preparations intensified throughout the year, including a mid-year visit to Türkiye to meet with our hosts: the Turkish Chamber of Shipping, the Maritime Association of Shipowners and Agents and GBD Turkish Shipbrokers. Their efforts, combined with the enthusiasm of our membership, revealed a record-breaking turnout.

The programme was packed with plenary sessions on ship agency, ship broking, regional developments, education, digitalisation and quality, as well as a dedicated session for local industry issues. Istanbul—at the crossroads of global trade—provided an ideal setting for what was an insightful and productive gathering.

Supporting the Next Generation: 2025 Young Agent & Broker Award (YABA)

The Young Agent and Broker Award continues to exceed expectations. In 2025 we again doubled the number of submissions, with entries arriving from a wider range of countries and covering increasingly sophisticated themes—digital transformation, AI in shipping operations, sustainability, inclusion, and the operational challenges of emerging markets.

Generous sponsorship from our partners has strengthened the Award's profile and allowed us to expand the range of benefits offered to finalists. As a programme dedicated to nurturing the future leaders of maritime agency and broking, YABA has become a cornerstone of FONASBA's mission and identity.

Representing the Agency and Broking Community Worldwide

As ever, FONASBA remains active at the international level through participation in major forums, working groups and regulatory processes. Our representatives have contributed throughout the year to high-level discussions on port security, illicit cargo movements, digitalisation and compliance frameworks. Collaboration with partners such as ICS, BIMCO, WSC, WWSA, the Mission to Seafarers, and recognised experts across the sector continues to enhance the depth and relevance of our policy work.

Our Federation's growing recognition has also been reflected within the Secretariat, which expanded in 2025 with the addition of a new staff member working alongside the General Manager. This investment directly

supports our objective to deliver a more comprehensive range of services to our members, reflecting the increasing scale and importance of FONASBA within the industry.

Looking Ahead

As we approach the close of a productive and forward-looking year, FONASBA looks at 2026 with renewed confidence. Our Federation is growing—structurally, geographically, and in reputation. Our voice is being heard at the international level. And with strengthened leadership, expanding networks, and a global membership committed to excellence, FONASBA is well placed to continue shaping the future of ship agency and broking.

As always, this is only a summary of the many actions undertaken on behalf of our global community. We extend our sincere thanks to all our members who have travelled, advocated, organised, contributed and represented FONASBA throughout the year. We look forward to meeting many of you in Tokyo in October 2026 for our Annual General Meeting, and to continuing our shared work throughout the new year and beyond. ▲

