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TradeLens eBL: the new electronic system approved by the International Group of P&I Clubs

On 24 March 2021, the International Group of P&I Clubs officially approved the TradeLens eBL system, a digital supply chain system that provides a process for the issue, transfer and surrender of original bills of lading.

Prior to this, six other electronic systems have already been approved by the Group: essdocs, Bolero International Ltd, E-Title, edoxOnline, CargoX and Wave.

TradeLens eBL has been jointly developed by Maersk and IBM and allows carriers to digitally issue the bill of lading in the form of a structured document. The issuance is recorded, identified and registered on the TradeLens blockchain and, once ready, can be transferred instantly. The use of the blockchain, i.e. the electronic ledger, therefore allows traders to store all details of goods

shipments throughout the transport chain. It also allows traders to view real-time information on the arrival time of the shipment, customs documents, commercial invoices, etc. Traditionally, this exchange of information was done via EDI (Electronic Data Interchange), a technology not capable of providing real-time information.

TradeLens eBL therefore introduces an innovative solution to increase electronic collaboration between the different parties involved in international trade, fulfilling the function of providing proof of the transport contract and confirming receipt of the goods.

All this is done without the use of paper documents, so that the transfer of title to the goods can take place efficiently and in real time.



Genova

Via XX Settembre, 14/17 16121 Genova Tel. +39 010 586841

Milano

Via Agnello, 6/1 20121 Milano Tel. +39 02 36576390

mail@mordiglia.it www.mordiglia.it

Venezia

San Polo 720 30125 Venezia Tel. +39 041 2412865