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The NAVIG8 CONSTELLATION assisted by the Port Towage Amsterdam operated tug SATURNUS inbound for the IJmuiden Locks Photo: Patrick Deenik ©
IN MEMORIAM

Ik ontving het droeve bericht dat Bootsman 

GERRIT DOELMAN

Op 82 jarige leeftijd onverwachts is overleden.

Namens alle lezers wens ik zijn kinderen en familie veel kracht toe in deze moeilijke tijd

***** GERRIT, RUST ZACHT*****
Your feedback is important to me so please drop me an email if you have any photos / articles that may be of interest to the maritime interested people at sea and ashore
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EVENTS, INCIDENTS & OPERATIONS

The EEMS COBALT passing Barendrecht  Photo: Paul Gerdes (c)
Stella Maris Supports Seafarers Facing Unseen Crisis At Christmas

While most businesses and companies have started winding down operations in preparation for the Christmas holidays, global maritime charity Stella Maris (Apostleship of the Sea) will be busy supporting the many seafarers who face unseen difficulties this time of year. The organization’s port chaplains and ship visitors in Great Britain and around the world are working through Christmas to ensure that crew members, and particularly those going through crises, receive vital pastoral and practical support. In one recent case, Stella Maris stepped in to help the Kenyan crew of a vessel who lacked food and water and had received death threats from the ship’s owner. The charity arranged with the local church for the crew to be visited and is working with colleagues to get the situation resolved. “This will be a hugely stressful time for not only the crew but for their families back home too. Christmas can be a lonely time for many seafarers, without family around, but for those caught up in such awful circumstances, the effect upon their mental wellbeing is huge,” said Martin Foley, Stella Maris European Regional...
Coordinator. Last week, a Stella Maris chaplain in Southern Africa learnt about a fishing vessel that was arrested in port with six seafarers on board who are without sufficient food and water. They have also not been paid their wages for a few months now. The local Stella Maris team intervened, providing emergency food and water supplies. One of the seafarers was shivering from the cold so the chaplain gave him his own warm jacket for which he was really grateful to have. Stella Maris continues to monitor the situation. Martin said, “Sadly, situations like these are not unfamiliar with Stella Maris port chaplains and ship visitors, as the charity’s Life at Sea Report – the second edition of which will be published next year – has shown.” He added, “The sight of a Stella Maris port chaplain or ship visitor going on board a ship is a welcome one for many seafarers, especially at this time of year when we ensure that seafarers are not forgotten and show our appreciation for the sacrifices they make throughout the year.”

The Boskalis CSD HELIOS at work in the early morning hours. photo: Dirk van Uitert ©

**The LPG Outlook**

By: Inderpreet Walia

HEALTHY market fundamentals point to a stronger 2020 for liquefied petroleum gas shipping, with rising cargo volumes combined with new areas of demand to largely absorb fleet supply growth. While oil price uncertainty, trade tensions and sanctions have affected trade flows on some longer-haul routes, the underlying availability of LPG — especially US supply — and demand growth in Asia, remain the key drivers of seaborne trade.

The biggest change for the sector, perhaps, was the shift in trade patterns due to the Sino-US trade dispute. The spot and short-term market has been growing rapidly amid contract renegotiation and swaps by Asian consumers and Arabian Gulf traders re-letting tonnage.

New importing nations are emerging owing to their expanding domestic and industrial consumption, while the prospects relating to Chinese and Indian imports remain promising.
The US-Asia trade is booming as America turns into the world's largest LPG exporter producing around 2.2m barrels per day in 2018 to around 2.4m bpd in 2019 with 2020 forecasts at 2.6m bpd, according to the Short-Term Energy Outlook released by Energy Information Administration. Overall, the outlook for global seaborne LPG volumes remains positive, with Lloyd's List Intelligence projecting an increase to 132m tonnes in 2019, 8.7% higher as compared with the previous year and a further 9% year-on-year increase to 144m tonnes in 2020. With about 46 new LPG carriers on the current orderbook for 2020, there is still a chance of the market being oversupplied, but a lot depends on how many new US LPG export terminals come online and how demand shapes up. Optimistic voices suggest that freight rates would be marginally higher in 2020 as compared with this year, due to increased demand for larger vessels for long-haul voyages from the US and the expected increase in bunker expenses. Norwegian brokerage Fearnleys expects spot rates for 2020 to be about $45,000 per day, while Gibson shipbrokers estimates US spot to be at premiums probably about $110,000 a day. Even as sentiment is veering towards an improvement in the fortunes of owners as 2020 rolls on, those often-unexpected outages, like the ones witnessed this year, still loom large in many minds. As a fuel, LPG still faces challenges. However, the demand for LPG as bunker is likely to expand mainly due to environmental regulations and tighter climate regulations. Fearnley's believes that most of the newbuild orders in the segment will use LPG as marine fuel.

**Demand delight**

Chinese LPG imports still form the backbone of the global demand equation, mainly due to cooking fuel. China's LPG imports increased by 4.8% year on year in the first 11 months of 2019, to 20.5m tonnes. Indian refiners' in the January-November period were 17.4m tonnes, significantly up by 8.5% as compared with the year before, data from Banchero Costa research shows. China has eight PDH plants in operation at present. These consume 5.5m tonnes per annum of LPG. With three to four new PDH plants coming online next year and about the same number in 2021, China would require another 6m tonnes of LPG in the coming years, senior analyst at Fearnleys Martin Kjendlie said. Indian demand for LPG will continue to grow because LPG is substituting biomass as a household fuel as the country's rural population urbanises by the millions every year. Key new destinations for LPG carriers include other developing economies of Asia such as Bangladesh, Vietnam and the Philippines. These are projected to boost LPG demand in the coming years. Drewry expects LPG demand in Asia to grow significantly, at a 5% compounded annual growth rate between 2019 and 2024.

**Trade war**

Chinese LPG imports took a hit after the onset of the US-China trade war when Beijing imposed tariffs of 25% on US LPG. As a result, US-China LPG trade slumped from 1.6m tonnes in 2018 to negligible figures in 2019, Drewry data shows. To fill in the gap, China increased its LPG imports from other regions such as the Middle East, Africa, Canada, Malaysia and Australia. US exports were shipped to South Korea and Japan instead. "While the LPG business has reacted to the US-China tariff dispute and has efficiently handled cargoes through swaps and diverting US tonnes to likes of India; traders with Arabian Gulf tonnes have re-let tonnage and sold free on-board cargoes to China," Gibson's Singapore director Michael Hickey told Lloyd's List. Still, "we are reaching a point where I believe there is less and less room to do so," he added. "Therefore, given the rise in the size of Chinese imports predicted in 2020 and the lack of any sizable new supplies outside US, it seems impossible to meet demand in China without some tonnes from the US being imported directly." Additionally, China has also been importing LPG cargoes from Iran, despite the US sanctions on the latter. Drewry's senior research analyst Aman Sud agreed that "LPG trade between Iran and China will decline in the fourth quarter of 2019 due to increased maritime surveillance, US sanctions on Chinese vessels trading with Iran and maintenance at Iranian refineries." He qualified this by saying that Iran has increased its LPG exports through its land borders to Afghanistan and Pakistan at prices much lower than the Saudi benchmark. In September 2019, China also bought propane cargoes from the North Sea region. This was triggered by the price arbitrage between Asia and Europe. If the US and China cool off their trade spat, US cargoes will once again supply Chinese demand, thus reducing demand from the Middle East, with a corresponding drop in US-Japan trade, MSI director Stuart Nicoll said. "This will mean that the net impact might be relatively minor on the tonne-mile demand." Instead, if US gas were to be pushed back into the Atlantic, the impact would clearly be negative, Mr Nicoll asserted.

**US to step up**

US cargoes look set to play a larger role in the coming year as increased exports continue to generate LPG shipping demand. EIA data suggests that US LPG exports have increased from less than 1.2m barrels per day in 2018 to more than 1.3m barrels per day in 2019. If fresh cargoes emerge as scheduled, it is clearly a development that will help soak up tonnage in the LPG shipping market. However, the US LPG growth story could face infrastructural bottlenecks, as the pace of expansion in installed export terminal capacity has lagged the rate of growth in export volumes. The installed LPG export capacity in the US stood at just over 1.4m barrels per day at the end of November 2019, with aggregate capacity utilisation for the year expected to be about 95%. By the third quarter next year, Enterprise could add 260,000 barrels a day of additional export capacity, while Targa is also expected to add 265,000 barrels per day to its Galena Park facility.
About 40,000 barrels per day of export capacity at the Freeport terminal could also be added by P66 in the second quarter of 2020. As a result, installed LPG export capacity in the US is expected to increase to about 1.8m bpd by the end of next year. Whether the export terminals become operational in their stipulated time remains to be seen, but there can be no denying that delays can cause the supply situation to be very tight due to the surging Asian demand.

### Fleet expansion

The LPG carrier fleet will continue to rack up growth in 2020, according to most projections, even as surplus tonnage is likely to be absorbed by rising vessel demand. The very large gas carrier fleet, which accounts for about two-thirds of the global LPG fleet capacity and ships about three-fourths of the global LPG seaborne trade volume, comprised 283 vessels at the end of November 2019, up from 265 vessels at end of 2018. With no vessels scheduled for delivery during the rest of 2019, the VLGC fleet is expected to remain unchanged at the same level, without accounting for future scrapping, by the end of 2019. However, the latest data from Fernley’s show that the fleet is expected to grow by 21 ships in 2020. We believe volume growth alone will absorb much of this addition,” Mr Kjendlie conceded. “With the current high freight rates, we do not foresee any premature scrappings for the year, however, the first special survey due on the chunk of vessels that were delivered in 2015 (35 vessels) will certainly take out some capacity and keep supply tight.” That will also be the case in 2021, he said, pointing out that a few scrubber retrofits and dual fuel retrofits will also keep a check on vessel supply, potentially lifting spot freight rates. The current orderbook (the right-hand side of the orange line in the graph above) stands at 11.4m m3, which is equivalent to a massive 33% of the current fleet, Lloyd’s List Intelligence data shows. Deliveries in 2019-2023 will be 318 carriers in comparison the deliveries in 2014-2018 totalled 343 vessels.

### Panama Canal

Increasing US exports, a major share of which ends up in the Indian subcontinent and South East Asia, resulted in more LPG vessels transiting through the new locks in the Panama Canal in 2019. US exports are expected to rise further in 2020, with Asia expected to remain the major destination for additional US cargoes. Far East-bound very large gas carriers loading from the US terminals are expected to rely more on the Panama Canal for a shorter voyage time. But, in an increasingly common theme, congestion issues had some severe impacts on LPG shipments this year. Apart from reserving slots for the transit and paying a fee for the same, LPG vessels must compete with other vessels, which usually get preference. “The Panama Authority has always operated on preference policy favouring container vessels, cruise liners and liquefied natural gas vessels,” Mr Hickey noted. “LPG are supposedly lower down the rankings.” As the US looks to send cargoes to Asia through the canal, ships hauling LPG are expected to face congestion. However, this will also depend on the weather, especially delays caused by fog, which causes vessels to miss loading dates. LPG vessels had to wait for around four-to-six days on quite a few occasions in 2019 when they missed their reserved slots, or if they did not have any slots reserved. To add to the woes, the new locks suffered from drought and water shortage issues on a few occasions in 2019. With the expected rise in LNG production and exports from the US, competition with LNG carriers could further rise in the future. Source: Lloyd'slist
production unit as part of ongoing tests at the field. But since the field started operating again, almost 43,000 b/d have been added to the country’s production, which now is estimated to stand close to 2.97 million b/d. Year-on-year growth surpassed 13% in October.

Eight new FPSOs have been installed since early 2018, each of which has a capacity to produce at least 150,000 b/d. More wells are scheduled to get connected to the installed FPSOs in the coming months, including the FPSO P-68 that pumped first oil from the Berbigao Field in early November.

The country could prove to become the biggest headache for OPEC, since growth of US production is set to slow down. Together with Norway and Guyana, Brazil will be the main driver of global oil production growth in 2020.

Focusing on crude oil shipments, data by IHS Markit Commodities at Sea suggests that loadings of Brazilian crude oil further increased last month, having reached 1.69 million b/d in November, up more than 8% month-on-month and around a third more than last year. The trend followed since May 2019 has been quite clear, with 1.23 million b/d shipped on average since early 2019, compared to shipments of one million b/d observed in 2018.

Flows to China continue dominating the country’s exports, but volumes stand only close to 800,000 b/d, marginally lower than a year ago. However, average flows to China in 2019 have reached 625,000 b/d, much higher than the average of 523,000 b/d shipped in 2018. Flows to other Asian countries has more than doubled since early 2019, with Brazil having developed floating storage facilities in South East Asia. Flows to South East Asia have been close to 200,000 b/d over the last couple of months. Meanwhile, it has become clear that there is high interest for some Brazilian grades in the US, especially since August, while Europe has been absorbing around 7% of the country’s shipments. Source: IHS Markit

The Damen shipyards built Shoalbuster 2308 MTS VALOUR passing the Baanhoek Bridge. Photo: Arie Boer (c)
The Nicaragua registered tug \textbf{AZARAS H. PALLAIS} escorted the oil/chemical tanker \textbf{MARLIN AMBER} into the port of Corinto. Her IMO nr is 7362902 and was built in 1974. \textbf{Photo: Aart van Essen ©}

**Nigeria inks major LNG expansion with oil majors**

\textbf{By: Camillus Eboh, Libby George}

Nigeria signed a major gas expansion deal on Friday, a much-needed collaboration with oil majors that Nigeria LNG said would boost its liquefied natural gas output by more than 30%. The agreement marks a moment of amity with international oil majors, even as a tax dispute and a new law increasing the government’s take on deepwater oil production have irked some companies. The final investment decision on the Train 7 processing unit at the Bonny Island plant was signed by Nigeria LNG partners state-run Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Eni, Total and Royal Dutch Shell in Abuja. The new train is expected to boost output by 35% to 30 million tonnes per year, NLNG said in a statement, and will arrest a decline in Nigeria’s LNG output. NLNG operates six LNG processing units, known as trains, on Bonny Island. The train 7 project has been delayed for several years. A previous deadline for a final investment decision in the fourth quarter of 2018 was not met. The west African country is rich in oil and gas but has been struggling to boost its output of both resources. Its declining LNG production last year pushed it down to the world’s fifth largest producer, with the United States taking its place at number four. Total, Chevron and ExxonMobil are trying to pare back some Nigerian assets as they focus on projects elsewhere, including U.S. shale. Shell has also sold onshore assets in the country and has discussed further divestment. NNPC Group Managing Director Mele Kyari said Nigeria’s President Muhammadu Buhari has directed NLNG to push forward to Train 12, and that they were on course to do so. “It also signifies that there is renewed confidence over international investors, particularly our partners which we have known for a long time, to still agree to put money back into this country,” Kyari said.

He added the project was expected to generate $20 billion in net revenue for the government and create some 10,000 direct jobs. Earlier this month, NLNG signed 20-year supply agreements with Shell, Eni and Nigerian oil company Oando to feed the Train 7 project. Commodities trader Vitol also signed a 10-year deal with NLNG earlier this month to buy 500,000 tonnes of LNG per year from other trains. \textit{Source: Reuters Reporting by Camillus Eboh in Abuja and Libby George in Lagos, Additional reporting by Julia Payne in London; editing by Jason Neely and Emelia Sithole-Matarise}

**Wison Offshore & Marine begins construction of Arctic LNG 2 project**

\textit{Published by David Rowlands, Editor}

Wison Offshore & Marine (WOM) has announced that the fabrication of the Arctic LNG 2 project began in Zhoushan Yard on 29 November 2019. The module fabrication contract was awarded by Technip France S.A., a wholly-owned subsidiary of
TechnipFMC. The project consists of three 6.6 million tpy LNG trains. According to the statement, WOM’s work scope is engineering, procurement, fabrication and commissioning of modules in train one with a total weight of 48 000 metric t. With continuous support from Novatek (the client of the project) and TechnipFMC, as well as by using detailed planning, WOM claims that it achieved the first cutting milestone ahead of schedule, which may ultimately lead to time and cost savings in the project execution. An Wenxin, Chief Operating Officer of WOM, said: “Wison Offshore & Marine is committed to delivering innovative monetisation solutions across LNG value chain and high-quality onshore and offshore module construction services for the global energy industry, and providing customers with integrated EPCIC and operation services that meet the highest international quality and safety standards.” Source: LNG industry

The first 2 Island Class vessels for BC Ferries have officially entered the waters of the Pacific Ocean. The hybrid electric ferries recently cleared the Panama Canal & are now on their way to Point Hope Maritime in Victoria. 4 more Island Class vessels will be joining the fleet by 2022.

Yacht lost in Solway Firth

By Melissa Major

Workington RNLI were called to help search for a yacht lost in the Solway Firth in an eight-hour operation.

A helicopter and RNLI crews from Ramsey in the Isle of Man and Kirkcudbright was also involved in the operation on Friday night. Workington RNLI was alerted by HM Coastguard in Belfast at 4pm that a 25ft yacht, which had left Maryport heading towards the southern coast of the county, was lost. The yacht had one crew member, a man, who had left Maryport earlier that morning and thought he was around 15 miles off the coast of Workington. The Shannon class Dorothy May White was launched and while en route, the Coastguard requested that Ramsey RNLI and the Coastguard rescue helicopter 199 from Prestwick to help locate the yacht.
yacht. Workington RNLI reached the scene at around 5pm and managed to speak to the man via a mobile phone. Workington’s crew directed the helicopter until the yacht was sited five miles south of Burrow Head in southwest Scotland. The Dorothy May White reached the yacht at 5.45pm and the helicopter and Ramsey lifeboat were stood down. The occupant was safe and well and the lifeboat began to tow the yacht to Whitehaven. But the yacht lost propulsion and weather conditions meant they had to divert to Kirkcudbright. The RNLI crew there was due to rendezvous with Workington at around 8pm, in the mouth of river behind Little Ross lighthouse. Low water levels meant this proved impossible and the Workington crew had to wait until 9pm then meet with the local Coastguard teams at the town’s quay, where the yachtsman was transferred and assessed. source: newsandstar

The Al DAnova moored at Tenerife Photo: Ko Rusman ©

Takoradi Port traffic grows by 21 per cent

The Takoradi Port this year recorded a total port traffic of 9.9 million metric tons as against 8.2 million metric tons last year, representing 21 per cent increase in total port traffic. It also recorded a rise of 2.2 million metric tons in exports, representing a 42 per cent. Captain Ebenezer Afadzi, the Director of Takoradi Port, made this known at a press soiree organised by the port management in Takoradi to interact, inform and educate stakeholders about development of the port.

Despite the positive total port traffic, he said, a decrease of 13 per cent was recorded in imports, 21 per cent decrease in transshipment and 26 per cent in transit, but added that, it was only exports that registered an increase of 43 per cent. He indicated that vessels’ calls to the port also decreased by 206 from 1,712 in 2018 to 1,506 this year. According to him, despite the increase in commercial vessel calls from 645 in 2018 to 743 this year, oil supply vessel calls decreased from 1,067 calls to 793 this year. However, he was hopeful the situation was set to change in the coming year since a lot of activities were expected in the oil and gas field in 2020. On the Takoradi Port expansion programme, Captain Afadzi said it achieved significant milestones under various projects and development. Under the “New Bulk Jetty,” he said the construction of 800 m quay wall was completed and installed with 48 fenders and 28 bollards, and that discussions were on course to ensure the installation of a 3,000mt/hr capacity conveyor system to ensure efficient service delivery. He said in August this year, the first quay block was positioned to signal commencement of work on new multipurpose container terminal and that all things being equal 600 metres of the quay wall would be completed in November 2020. On the “New Oil Jetty,” Captain Afadzi said, so far, 95 per cent of the first phase of the 300 meter -14 Chat Datum facility were completed. Details of completed works include; the installation of 71 foundation piles, five loading arms and the mounting of seven Dolphins with cat ways between them. The second phase of the New Oil Jetty project, which was ongoing involved the installation of a fire fighting system, pigging system, heat tracing line and metering. It would be operational by the end of the first quarter of 2020, he said. “Definitely, the completion of this new oil jetty will mean efficiency-gains as bigger vessels with larger volumes will enjoy quick turnaround,” Captain Afadzi added. He said a 10,000sqm warehouse was being constructed by BAJ Freight and Logistics and that when completed it would help facilitate the oil/gas operations through the Port. The construction of a New Civil and Electrical Engineering Office complex was 99 per cent, he said, and that it would be handed over to the GPHA by the end of first quarter 2020.
The GPHA is in discussion with private partners Redsea Gateway Terminal Service for the development of the oil and gas hub. The contract would involve the reclamation of 28 acres of land at the former Cocoa Wharf, construction of 550m quay wall with berth pockets dredged to 9m. According to Captain Afadzi, the first phase would involve the reclamation of 28 acres and the construction and dredging of a 350 quay wall to service oil supply vessels, which would take 23 Months to complete. The reclamation of the stretch of land from New Takoradi end of the Port to the Naval Base in Sekondi to be used for Petrochemical industry related activities would pave the way for new opportunities to attract more investors/investment into the enclave.

“When reclaimed the land can be used for large tank farms for gas to be tapped and stored for LPG and Butane,” Captain Afadzi said. Already, about four companies have expressed interest in partnering GPHA for the development of that stretch of land to support the planned New Takoradi oil refinery and other petrochemical related activities. Notwithstanding, the Captain the port was saddled with bad access road to the New Bulk Jetty, the installation and operation of the fumigation facility in the port and the recent port tariffs. Source: GNA

The Marshal is flagged oil/chemical tanker **MARLIN AMBER** built in 2015 with a dwt of 49,999 t and imo nr 9697210, going into the port of Corinto (Nicaragua) early morning to receive her cargo. **Photo: Aart van Essen (c)**

**Adani Ports acquires 40.25 per cent stake in Snowman Logistics**

Adani Ports and SEZ Ltd (APSEZ) has ventured into cold chain logistics business by acquiring a 40.25 per cent stake in Bengaluru-based Snowman Logistics for Rs 296 crore. The price of the deal was at Rs 44 per share, a 3.2 per cent premium to the market price of December 27, and a 12 per cent premium to the 60-day volume-weighted average price (VWAP). This will trigger an open offer of 26 per cent in Snowman Logistics’ shares, sources close to the development told BusinessLine. The acquisition was made through APSEZ’s wholly-owned subsidiary, Adani Logistics. The company has acquired the stake from Snowman Logistics’ parent company, Gateway Distriparks, they added. Source: The Hindu Business Line

**Navigation season at Sakhalin based Port of Shakhtersk closed as of Jan 1, 2020**

Acting Harourmaster Rustam Abdullin press office announced that due to a sudden drop in air temperature and gradual front, to the beginning of ice formation at the Sakhalin based Port of Shakhtyorsk, navigation to / from the harbour will be closed as of midnight January 1, 2020. The port will accessible once the ice drift ends, the Harbourmaster’s order reads.
Shakhtersk seaport is located on the west coast of Sakhalin Island, in the central part of the Tatar Strait in Gavrilova Bay. The port includes three marine terminals: Boshnyakovo, Uglegorsk and Krasnogorsk. The port basin is 47.28 sqkm. Annual cargo throughput is more than 2 m tonnes. The port has 28 berths with a total length of 2 113 linear meters. The port Navigation season lasts March through December. Source: portnews

Last Friday the PENGALIA arrived at Dutch Harbour in ’s Gravendeel assisted by the tugs GEPKE & GEPKE III and the boatmen of the KRVE the PENGALIA was moored alongside the laid up TSHD BARENT ZANEN

photo: Teun Berkouwer ©

USCG interdicts lancha, recovers illegal fishing gear in US waters

The U.S. Coast Guard said it has interdicted a lancha and recovered three and a half nautical miles of illegal fishing gear containing 109 entangled fish in federal waters off the coast of South Texas, Christmas Eve. The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Chinook, along with Coast Guard Station South Padre Island Response Boat-Small crews and a HC-144 Ocean Sentry aircrew, interdicted a lancha crew illegally fishing offshore South Texas and spent five hours locating five sets of illegal longline fishing gear containing 109 fish and shark weighing approximately 630 lbs. The Chinook crew returned to recover the illegal long lines and were able to release 41 live red snapper and 13 sharks back into their habitat. Longline fishing is illegal in waters up to 200 nautical miles off the U.S. coast. Longlines are a form of fishing gear that consists o
multiple long lines that are baited with hundreds of hooks, attracting and catching many fish. Longline fishing gear can be harmful and impact the environment when the fishing gear is lost and floats freely throughout the ocean, potentially entangling and killing marine life. Source: portnews

As reported before, Allseas Group stopped working for the North stream 2 Pipeline project and their equipment left the construction site. Pipe supply vessels ALEGRIA and FELICITY were spotted Dec 28th at Rendsburg on their return trip from the Baltic to Rotterdam. Both were built at Ferguson Shipbuilders Ltd. in Glasgow in 1998/99. Photo's: Martin Lochte-Holtgreven ©

Indonesia starts pumping compliant fuel oil

By: HweeHwee Tan

INDONESIA’S national oil company, Pertamina has started producing compliant fuel oil from its Plaju refinery in South Sumatra. The first shipment of the fuel oil complying with the International Maritime Organization’s 0.5% sulphur limit will soon be delivered to the supply point in Balikpapan, East Kalimantan, Reuters reported, citing a company statement. Lloyd’s List understands the Indonesian government wants to bunker ships with a biodiesel fuel blend to comply with the IMO rule taking effect from January 1. Since last September, Jakarta has implemented the mandatory use of a so-called B20 blend with 20% biodiesel content across its transport sector.
Leaning on the low sulphur promise of the B20 blend, the administration of re-elected president, Joko Widodo, has reversed a call made last October to exempt its domestic shipping sector from the IMO 2020 rule. The Jokowi government is planning to raise the mandatory biodiesel content in transport fuels to 30% next year. Source: Lloydslist

Balsa 96 "anchored in front of " Puerto Corinto " / Nicaragua. Photo: Hermann Hazenberg (c)

IMO, IPPC improve collaboration on dealing with cargo contamination

In efforts of dealing with contamination of sea containers and cargoes from pests the International Plant Protection Convention launched a Sea Containers Complementary Action Plan, also establishing a Sea Containers Task Force to supervise the actions. Specifically, IPPC contracting parties agreed to measure the impact of the IMO/ILO/UNECE Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU Code) over a five-year period. They also agreed to increase awareness of pest risks related to sea containers and assist national plant protection organizations (NPPOs) in better managing these risks.

Also, the established force will cooperate with representatives from government, industry and international organizations, to better deal with the situation.

Moreover, a proposal was made to measure the impact of the CTU Code through a joint IPPC/IMO/industry protocol to collect data related to sea container contamination, including monitoring the uptake and implementation of the CTU Code through reports from industry and NPPOs. The proposal aimed at ensuring that cleanliness data collected by the national plant protection organizations (NPPOs) is complemented by data collected by industry. In the meantime, during IMO’s CCC 6, Ms Ketevan Lomsadze, IPPC Implementation Facilitation Officer, presented the Sea Containers Task Force (SCTF)
proposal to include cleanliness questions among the selection criteria for IMO inspection programmes for cargo transport units carrying dangerous goods. The collection of data concerning cleanliness will ease the procedure of measuring pest contamination in CTUs and their cargoes. Additionally, it will also develop a common risk-based approach for dealing with phytosanitary risks associated with sea containers and cargoes. Source: safety4sea

The MOL TRIBUTE handling boxes at Rotterdam Maasvlakte photo: Peter Andriessen ©

UK shipping jumps over 40% from 2010 level, study finds

By: David Osler

UK SHIPPING has a turnover £19bn ($25bn), an increase of 41% from 2010, and directly supports 181,350 jobs, according to a new report from the Centre for Economics and Business Research. The research, commissioned by Maritime UK, also highlights the industry’s £6.1bn contribution in gross value added, an increase of 38% on nine years ago, when that figure stood a £4.4bn, and the £927m in tax revenue it generated in 2017. Shipping also plays a vital role in the wider supply chain economy. Through direct, supply chain, and wider spending, it is said to support 682,000 jobs and £45bn in turnover. The findings have been welcomed by Bob Sanguinetti, chief executive of trade association the UK Chamber of Shipping. “We all know what an incredible shipping industry we have in the UK, and now we have the numbers to prove it,” he said. “As we leave the European Union, it is vital we continue to do all we can to support our seafarers and those that work and support the industry so we can seize the opportunities of the future in areas like green technology, automation and digitisation.”

Shipping minister Nusrat Ghani described the maritime industries as the lifeblood of the UK economy, which plays a vital role in our daily lives. “These figures are clear evidence that the sector is going from strength to strength as we remain steadfast in our ambition to continue our global reputation as a great trading nation,” she added.

“Our landmark Maritime 2050 strategy, along with our strong partnerships with industry will help us to ensure this sector continues to flourish for generations to come.” The report found strong evidence that the introduction of tonnage tax in 2000 had a significant positive impact on the level of UK-owned shipping tonnage and its economic contribution in subsequent years. CEBR estimates that without the tonnage tax regime, the shipping industry would have directly contributed just £1.5bn in GVA in 2017, a full £4.6bn shy of the eventual outturn. The wider UK maritime sector, of which shipping is the largest part, facilitates 95% of all UK trade. The maritime industry was found to be larger than both the automotive and aerospace transport industries. The report also reveals that the UK shipping industry is almost twice as productive as the national average in Gross Value Added per job. The UK average is £54,330 per job, with the maritime industry recording £77,214 and shipping £102,589. Source: Lloyd's
Virty Ferries **SAINT JOHN PAUL II** at Pozallo  
*Photo: Jan v Vuuren ©*

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The **PACIFIC MYRA** arriving from Brazil at the Tata Premises in Velsen Noord  
*Photo: Marcel Coster ©*

**Zeesleper de Elbe viert 60-jarig bestaan met herdruk**
De Elbe bestaat dit jaar zestig jaar. Een mooi moment voor een herdruk van het in 2011 uitgebrachte boek over de zeesleper die ooit zonk, maar in de buitenhaven van Maassluis werd gerestaureerd.

door: Sandra Don

De leek kan het zich nauwelijks voorstellen bij het betreden van een van hutten op de Elbe. In een hok van twee bij twee slaap ooit vier bemanningsleden. Zonder verwarming. Zonder uitzicht op zee. ,,Lekker hoor, een jaarjje met vier van die gasten met stinksokken in zo'n ruimte die ook nog eens flink pafden. In de gevangenis hadden ze het beter", grapt Luuk Vroombout. Hij is niet alleen bestuurslid van de Stichting Maritieme Collectie Rijnmond, maar zorgde er mede voor dat de Elbe van de sloop werd gered. ,,Het enige dat het personeel had was een bed en een kast." ,,Maar het is wel de kracht van de Elbe", stelt voorzitter Koos Karssen, die tijdens reizen dikwijls als matroos in de keuken staat. ,,Onze passagiers mogen overal kijken: van de stuurhut tot aan de machinekamer. Dat vinden mensen machtig en dat is het ook."De boot is een van de pareltjes van de stad en een echte bezienswaardigheid

Van woeste zeeën naar rustiger vaarwater. Dat is de ontwikkeling die de Elbe de afgelopen zestig jaar doormaakte. Inmiddels ligt de zeesleper, die ooit zonk, alweer jaren in de buitenhaven van Maassluis. Tientallen vrijwilligers knapten het totaal verwaarloosde schip op. Inmiddels heeft de Elbe 150 reizen gemaakt. Ter ere van haar verjaardag werd een nieuw hoofdstuk aan het boek over de Elbe toegevoegd waarin de weg van restauratie naar exploitatie wordt beschreven. Dat vernieuwde boek werd onlangs overhandigd aan burgemeester Edo Haan, die het meteen met belangstelling doorbladerde en zich graag liet informeren door de vrijwilligers. ,,De Elbe zit in de haarvaten van de Maassluisse samenleving. Dat merk ik keer op keer als ik bij mensen op bezoek ga vanwege hun huwelijksfeest", vertelt hij. ,,Velen hebben een verleden op of met de Elbe. De boot is een van de pareltjes van de stad en een echte bezienswaardigheid.

Daarom is het fijn dat jullie als vrijwilligers het lek letterlijk boven hebben gekregen en dat de Elbe nu weer vaart. Naar Hamburg, Brest en al die andere plaatsen."

Varen deed het schip in zes jaar tijd al 150 keer. ,,Van feestjes tot aan asverstrooiingen; niks is te gek", aldus Karssen. ,,Daarmee genereren we mooie inkomsten en kunnen we onszelf bedrijven. Daarnaast hebben we met Gerrit Malipaard en Luuk Vroombout twee grote sponsors en voelen we ons gesteund door de gemeente Maassluis." Maar een oud schip vergt onderhoud. Zo wil de stichting volgend jaar het dek vernieuwen. De zoektocht naar het juiste teakhout én de sponsors is al begonnen. Kosten: 3,5 ton. ,,Dat is veel geld, maar het is nodig om het schip in oorspronkelijke staat te behouden. Dus in de stijl van 1959. Dat vergt inzet, maar dat maakt deze boot nu juist zo speciaal, het is iets dat mensen aantrekkt."

De stichting kan een beroep doen op een groep van tachtig vrijwilligers. ,,Dat lijkt veel, maar als we varen hebben we al minimaal acht man nodig", vertelt Roger van der Kraan, coördinator en 'manusje van alles'. ,,Bijzonder is wel dat wij zowel oude als jonge vrijwilligers hebben. Ervaring en nieuwe kennis vullen elkaar hier goed aan." In februari maakt de Elbe zich op voor een audit, waarbij de boot intern en extern wordt gecentreerd. Van der Kraan: ,,Dan worden we als het ware doorgelicht, alles moet in orde zijn. Dat is van groot belang voor de veiligheid van de passagiers, maar ook van ons-zelf." Later in de maand volgt de wintervaartocht. ,,Uiteraard met erwtensoep aan boord én de verkoop van onze Elbe-mutsen voor een warm lichaam en warm hoofd." Bron: Algemeen Dagblad
Philippines records 8 mln foreign tourists in 2019

Tourism is booming in the Philippines with more than eight million visitors coming in 2019, the government said on Saturday. "Breaking the eight-million mark is another milestone to celebrate, as it marks the unprecedented growth of the country's tourism industry," Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat said in a statement. The country's Department of Tourism (DOT) celebrated on Friday the benchmark number of eight million guests, four days before 2019 ends.
The *AIDAvita* visited last Saturday Puerto Princesa City at the Philippine island Palawan

*Photo: Piet Sinke www.maasmonddmaritime.com (c)*

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"The momentous occasion is part of the DOT’s tradition of celebrating the arrival of significant number of tourists following the welcoming of the Philippines’ 5 million-th visitor in 2015," Puyat said. Puyat attributed the historic eight-million mark to a number of factors, especially to the coming of Chinese holidaymakers, the refreshed branding campaign called “It’s More Fun in the Philippines”, and the re-opening of Boracay island resort after a six-month clean up. Puyat said advocating sustainable tourism also improved air connectivity and hosting of big ticket tourism events. It has also helped to promote digital and online marketing, different tourism product portfolios including culinary tourism and farm tourism, healthy private-public partnerships, international accolades and recognitions. The detailed report of visitor arrivals for 2019 will be released early in January next year. The Philippines is hoping to reach its target of 8.2 million foreign tourist arrivals in 2019, a million higher than 2018. China being its second largest tourist origin, the Philippines has welcomed a total of 1,499,524 Chinese tourists in the first 10 months of 2019, increasing 41 percent from the same period in 2018. Every week, more than 300 flights are shuttling between China and the Philippines. According to the Philippines Statistics Authority (PSA), tourism industries contributed 12.7 percent to the Philippine economy in 2018.

*Source: Xinhuanet*

The *AUDAX* outbound from Amsterdam heading for Rotterdam

*Photo: Marcel Coster ©*

**Maritime piracy increases business costs in the Gulf of Guinea**
In early December, the NAVE CONSTELLATION supertanker was hijacked. Pirates boarded the fully loaded ship, stole its oil cargo, and kidnapped 19 members of its crew about 77 nautical miles (143km) from Bonny Island, a loading terminal in Rivers State, Nigeria. While attacks on supertankers are rare, piracy is so common in the Gulf of Guinea that, in its July report, the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) described the passage as "one of the most dangerous shipping routes in the world" and a "world piracy hotspot".

Happy new year 2020 from the crew onboard the CLV NDURANCE

Yet, because it is such a crucial part of the regional economy, ships still sail its waters and assume the increasingly higher costs that come with the threat of maritime piracy. Ninety percent of trade to West Africa comes by sea, according to the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, so maritime security is a crucial factor in the region's economy. IMB records show pirates kidnapped 27 crew members in the first half of 2019 alone, and one in four global piracy incidents in 2018 happened within Nigeria's territorial waters, according to international insurance carrier Allianz Global.

Ideal conditions for pirates

The Gulf of Guinea covers 11,000 square kilometres (4,247sq miles) and stretches from Angola to Senegal. It is one of the world's most important shipping routes for both oil exports from the Niger Delta and consumer goods to and from Central and West Africa, but it is not very well guarded, a combination that creates ideal conditions for piracy. "Congestion at Lagos ports and the lack of other options means that ships are spending a long time queuing, meaning there are a large amount of ships in a relatively small area to target," said Chidi Nwaonu of UK-based security firm, Peccavi Consulting. "Due to that and a lack of naval presence, there is the motive of high financial reward and comparatively low risk of detection or capture." In March, 33 countries came together to carry out maritime security training in the Gulf, and some attendees noted the need for more funding, cooperation, and infrastructure. Under Nigeria's federal system, state governments only have a rudimentary capacity to address piracy and must depend on the federal government to police the waters. "Nigeria doesn't have a plan to tackle this menace yet," Cheta Nwanze, head of research at Lagos-based security and political analysis firm SBM Intelligence, told Al Jazeera. Nwaonu concurred. "Nigeria's navy is the most powerful in the GoG (Gulf of Guinea), but compared to the army and air force, it has been underfunded and neglected." That is proving costly for firms: industry experts say kidnappings at sea have become so common, they have increased the cost of operations. Businesses have to factor in the costs of independent security contractors, extra insurance, and, sometimes, ransom money.

All of it adds up. The economic cost of piracy in West Africa through 2017 was $818.1m - up from $793.7m the year before. Nearly a quarter of that $818.1m was spent contracting maritime security, according to the nonprofit Oceans Beyond Piracy's 2017 State of Maritime Piracy report. Insurance also represents a huge cost. According to Oceans Beyond Piracy's analysis, the total cost of additional war risk area premiums incurred by ships transiting the Gulf was $18.5m in 2017 alone, and 35 percent of ships transiting the area also carried additional kidnap and ransom insurance totalling $20.7m. Insecurity is so rife in the region that global insurance firm Beazley now offers "Gulf of Guinea Piracy Plus," a bespoke insurance plan for maritime crew travelling through the area. The plan provides compensation for illegal vessel seizures and crew kidnappings even in the absence of ransom demands. It tracks insured vessels on a 24-hour basis, but because the risks are so high, it limits claims to $15m. A spokesman for Beazley told Al Jazeera premiums for this type of coverage are decided on a case-by-case basis, however, because the risks are so great. In June 2019, things reached a crescendo when India's Directorate General of Shipping issued a restriction on all Indian nationals in the maritime industry, banning them from working in vessels in Nigeria and the Gulf of Guinea at large. That India would institute such a ban underscores the extent of the problem because, as a group, Indian nationals make up one of the largest contingents of sailors in the region. "India is the second-largest contributor of sailors to the international marine fleet after the Philippines, and Nigeria's largest trading partner for our oil exports," explained
Nwanze. And while the ban may be one of the clearest acknowledgements of maritime piracy in the region, it does not appear to be enough of a disincentive for Indians looking for work on such a lucrative shipping route. A few weeks after the ban went into effect, five Indian sailors were rescued from a hijacked ship. All but one of Nave Constellation's kidnapped sailors were Indian. A joint statement released by the vessel owner, Navios Maritime Acquisition Corporation, and manager, Anglo-Eastern Tanker Management confirms the crewmen were released three weeks after the supertanker was hijacked. "Since the attack, the prime concern has been the safety, well-being and early return of the seafarers taken by the pirate gang. Owners and managers are now delighted to report that on December 21 all of those taken were released and are now safe and undergoing medical tests and debriefing, following which they will return to their loved ones at home," the statement read. And yet, because the risks of maritime piracy are still so great, the companies declined to offer or confirm operational details of the kidnapping. Source: Al Jazeera News

Master plan for Sri Lanka's Hambantota Port on the horizon, says HIPS CEO

Saturday, 28 December 2019 | 00:00

A master plan for developing industries around Sri Lanka's southern Hambantota Port is on the horizon, says Ravindra Jayawickrema, CEO of Hambantota International Port Services (HIPS) which is a subsidiary of port operator Hambantota International Ports Group (HIPG). Jayawickrema told Xinhua in an interview that a master plan for industries, undertaken by an international group of companies who are competent in the field, has almost been finalised. "What is being envisaged is to allocate a certain area of land within the port for various light, heavy and food industries," he said. Once the plan is finalised, the port operator HIPG will go to the market to entice investors to set up export-oriented manufacturing to take advantage of Hambantota Port's free port policy and strategic access to one of the world's busiest shipping lanes located just a few nautical miles south of the port. Along with industrial development, Jayawickrema says the port operator hopes to catch the container overflow from the congested Port of Colombo and develop Hambantota's bunkering and fuel supply operations once the tank farm comes into operation early next year. "Sri Lanka lies between Singapore and Fujairah, two of the largest fuel depots in the world that supply over 60 million tonnes of fuel per year. We are trying to tap into that market to a certain extent," he said.

According to Jayawickrema, shipment volumes at Hambantota have tripled since 2017. The majority of this is trans-shipments, followed by imports. While exports are yet to take off, imports coming through the port have created economic opportunities for locals.

As the majority of Sri Lankan automobile imports arrive through the Hambantota Port, Jayawickrema noted that entrepreneurs have set up vehicle repair yards around the port and created jobs for locals. The port also imports slag and clinker, raw materials used by local cement manufacturers. Dispelling rumors of a “Chinese take-over” in Hambantota, Jayawickrema emphasised that the port is governed by the Sri Lanka Ports Authority Act. "All ships entering the port have to gain approval from the Harbormaster in Colombo. The pilots who bring the ships in and out of the port are direct employees of the Sri Lanka Ports Authority," he said. The Hambantota Port recently celebrated the second anniversary since operations were given on a 99-year lease to HIPG, a joint venture between the China Merchants Port Holdings and the Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA). Source: Xinhua

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20 bodies recovered from DR Congo river after ferry blaze

Several other people suffered burns and a number remain missing

Twenty bodies have been recovered from a river in the Democratic Republic of Congo after a ferry blaze, local officials said Saturday. The boat, which was transporting dozens of passengers as well as goods, caught fire overnight Monday in
Tshimbinda, a village near Tshikapa, the capital of the central province of Kasai. A report by a naval force in charge of waterway security in the DRC said a member of the crew lit a cigarette just as his comrades were filling up the boat with fuel. It said 17 bodies were found on Tuesday and another three on Friday along the Kasai river, a tributary of the Congo River. Several other people suffered burns and a number remain missing, the report said, without giving the total number of people on board the boat at the time of the fire. Lake and river transport is widely used in the vast country as the highway system is poor, but accidents are common, often caused by overloading and the unsafe state of vessels.

Source: Gulfnews

4 FAIRPLAY TUGS ENROUTE LAS PALMAS

Fairplay tugs enroute Las Palmas all tugs have been renamed and brought under Spanish flag

Shipping costs likely to rise as new clean-air rules kick in for vessels on January 1

Within days, new shipping emissions rules from a United Nations agency will kick in, requiring vessels around the world to cut sulfur pollution by 85%. Most analysts agree the regulation will result in higher shipping costs for consumers.
companies have several choices to comply: to purchase expensive onboard equipment to reduce emissions; to burn natural gas; or to purchase cleaner, pricier fuel. Research suggests most of the industry will choose the latter option. “Your fuel costs are probably going to be 50 to 60% higher,” said Jamie Webster, oil analyst at the Boston Consulting Group and fellow at Columbia University’s Center on Global Energy Policy. “Obviously, shippers are going to be interested in trying to pass those costs on until it gets down to those of us at the consumer level.” How much costs will go up is up for debate. A single flat-screen television may cost less than a dollar more to ship, according to one industry estimate. But a week-long cruise may run an additional $150. Another area of impact: diesel prices. Clean fuel for shipping contains diesel as a main ingredient, so shipping companies will soon be competing against other diesel users: railroads, trucking companies and delivery firms such as UPS and FedEx. According to one estimate, diesel costs could rise a dollar a gallon. Industry projections assume the world’s 59,000 ships -- oil tankers, container ships and bulk carriers -- will actually comply with the new rules. “There’s a big question about how much cheating will be involved -- there will certainly be some,” said Rusty Braziel, president of consultancy RBN Energy. “There’s no police force out there enforcing all of this. It’s being essentially enforced by companies that fuel these ships.”

Source: MarketPlace

AHT S Vessel LANKARAN is a 2012 built DP 2 offshore anchor handling tug supply vessel, with over 207 t bollard pull and space for over 5500 meters of 77 mm wire on the main drum, one of the largest AHT S vessels operating in the Caspian Sea region. Specifically built for offshore operations, LANKARAN can tow, transport containerized cargo, bulk materials, act as an ROV platform or lay and/or recover anchors. Due to the large deck area, the vessel can launch or recover anchors whilst at the same time having other anchor line materials on board, such as buoys, chain inserts or additional anchors. Caspian Marine Services Limited has a fleet of 26 vessels operating predominantly in the Caspian Sea region, the fleet is a combination of owned and managed vessels. With a fleet of modern, diverse and technologically advanced vessels we provide a full range of services capable of supporting a wide variety of offshore activities from pipeline handling, platform supply, passenger transfer services, heavy-lift, Flotel service, towage, seabed survey, cargo transportation and diving support.

Photo / text: Gerard Maijntz RSES JOCAP B.V. Baku Azerbaijan

Iron ore deliveries from Tangshan ports more than doubled from week ago

More than 750,000 mt of seaborne iron ore was delivered from Jintang and Caofeidian ports, two major ports at the top steelmaking hub of Tangshan, per day on average this week, showed SMM data. This was up 439,000 mt, or 139% from last week, as Tangshan authorities lifted the ban on port transport and eased production curbs on steel mills after the latest round of heavy smog ended. Seaborne iron ore deliveries from 35 Chinese ports averaged 2.82 million per day in the week ended December 27, up 359,000 mt from the previous week. Despite greater deliveries, stocks of seaborne iron ore across those ports inched up 140,000 mt from a week earlier to 117.04 million mt as of December 27. Steel mills’ restocking activity after the removal of anti-smog measures, is set to offer strong support to port spot iron ore prices. Source: SMM

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In February 2019, the then Defence Minister, Gavin Williamson, announced the plan to rapidly procure vessels around which two 'Littoral Strike Groups' would be formed. Here we look further at the Future Littoral Strike Ship (FLSS) concept and at the design developed by Prevail Partners as one of the potential candidates to meet this requirement. Since the ministerial announcement, there has been limited further official comment about the FLSS concept, although the previous First Sea Lord was enthusiastic about "refreshing our littoral strike credentials” when speaking at RUSI in May 2019. £35M has been allocated from the MoD's Transformation Fund for the development of FLSS although, at the time of writing, no commercial company has received a contract for detailed design work. The concept clearly makes sense but information in the public domain is sketchy. The FLSS has been evolved from an earlier Multi-Role Support Ship (MRSS) pre-concept study undertaken between 2017-2018. Conducted by the MoD's Naval Design Partnering (NDP) team, the MRSS study was tasked to consider options for replacing the LPDs, HMS Albion and HMS Bulwark as well as other amphibious capabilities. The FLSS are intended to be procured quickly to complement the LPDs, rather than replace them. The FLSS is unlikely to fly the White Ensign and may either be operated as a Royal Fleet Auxiliary, or more likely run as a government-chartered vessel. MV Ocean Trader is a merchant ship conversion belonging to the US Military Sea Lift Command and
was perhaps the inspiration for the FLSS. **Ocean Trader** is not painted all-grey and looks like a typical merchant vessel in appearance. Iran also operates the MV **Saviz**, supposedly a general cargo vessel but in fact used as an offshore surveillance and special forces base, recently operating in the Red Sea probably supporting Houthi rebels in Yemen. At times there are advantages to not advertising the military capabilities of a vessel.

Merchant ship conversions can be done rapidly. This is the **MV Baltic Ferry**, one of many British-flagged merchant Ships Taken Up From Trade (STUFT) at very short notice for used during the 1982 Falklands War. Ro-Ro vessel Baltic Ferry was converted in a week with a flight deck welded to her upper deck. FLSS will be much more sophisticated and capable but probably not entirely dissimilar. (Photo: RFA Nostalgia)

MoD thinking appears to be that there will be two ships, both forward-deployed, one based East of Suez and the other covering in the Mediterranean, Atlantic and Baltic as required. The main role of the FLSS will be as a base for special forces operations. The world has seen an increase in groups fighting hybrid conflicts in the so-called ‘grey zone’ below full-scale war. This has been one of the reasons the Royal Marines are transitioning away from operating like infantry to return to their traditional commando and amphibious specialist roles. For the foreseeable future, ‘light footprint’ operations delivered from the sea against terrorist, criminal or extremist groups that threaten UK interests are more likely to be politically acceptable than large scale troop deployments.

Having a low-cost FLSS permanently deployed not far from potential trouble spots offers a deterrent and a tailor-made platform for these operations. Designed to be flexible in the way they are deployed, the FLSS may operate semi-covertly and independently for special forces and commando insertion or for disaster relief work. Alternatively, in higher threat areas the ship could be integrated into a naval task group. Using UAVs and ISR capabilities they may even be able to contribute to the protection of the group. Of course, the FLSS is not limited to low-intensity operations and would be a very useful asset in a more serious conflict by providing an additional amphibious lift for troops and supplies.

The FLSS will have a dual role, also able to perform Humanitarian and Disaster Relief (HADR) missions which could include aid to civilians in the wake of natural disasters, civilian evacuations and medical emergency support. Analysis of the Hospital ship concept (See previous article) reveals it is unlikely the FLSS will be painted white and be used as a dedicated Geneva Convention-compliant hospital ship, except perhaps in a long term major conflict with potential for large numbers of battlefield casualties. Using the FLSS as an ‘aid ship’ is more flexible as it can quickly be reconfigured from offensive operations to HADR in a matter of hours or days. A dedicated hospital ship is more complex to fit out and is subject to very strict regulation of people and equipment it may carry and where it may sail.

Prevail Partners Ltd (PPL) is the first company to go public with its Multi-Role Vessel (MRV) proposal that would meet the FLSS requirement. PPL is a group of British companies with expertise in defence and national security that provide consultancy and bespoke services to industry and government agencies. Both of the founding partners have considerable experience serving in UK Special Forces to senior levels. PPL has assembled a strong consortium of European companies including Siem Industries (ship leasing), Flensburger Schiffbau-Gesellschaft (shipbuilding), Houlder, (naval architecture) Vestdavit (boat davits), Prism Defence (helicopter-ship integration) and Clarksons Platou (shipping support) who have the specialist expertise to deliver and equip the vessels.

The MRV is offered as ‘fitted for but not with’ naval self-defence systems which can be selected by the customer. In this mockup, she carries a relatively heavy armament of 3 Phalanx CIWS. Cannons, mini guns and decoy systems would complete a balanced defensive weapons fit similar to that of Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessels when deployment to higher threat regions. The MRV is based on the FSG 4100 ro-ro ship that is already in commercial service. Four of the original six Point class vessels in service with the MoD were built by FSG to a similar design. The 7,500 tonne DWT vessel uses an efficient hull form that has good seakeeping qualities. Simple twin diesels will propel the ship up to 20 knots with an
endurance of 28 days and 10,000nm. There are about 2,428 lane-meters available for vehicles and the vessel can accommodate an embarked military force of up to 400, although the ship’s core crew requirement would be just 35. The vessel is compliant with SOLAS Passenger Ship Rules, being fitted with davit-launched lifeboats, rescue boats and life rafts.

The MRV can carry the equivalent of 90 C-17 Globemaster aircraft loads of stores and, for example, could get from Plymouth to the Caribbean in under 7 days while transporting its own helicopters, boats and headquarters to enable a substantial operation on arrival. Sockets are provided and power supplies are available for standard TEU containers and refrigerated containers for food storage. The vehicle deck could transport the equivalent of 65 European lorries, 55 military vehicles containing a mix of main battle tanks, armored fighting vehicles, trucks and artillery. Another 1,200 lane meters would be available by using the flight deck and top deck. The stern ramp designed to work with Mexiflotes and facilitates the rapid loading and unloading of wheeled and tracked vehicles up to sea state 2.

Drawing on the expertise of Vestdavit, already and established RN supplier, the 4 main boat bays would be able to embark a wide variety of craft from RIBs to small landing craft (LCVPs). Royal Marine Offshore Raiding Craft (ORC), workboats, and potentially UUVs could all be handled by the sophisticated davits. Royal Marine Offshore Raiding Craft (ORC), workboats, and potentially UUVs could all be handled by the sophisticated davits. The MRV is fitted with a spacious 900 m\(^2\) command centre based on UK Special Forces 1* and OF5/4 Task Force headquarters. Access to the facility can be strictly controlled for secure handling of above secret information. A full suite of communications facilities and antenna arrays can be added subject to customer requirements. The ship is intended to host a variety of unarmed systems for Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) operations.

PPL say their project plan is very well developed and they could even deliver the first ship in basic configuration within a year if the MoD was flexible in its procurement approach. A newly completed 4100 RoRo vessel is alongside in Germany at present and could be fitted out with accommodation block and other modifications at a shipyard in Poland. Given constrained budgets and limited RFA manpower, an attractive option would be to take the ships on a wet-lease charter basis where PPL finance, build, deliver, crew and manage the vessel through its life. Alternatively, on a bare-boat charter, PPL would build the vessel and lease it to the MoD who would be responsible for crewing and maintaining the ships. PPL see the MRV as having export potential for sale to other navies or government organisations. The Hospital/Aid ship version could also meet the requirements of charities and NGOs. Just as RFA Mounts Bay is currently involved in a major disaster relief operation in the Bahamas, a new charity Britannia Maritime Aid, has launched a campaign to build a disaster relief vessel. There is growing momentum and interest in building a UK hospital/aid ship, either through a government DFID/MoD initiative or delivered independently by an NGO. Although the Bay class have a floodable dock and can use the mexeflote to offload in higher sea states, the MRV has several advantages when used in the disaster relief role. The MRV has more than twice the stores and vehicle capacity, can carry lorries and is slightly faster at about 21 knots compared with the 18 knots of the RFA. Aviation facilities are far superior with a large hangar and a helideck that can support high tempo, multi-spot day/night/all-weather flying. The command and communication facilities would also be more capable. The FLSS appears to offer the UK a low cost and flexible way to increase its amphibious capabilities. It could also provide a usefully poised deterrent to asymmetric threats to UK interests, particularly in the Middle East. A
potential achilles heel would be finding enough helicopters to equip the ships on a permanent basis. The UK military’s rotary-wing assets have approximately halved in the last ten years. The FLSS could quickly flex to become the base for humanitarian operations, a requirement that seems to be ever-more frequent. The PPL consortium has put together a very credible solution in the form of the MRV which the MoD should consider carefully, although there will probably be competition from other companies.

**USS ROSS** finished her routine patrol of the Black Sea in accordance with the Montreux Convention. This is the 8th time a U.S. Navy warship has been in the Black Sea in support of the NATO allies and partners.

Heavily laden: the Russian Navy ВМФ Project 775 BSF Black Sea Fleet 197th Landing Ship Brigade’s Ropucha class landing ship **Azov 151** transited Bosphorus en route to Tartus Syria. **Photo : Yörük İşık ©**

**Military chief attends the commissioning ceremony of new vessels**

A ceremony to put naval vessels into service and commemoration of the 72nd Anniversary of Tatmadaw (Navy) took place at No.3 Naval Wharf in Yangon on December 24 and Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services attended and delivered a speech. The eight new navy vessels including a multipurpose support vessel “**MOTTAMA**”, which is built in South Korea, are commissioned on December 24.
The commissioning ceremony of new naval ships held at Thilawa on December 24

The other seven new navy vessels built in Myanmar are a coastal transport vessel “MYITKYNIA”, two 27-meter long fast patrol boats, two 26-meter long offshore tug boats and two 20-meter long inshore patrol boats. The multipurpose support vessel “MOTTAMA” is not a type of combat vessel and it has clinics, operation theaters and doctors to cure the injured soldiers. It also has places to land helicopters and to supply fuel to the helicopters. It can also provide military assistance for army, navy and air force directly and perform emergency patient rescue operation effectively, said its captain. Although the vessel is not a combat type, it can carry 16 armoured vehicles and military trucks. The commissioned vessels saluted the Senior General in single line formation. The navy is possessed a submarine and its commissioning ceremony will be held separately, said Brig-Gen Zaw Min Tun, Secretary of Tatmadaw True News Information Team on December 23. Source: elevenmyanmar

SHIPYARD NEWS

Eastern Delivers 70th Vessel To Florida Marine

BY FRANK MCCORMACK

Eastern Shipbuilding Group Inc., the Panama City, Fla.-based operator of two new construction and repair facilities, announced recently the delivery of the mv. JADEN PASENTINE to Florida Marine Transporters, headquartered in Mandeville, La. Florida Marine (FMT) took delivery of the mv. JADEN PASENTINE on November 19, 2019. Eastern Shipbuilding (ESG) delivered the DPJ II to Florida Marine in August last year. The mv. JADEN PASENTINE, measuring 90 feet by 32 feet with a molded depth of 10 feet, represents the 70th towing vessel in that series built at Eastern Shipbuilding for FMT since early 2006.

The mv. JADEN PASENTINE was built at Eastern’s Allanton shipyard from a design by Boston, Mass.-based Gilbert Associates Inc. The twin screw vessel is powered by two Caterpillar 3512C Tier 3 engines from Louisiana CAT. Those engines are coupled to Twin Disc MG5600 reduction gears with a 6.04:1 ratio from Sewart Supply to produce a total of 3,200 hp. Kennedy Engine Company in Biloxi, Miss., supplied the vessel’s two 99kW John Deere 40445AFM85 generators. This series of towing vessels, along with the relationship between ESG and FMT, stretches back to 2004. Deliveries for the series commenced in February 2006. According to Eastern Shipbuilding, the series is the largest new construction program in U.S. shipbuilding history between a single owner and single shipbuilder involving the same class of towing vessel. Florida Marine Transporters operates one of the largest and youngest fleets of towing vessels and tank barges in
the country, shipping a wide range of cargoes from petrochemicals, chemicals, liquified petroleum gas, crude oil, agricultural liquids and dry cargo. Source: waterwaysjournal.

Diana Shipping announces the sale of a Panamax dry bulk vessel, the m/v Calipso

Diana Shipping Inc., a global shipping company specializing in the ownership of dry bulk vessels, has signed, through a separate wholly-owned subsidiary, a Memorandum of Agreement to sell to an unaffiliated third party, the 2005-built vessel “CALIPSO”, with delivery to the buyer latest by January 30, 2020, for a sale price of US$7.275 million before commissions. Upon completion of the aforementioned sale, Diana Shipping Inc.’s fleet will consist of 41 dry bulk vessels (4 Newcastlemax, 14 Capesize, 5 Post-Panamax, 5 Kamsarmax and 13 Panamax). As of today, the combined carrying capacity of the Company’s fleet, including the m/v CALIPSO, is approximately 5.2 million dwt with a weighted average age of 9.53 years. Diana Shipping Inc. is a global provider of shipping transportation services through its ownership of dry bulk vessels. The Company’s vessels are employed primarily on medium to long-term time charters and transport a range of dry bulk cargoes, including such commodities as iron ore, coal, grain and other materials along worldwide shipping routes. Source: portnews
The **ROLLDOCK STAR** with as deck cargo the **WADDEN 4** outbound from Rotterdam heading for Port La Nouvelle.

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The tug **RADE** outbound from Rotterdam passing Maassluis **Photo: Nico Ouwehand ©**

**Rosterminalugol hits its 24-millionth-tonne milestone this year**
The volume of export coal handled at Rosterminalugol port as of December 25 reached 24 million tonnes since January 2019, the coal port operator said. The 24-millionth tonne was loaded onto the M/V **AP JADRAN** as part of a coal cargo exported to one of the European ports. The Panamax bulk carrier became the 334th vessel received and handled at the dedicated coal port this year. Since the beginning of December, the coal terminal handled 23 bulk carriers with the average daily rate of loading of 68,100 tonnes of coal. At the same time, on December 25 Rosterminalugol JSC beat its own daily loading monthly record having handled 101,700 tonnes. The company is implementing a long-term programme on enhancing environmental safety initiated by Port Management Company LLC, a sole executive body of Rosterminalugol JSC. Under the programme the company annually confirms compliance with the ISO 14001:2004 standard “Environmental Management System”. By winter season of 2019-2020, the dust protection system of the terminal will be expanded with additional 15 snow guns.

Rosterminalugol JSC (port Ust-Luga, Leningrad Region) is the largest dedicated coal terminal in the North-West region of Russia. The terminal built with the application of the innovative technologies is intended to supply Russian coal produced in Kuzbass and other coal fields to the customers in Europe, Africa, Middle East and Latin America. The terminal was founded in 1996 under the programme on establishment of a commercial seaport in Ust-Luga. Phase II of the port – automated transshipment facility – was put into operation in 2006 in the presence of Russian President Vladimir Putin. In 2016, Rosterminalugol entered the holding run by OOO Port Management Company. In 2018, the company handled 19.9 million tonnes of coal. In terms of application of digital and computer technologies, Rosterminalugol is the leader in the port industry. Automation of processes at the port exceeds 98%. Port Management Company LLC founded in 2008. is Russia’s major coal port holding that exercises the powers of a single executive body of largest dedicated coal ports based in the Baltic Sea region (Rosterminalugol JSC, Ust-Luga, Leningrad Region) and in the Far East (Vostochny Port JSC, Wrangel Bay, Primorsky Territory). In 2017, total coal throughput of the holding's stevedoring companies reached 48.2 million tonnes, which is more than one third of all seaborne coal exports from Russia. The commodity is exported to more than 30 countries in Europe, the Middle East and the Asia-Pacific region.

#### PHOTO OF THE DAY .....

Bulk carrier **EQUINOX STAR** (2011, flag: Cayman Islands) is taking bunkers from tanker **NI SYROS** (2010, flag: Gibraltar) on the anchorage of Gilbraltar. **Photo : Cees Kingma, Estepona ©**
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