

DAILY SHIPPING NEWSLETTER 2003 – 026



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NATO escorts ships past Gibraltar

NATO warships have begun escorting allied civilian ships through the Straits of Gibraltar this week to help avert possible terrorist attacks, the alliance says.

"The alliance decided to expand its naval operations in response to recent assessments of terrorist threats to particular shipping lanes," it said in a statement on Wednesday.

"This new mission is part of NATO's continuing support for the campaign against terrorism, and is a significant extension of the existing Operation Active Endeavour, which was launched following the September 11 (2001) attacks on the United States."

Under that operation, NATO air and naval forces have also been carrying out patrolling and surveillance activities in the eastern Mediterranean.

The statement made no reference to the current Iraq crisis, which has badly split NATO, with Britain, Spain and others lining up behind the tough U.S. stance towards the Baghdad government while France and Germany lead opposition to any military action.

For a safer fleet, think long-term

THE recently announced multi-billion pound project to build two giant aircraft carriers for Britain's Royal Navy (RN) is somewhat out of the remit of this column but I couldn't help noticing, once again, that navies can take the long view when it comes to ordering ships.

Don't judge a ship by its age: various pressures on commercial shipping are tending to favour the new vessel but a ship should be judged by its condition, not age. The first of the pair should come into service in nine years' time. That makes the ordering of an LNG carrier to fulfil a charter three years hence look like a spur of the moment whim.

The RN is looking to the long term, too, when it comes to the expected service life of these ships. It says it expects them to be still sailing 50 years after completion.

In reality that should be perfectly possible. With good maintenance, sound hulls can go on almost indefinitely. Of course, in practice few commercial ships last into their fourth decade. And right now ageism is politically correct, at least when it comes to ships.

But some vessels do appear to go on forever. The pioneering LNG carrier [Methane Progress](#) must have been well into its fourth decade when scrapped. It is likely that other LNG carriers may well have equally long, or even longer, careers.

Passenger ships too can have very long service lives though they now tend to fall foul of higher safety standards and modern cruising tastes.

Modern regulations, in this case banning single hull tankers, are also putting paid to the careers, at least as oil tankers, of the remarkable [Ludwig](#) VLCC fleet, now operated by Concordia Maritime, which would otherwise probably have shared the oceans with those RN newbuildings for a considerable chunk of the current century.

In general, though, various pressures on commercial shipping are tending to favour the new vessel. Well known Hong Kong owner George Chao, of Wah Kwong, is quoted on this subject in the current issue of the Bureau Veritas magazine Veristar News. He believes older ships are a problem for both owners and classification societies like Bureau Veritas.

Mr Chao says: 'It is a big challenge for class and for individual surveyors to know where to draw the line with older ships. There is a lot of pressure from all angles, port states, P&I, charterers. I prefer to work with newer vessels, and I'm broadly in agreement with the moves in the EU to squeeze out older tankers.'

That is certainly a logical and prudent approach in the current political climate. There is though a problem with the idea that only new ships are good ships. In practice that probably means a 20-year-old ship is an old ship and should be scrapped.

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The trouble is we are then encouraging the mentality that a ship need be only to last 20 years. Already there is considerable concern about the pressure on yards to cut costs by building to absolute minimum specifications.

It is encouraging, though, that one classification society has published a detailed set of Tanker Guidelines, intended to support owners during the specification and tender process for tanker newbuildings. Ugo Salerno, chief executive officer of Italian classification society Rina, says: 'There is intense pressure on owners to order new tankers now and to snap up newbuilding slots. At the same time, the number of choices owners face when dealing with detailed specifications has never been more complex. We believe these simple, practical guidelines will help owners to get both better ships and better relations with the yards.'

In other words, Rina is trying to blunt the commercial pressures which can lead to corner-cutting at the newbuilding stage. Still, even such a welcome initiative can only help to some extent.

Once the current panic over double hulls, for both tankers and dry bulkers, has settled down, the shipping industry must push hard to ensure that ships are judged on their condition and not their age. If we build ships that are intended to sail on 'forever', we will be building a much safer world fleet, to far higher specifications, than if we expect a new ship today to be under the torch in 20 years' time.

Prestige: cause may never be known

THE initiating cause of the damage which was to lead to the loss of the Prestige is unlikely to be definitively identified, ABS president Robert Somerville has suggested.

Mr Somerville was commenting on the publication of the classification society's technical analyses of a range of vulnerabilities which may have theoretically existed in the hull structure at the time of the casualty. It is, however, pointed out that as the physical evidence was destroyed during the six-day ordeal endured by the ship after being denied access to shelter by the coastal state, any inquiry into the lost ship is a matter of hypotheses and speculation.

The various technical analyses carried out by the classification society are designed to explore these theories, and the sole recommendation deals with the issue of places of refuge. It also concludes that the ship was loaded properly on her final voyage, had more than adequate hull strength for the reported conditions and should not have been damaged by the impact of breaking waves.

The report makes clear that the most likely cause of the initial flooding of the starboard ballast tanks, which led to the vessel assuming a steep list with some oil spilled, was a combination of a weakened section of the ship's structure and severe wave impact. It is, however, made clear that while ABS believes "intuitively" that this could have been the case, no physical evidence or eyewitness testimony was available to corroborate the theory.

The report inclines to the view that structural weakening in way of fenders used while the ship was employed in a lightering role in Fujairah and then St Petersburg could well have led to permanent deformations of the structure in the vicinity of frame 71, the area where the structure was damaged in the Atlantic storm in November. Lightering damage, the report states, "does remain a more likely contributor than any of the other factors".

It was revealed that there were 174 transfers of cargo and fuel oil during the period from June 2001 to October 2002, with a range of different ship sizes involved in the transfer. Exactly half of these transfers were on the starboard side of the vessel. Extensive studies of the forces involved in ship-to-ship transfers, and of the effects of fendering, were undertaken by the classification society.

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While there had been no reports of damage to the ship during her extensive lightering operations, ABS had evidence of such structural deformations being caused to a sister ship, the Apenemo, attributed to lightering operations in 1989. It was also discovered that while at Fujairah the fenders employed were of the conventional and much-used "Yokohama" design, those in St Petersburg were Russian-made devices of about 75% of the dimensions of these. It is pointed out that the efficiency of fendering in the prevention of damage depends on many factors, including the fender type, its energy absorption capacity, reaction force and surface pressure on ship's hull, the angle of impact, friction, wear conditions, frequency of berthing and other factors.

The analysis notes that the vessel, built to comply with ABS 1973 structural requirements, was sufficiently robust when built to meet 2003 ABS and IACS Rule hull girder strength requirements. It is noted that the rules under which the ship was built did not include hull fatigue strength requirements as the methodologies did not exist at that time. However, it is pointed out that the ship had spent much of her life trading in areas that were less severe than the North Atlantic, which is used to develop fatigue criteria. The report notes that most of the side longitudinals identified as perhaps having insufficient fatigue life left had been renewed in the fourth and fifth special hull surveys.

The report also considers other possibilities, such as residual welding stresses, improper workmanship, unreported damage or voyage repairs, explosion, collision with logs or other floating debris or a rogue wave, and concluded that while each might have played some part, it was not possible to prove or disprove that any of these factors had contributed to the casualty.

The classification society also explores the circumstances of the ultimate hull failure and sinking of the ship and confirms its earlier hypothesis that even after the initial damage and the stresses induced by the counterflooding to bring the ship onto a near-even keel, there was adequate hull girder strength remaining to enable the ship to remain structurally intact and afloat. However, after the coastal state had refused the vessel shelter and ordered the ship to be taken out to sea in the teeth of heavy weather, the vessel's structure was subject to severe loading and subsequently started to disintegrate. The report does point out that the damaged structure had sufficient strength to withstand six days of severe punishment as the ship was towed out into the Atlantic.

It is, notes ABS, "easily deduced that, had the vessel been afforded a safe refuge, protected from the wave bending moments and dynamic forces experienced in the open ocean, it would have remained intact and afloat for a sustained period, certainly long enough to lighter the cargo off the vessel and prepare the vessel for subsequent repair". ABS, the report concludes, "joins the chorus of other interested parties recommending the international community of nations establish guidelines for the safe refuge of damaged vessels in order to prevent another damaged vessel becoming the cause of a regrettable and avoidable pollution event".

Italian ro-ros strike it rich with Gulf military transport deals

LUCRATIVE deals to transport military hardware between Europe and the Persian Gulf have been struck by at least four Italian shipowners in recent days.

Charter rates up to three times higher than the market average have persuaded Italian owners to lend out ro-ro ships to the US Military Sealift Command and the British Ministry of Defence, despite concerns of a pacifist backlash.

Sources reported deals involving around eight Italian-owned ships of varying ages and contracts of between 45 and 90 days, with options to extend charters for several months. Daily rates higher than \$20,000 were reported, compared to the recent market rates of \$10,000 for ro-ro vessels.

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"There have been deals **200%-300% higher** than the market," said one shipowner, who asked not to be named. Military procurers are said to have been on the market exclusively for ro-ro ships. Ro-ro specialist **Grimaldi Naples** confirmed a two-ship deal with the US armed forces reported to be worth more than \$5m. The ships would not need replacing within the fleet as Grimaldi Naples is taking delivery of a large number of new vessels, a company source said. Grandi Traghetti, the Genoa-based ferry firm controlled by another branch of the same Grimaldi family, also confirmed contracts covering "two or three ships." Another owner said to have struck deals with the US Military Sealift command is Sardinia-headquartered Strade Blu, though the company owner could not be reached for comment. A fourth Italian owner confirmed two ship charters but asked not to be mentioned by name. "Despite the fact that the ships will not touch Italy, this is a very sensitive subject," he said. "We don't want to be targeted by anti-war protesters." Pacifists and 'no global' activists have attempted to disrupt cargo shipments between Camp Darby in Tuscany in the port of Livorno over the last week. Camp Darby is one of the largest US logistics bases in Europe and was used extensively during the last Gulf conflict. Livorno port authority sources said union action was expected to coincide with the next large shipment of military hardware through the port. Camp Darby's local freight forwarder denied asking for a 20,000 sq m area within the port for military use within coming days. Elsewhere, protesters attempted to block a military shipment at the port of Naples, according to agencies. Pacifist sentiment within Italy is strong and widespread.

CASUALTY REPORTING

P&O NEDLLOYD CAPRI (LIBERIA)

General cargo **P&O Nedlloyd Capri** (6114 gt, built 1996), Istanbul for Damietta, loaded, reported to harbour-master at 0650, local time, today that the vessel was aground in approximately lat 37 00N, long 27 03E. Vessel is still aground and leakage reported in area. No tugs yet on scene.

GAS ROMAN (PANAMA)



photo : **SMIT Salvage ©**

SMIT Salvage and Semco have commenced with the offloading of the 3,165 tonnes of timber from the stricken general cargo **Springbok** as planned. On Feb 27 the vessel was involved in a collision with Lpg **Gas Roman**. Both vessels are still connected. Apart from the cargo offloading operation Springbok is being "patched," which entails the mounting

of steel plates onto the damaged hull. Simultaneously water which entered the vessel is being pumped out. All work is being performed under close guidance of a gas expert to prevent accidents. Up to now there are no threats to the environment. Weather forecasts are promising and allow the salvage team to work unhindered at this moment.

SHIPYARD NEWS

Lloyd Werft wins order from Norwegian Cruise Line

Lloyd Werft Bremerhaven, the German shipyard, has won an order from Norwegian Cruise Line, the cruise ship operator, for the completion of a new luxury cruise liner with a length of 259m. The liner is scheduled to be put into service in the summer of 2004

The ship is based on a hull of which 40 per cent has already been completed in the US. The hull was transported to Bremerhaven, Germany, at the end of last year.

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ConocoPhillips to Christen Integrity

ConocoPhillips will christen the second of four new towboats, which have received classification from the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS). The ceremony christening **Integrity** will be held at the Port of Orange in Orange, Texas, on March 5 at 10 a.m. The first of the towboats, "**Spirit**," was christened in January.

Two additional towboats, **Liberty** and **Innovator** will be christened in April and May, respectively. Orange Shipbuilding of Orange, Texas, built the vessels, which have safety enhancement such as CO2 extinguishing systems, fuel shutdowns, fire detection systems and fire fighting systems. In addition, they are equipped with double-hull fuel tanks and five-blade propellers that are more efficient and reduce hull vibration by as much as 50 percent compared to a conventional four-blade propeller. Environmental upgrades will include main propulsion engines that are not only compliant with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and Environmental Agency (EPA) emission standards, but that will reduce fuel consumption, lube oil consumption and air emissions by as much as 10 percent of

the current standard engines. ConocoPhillips' inland marine fleet of seven towboats and 14 barges made more than 600 voyages last year, hauling over 21 million barrels of crude oil and refined products.

P&O ANNOUNCE COBELFRET TO OPERATE PROPOSED LONDON GATEWAY PORT RO-RO TERMINAL

P&O has announced it has reached heads of agreement with Cobelfret to build and operate the proposed Ro-Ro terminal as part of the proposed London Gateway Port conditional on obtaining the statutory consents required. Cobelfret operate Ro-Ro services from Purfleet to Zeebrugge, Rotterdam and Flushing.

Alistair Baillie, Chief Operating Officer of P&O Ports commented: "We are very pleased to have reached this stage of agreement with Cobelfret. There is considerable synergy between the Ro-Ro terminal and the deep sea Container Terminal. With Cobelfret we believe we have the best opportunity to exploit this."

Christian Cigrang, Managing Director of Cobelfret said: "We have been operating out of the Thames Estuary for 12 years already and this will enable us to meet our customers' requests to expand our services to more European Ports. It will complement our existing facilities at Purfleet and reinforces our objective of remaining one of the primary operators in the Thames Estuary.

London Gateway is a great location with a shorter sailing time to the continent and easy access to the M25." Subject to a favourable decision from the Secretary of State for Transport, P&O hope to start work on the Port in 2004. The roll-on roll-off Terminal is expected to be completed within 12 months of the consents being given and be able to handle two vessels with stern/bow loading. It will create 150 new jobs.

NAVY NEWS

Two warships leave Halifax for Persian Gulf amidst questions over mission

Two Canadian warships slipped quietly out of Halifax harbour on Wednesday for the Arabian Sea amidst concerns that the force's role could change if hostilities break out in Iraq. Hundreds of family members stood under a grey winter sky, anxiously bidding farewell to crew aboard **HMCS Fredericton** as the frigate began its journey to the Persian Gulf.



Crew gathered inside the sleek ship's hangar, awaiting orders to depart as part of its six-month contribution to Operation Apollo, the international fight against terrorism.

"I'm nervous, excited and anxious," Cpl. Loretta Parent, who left behind her husband Ken on her longest deployment.

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"You never know what's going to happen when you get over there." **HMCS Iroquois** (photo top) trailed behind, a day after repairs were completed on the larger destroyer and it was given the OK to sail.

Iroquois set off last week for the region, but was turned back when its Sea King helicopter slammed into the landing pad seconds after taking off on a routine training exercise.

The navy was unable to find another Sea King to deploy with Iroquois, raising concerns over the vessel's ability to carry out its responsibilities as the command-and-control centre for a multinational task force in the region. Fredericton will sail with a Sea King and might be called upon to share it with Iroquois, which will replace **HMCS Montreal** when it arrives in the Middle East. Officials were still trying to determine what caused the accident, which injured two crew and renewed questions over Ottawa's plans to replace the embattled fleet.

Canada has 29 Sea Kings, with most undergoing repair. Only 12 are in flying condition. The air force could not ready another one of its 29 maritime helicopters in time for Iroquois' departure. The Canadian navy will have three warships in the area, with only **HMCS Fredericton** having a Sea King.



Undated file photo shows the Sea King helicopter that crashed on the Canadian destroyer HMCS Iroquois, February 27, 2003. The Iroquois, heading for the Gulf to take part in the U.S.-led war on terrorism, was called back to port after the ship's sole helicopter crashed on takeoff. The HMCS Iroquois had only been at sea for three days when the aging helicopter flipped onto its side slightly injuring two crew members.

HMS ECHO TO BE COMMISSIONED

The Royal Navy's newest survey ship, **HMS Echo**, will be formally commissioned into the Fleet at a ceremony at Devonport Naval Base on Friday 7 March 2003.

Vice Admiral Jonathon Band, Commander in Chief Fleet, and Lady Penny Haddacks will be the guests of honour at the ceremony and will inspect the guard and platoons from the ship's company. Lady Haddacks is the ship's sponsor and formally named the ship in March 2002.

During the ceremony HMS Echo's Commanding Officer, Commander Martin Jones, will read the Commissioning Warrant from Commander-in-Chief Fleet and a short service of dedication will be conducted by three Royal Naval Chaplains. The youngest member of the ship's company, Survey Recorder Chris Pickering aged 20 from Plymouth, and the Commanding Officer's wife, Mrs Joan Edwards, will have the honour of cutting the commissioning cake at the reception after the ceremony.

Families and friends of members of HMS Echo's ship's company will also be among the guests, along with representatives from the ship's affiliated town of Taunton, including the Mayor, Councillor Adrian

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Prior-Sankey, and the Commanding Officer of the Taunton Sea Cadets.

Commander Martin Jones said: "This ceremony is the focal point which marks the transition from ship build through trials to a living, working operational unit with the Fleet. To command a new ship, and especially a first of class, I consider an immense privilege and honour. "

HMS Echo, the 12th ship to bear the name, is a Multi-Role Hydrographic and Oceanographic survey vessel. She will work in world-wide front-line operational roles, including support for mine warfare and amphibious operations as well as undertaking specialist surveying tasks.



The ship is equipped with an all electric propulsion system and will be available for operations for more than 334 days each year – a 50 per cent enhancement on her predecessors. Her improved seakeeping means she can carry out survey work for 90 per cent of the year in the rough waters of the UK's Western Approaches. Existing vessels only carry out survey work in these waters for about 13 per cent of the year. HMS Echo is equipped with the latest integrated survey systems as well as advanced navigation and communications, and has a ship's company of 72. Like HMS Scott, the ship will operate a crew rotation system and will have 49 crew members onboard, while the remainder take leave or undergo professional training.

The ship was built by Appledore Shipbuilders Ltd at Bideford in Devon, under subcontract by Vosper Thorncroft Shipbuilding. Her sister ship, HMS Enterprise, is currently under construction at Appledore. As well as design and build, the £130 million prime contract covers the support of the ships throughout their expected 25 years service with the Royal Navy.

Since arriving in Devonport last December, HMS Echo has been undergoing sea trials and training in preparation for operational deployment later this year.

4 navy ships handed over to Coast Guard

Home Minister Altaf Hossain Choudhury yesterday said the importance of Bay of Bengal was gradually increasing in view of its geo-physical location and economic prospects. He was addressing a function marking the handing over ceremony of four Bangladesh Navy Ships '**Bogra**', '**Rangamati**,' '**Patuakhali**' and '**Noakhali**' and their commissioning to the Bangladesh Coast Guard (BCG) at the Naval Jetty at Pagla here, an ISPR press release said. The newly inducted vessels were built at the Narayanganj Shipyard. Prior to their commissioning in the Coast Guard, these vessels were in active service of the Bangladesh Navy for the last three decades, the press release said. He said the Bangladesh Coast Guard was formed on December 19, 1995 to combat the menace of smuggling, piracy, drug trafficking and other unlawful activities side by side with protecting the natural resources, fish resources and the sea water from pollution in the country's coastal areas.

USS JOINT VENTURE



The U.S. Navy's unique **Joint Venture HSV-X1**, a high-speed, sealift catamaran designed to transport and insert a broad range of military equipment and personnel, is seen docked in Kuwait February 28, 2003. The United States said on March 4 it was gaining support in the U.N. Security Council for a resolution against Iraq and ordered 60,000 more troops to the Gulf, as Turkey gave Washington hope it could be allowed to open a northern front there for any invasion

MOVEMENTS

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The **ROSEBERRY CROSS**, seen here departing Wednesday from the Tyne bound for the Tees after been in the No 2 drydock for 1 day at A & P Wallsend.

Photo : Kevin Blair ©

ASIAN HERCULES II

Text : Roger Wilson / photo : via Alex de Leur



On Monday [24th February] SMIT sheerlegs **ASIAN HERCULES II** installed the POWER GENERATION module onto **BONGA FPSO**. This module weighed over 2,400 tonnes and was installed in an operation lasting a few hours. This was the first of 26 lifts planned at **AMEC SERVICES**, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England facility in an operation planned to last until mid April, 2003.

This FPSO installation project is a significant and major contract for **SMIT HEAVY LIFT** who enjoys a close working relationship both with the Client and SHELL, NIGERIA.



KALMAR CONTAINER LOADED



Kalmar-container crane lifted from the shore and loaded in the Maas harbour (Rotterdam) on the SMIT pontoon **E-3505** by **Taklift 1** and **Taklift 3**. Destination was Hamburg. Weight of the container crane was approx. 440 tonnes.

Photo :
HANS DE
JONG
MARITIME
PICTURES ©

Luxury Passenger Liner Makes Brief Stop at Shanghai



top : The **Aurora** during a visit to Rotterdam 01-06-2002 – **Photo : Piet Sinke ©**

The **Aurora**, an international luxury passenger liner, arrived at Shanghai's Waigaoqiao port at 6:00 am Tuesday for a 10-hour stopover in China's most prosperous city before departing for Hong Kong at 8:00 pm.

The 200-meter long, 30-meter wide liner came from Japan with more than 1,800 British and Australian passengers and nearly 900 crew.

Local customs officials finished the exit and entry procedures for the passengers in a short time in order to let them disembark as quickly as possible.

The passenger transport authorities said eight international luxury passenger liners would make stopovers in Shanghai this month.

ZWERVER II



The newbuilding **ZWERVER II** arrived Wednesday behind the Polish tug **IKAR** in Rotterdam
Photo : Piet Sinke ©

CONTAINER AQUARIUS



In Singapore the transport barge **CONTAINER AQUARIUS** was converted into a pulbarge by **SMIT Transport Asia**, to be utilized for a pipe pull of 4,5 km in Dahej (Gujarat) in NW India, the barge which is now able to pull over 600 ton , is also equipped with an 8 point mooring system to cope the currents in the Bay of Cambay which can run up to 6 knots, accommodation for 60 people, and an 450 ton crawler crane and some utility winches.

The barge was converted in about 3 weeks time and departed Thursday afternoon from Singapore under tow of the **DEA CHAMPION** (Former Smit Lloyd 71) and the voyage to India is expected to take 21 days, the pull of the pipe have to executed April 8th .

Photo´s : John Bruinsma – SMIT Transport Asia ©



AIRCRAFT / AIRPORT NEWS



Two U.S. Air Force B-1 bombers that landed late Wednesday night stand-by at Andersen Air Base on the island of Guam, in the western Pacific, March 6, 2003. With tension rising sharply over North Korea's nuclear weapons ambitions, the United States is sending 24 B-1 and B-52 bombers to the island of Guam -- located 3400km (2,115 miles) from the North Korean capital, Pyongyang -- to deter any aggression by Pyongyang in case of a war in Iraq, defense officials said on Tuesday.

RIJNMOND WEATHER

Vooruitzichten van vrijdag t/m maandag:

Zaterdag een bui!

Perioden met zon, ook wolkenvelden en op zaterdag een bui.

© Ed Aldus 2003	VR-07	ZA-08	ZO-09	MA-09
Maximumtemperatuur:	9	9	10	11
Minimumtemperatuur:	1	5	5	5
Zonnekans in %:	50	30	40	40
Neerslagkans in %:	10	50	20	10
Windrichting kracht:	Z-3-5	W-3-5	ZZW-3-4	ZZW-3-4