

DAILY COLLECTION OF MARITIME PRESS CLIPPINGS 2007 – 062



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The UNION AMBER seen in action in her homeport Zeebrugge

Photo : Henk Claeys ©

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EVENTS, INCIDENTS & OPERATIONS

Mogelijk vervolgacties bij Smit

De vakbonden komen maandagavond bijeen om te overleggen over vervolgacties bij sleepbedrijf Smit in de Rotterdamse haven. Dat heeft FNV-onderhandelaar Cees Bos laten weten.



De **SMIT MERSEY** – Foto : Rik van Marle ©

De vakbonden en de directie van Smit Towage staan lijnrecht tegenover elkaar in een conflict over een nieuwe cao voor de medewerkers. Woensdag en donderdag legden de sleepers het werk neer. Vrijdag gingen de werknemers weer aan de slag om de havenbedrijven tijd en ruimte te geven om achterstanden die waren ontstaan weg te werken.

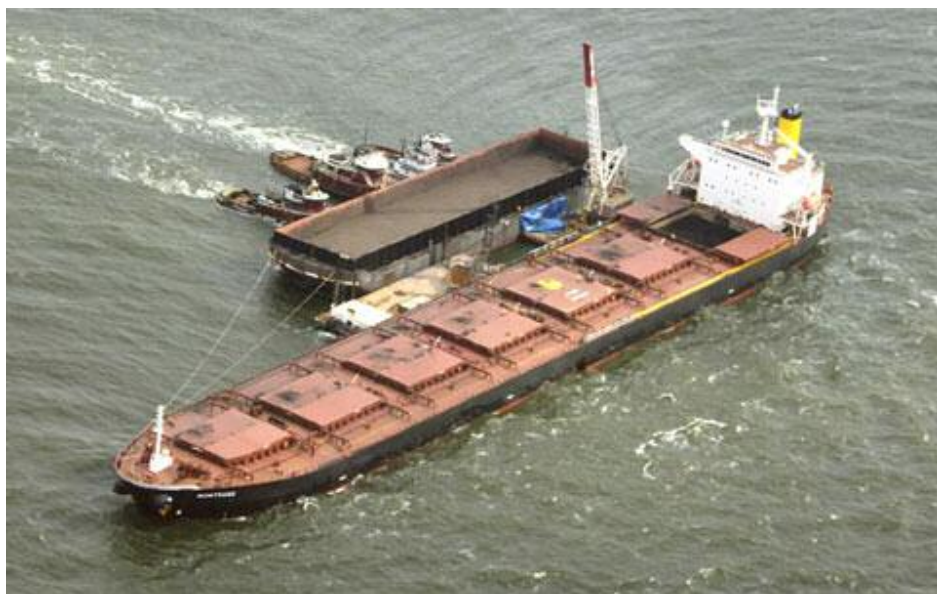
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Ook kreeg Smit op die manier een paar dagen de gelegenheid om op de cao-eisen in te gaan. Volgens Bos heeft het sleepbedrijf niets van zich laten horen.

Een woordvoester van Smit zegt dat haar bedrijf een brief naar de bonden heeft gestuurd met het voorstel om een bemiddelaar in te schakelen. Op de brief heeft het concern nog geen antwoord gekregen.

De vakbonden lieten vrijdag via de media weten niets te zien in een bemiddelaar. Volgens FNV-onderhandelaar Bos is dat genoeg en blijkt uit eerdere brieven al dat de bonden van een bemiddelaar afzien, omdat dat toch geen oplossing biedt zolang Smit zich star opstelt.

CHESAPEAKE BAY GROUNDING



THE US Coast Guard says that it is working to free the 38,731 gt ton Liberian-flag bulk carrier **Montrose**. The ship, operated by Dutch-based Seaarland Shipping, ran aground last Wednesday in Chesapeake Bay near Sharps Island. A Unified Command is overseeing the discharge of part of the ship's cargo of coal.

The Coast Guard says that there have been no reports of pollution or injuries. "Coal is ugly, and it will discolour the water, however the effect it has on the environment is very minimal," said Alan Williams, on-scene coordinator for the State of Maryland.

The Unified Command consists of the Coast Guard, ECM Maritime Services, Resolve Marine Group, Maryland Natural Resources Police, Motia, Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the Maryland Department of the Environment.

Drugs Over The Side

A former passenger was sentenced to 14 months in prison followed by four years of supervised release for his role in a plot to smuggle cocaine into the United States on a cruise ship.

Darin Adams, 36, pleaded guilty to one count of attempting to import 500 or more grams of cocaine into the United States.

Based on information provided by the local Sheriffs Office and the security division of Carnival Cruise Lines, the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Special Agents began investigating narcotics smuggling into Port Everglades and the greater Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., area, according to court documents.

The U.S. Attorney's office reported that on Nov. 9, 2005, officials began surveying the "**Carnival Legend**" as it returned from the western Caribbean.

As the ship was nearing the port at around 6:15 p.m., officials noticed a small boat following the ship and proceeded to stop it and run record checks, according to court documents.

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The small boat was being operated by Kevin Lamarr Presley and Adams was a passenger. After officials searched the boat, it was released. At approximately 7 a.m., officials received a call from the Carnival Cruise Lines security division reporting that someone had thrown a package overboard from the ship. The Ft. Lauderdale Harbor Pilot retrieved the package and turned it over to U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers, according to court documents.

Officials examined the package and found it to be a life vest tied to a blue duffel bag, which contained several bags containing approximately five pounds of cocaine, according to court documents.

Law enforcement officials then found Presley's and Adams' boat again and brought them to a marina.

While being interviewed, Presley claimed that he and Adams had been taking a fishing trip and Adams became seasick, according to court documents.

Officials used a U.S. Coast Guard narcotics canine to confirm that a life vest found on the small boat was the same as the one officials found with the cocaine, according to court documents.

Officials found four cell phones onboard the boat belonging to Presley and Adams which displayed several recent phone calls to and from Dwight Whitehead, a passenger on board the cruise ship who had been staying in a room with a balcony, according to court documents.

The cabin stewards on the ship told officials that Whitehead and his roommate rarely left the room, except to go ashore in Panama, and would stand on the balcony and watch them clean the room.

Further investigations showed that Whitehead had also previously taken several cruises to Panama onboard the Legend, according to court documents.



Cracking Up

The owner of a bulk cargo ship has been charged in US federal court with allowing the vessel to cross the Atlantic Ocean with two large cracks that had been covered with tape and painted over, court records show.

Representatives of Twilight Marine Ltd. are expected to plead guilty Tuesday (06 Mar) to a misdemeanor charge of grossly negligent operation of a vessel, according to court papers filed in U.S. District Court in Oakland. The company also is prepared to pay a fine and restitution, court records show.

In September, the "M/V **Warrior**", a 38,880-ton cargo ship, was crossing the Atlantic Ocean toward North America. Crew on board noticed several small cracks and rust holes in the starboard, or right side, deck, according to federal prosecutors.

The cracks were properly repaired, court documents show. But soon after, sailors found two larger cracks, each about 3 feet long, on the port, or left side, deck, the document said.

Those cracks were covered with tape and painted to blend in with the deck, the documents state.

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"During the Atlantic crossing, Twilight Marine knew that the "M/V **Warrior**" was in a hazardous condition in that these two cracks were not properly repaired," authorities wrote.



The **KADRI** is the former **FLINTERDAM**

Photo : Willem Koper ©

Can't Shake The Bug

A stomach flu soured the vacations of at least 167 of 1,260 passengers aboard the cruise ship "**Ryndam**" before it ended a 10-day voyage in San Diego on March 3rd.



The **RYNDAM** – Photo : Maurits Groothuis ©

It was the second consecutive trip – and the fourth since May – that forced the ship's operators, Holland America Line, to report outbreaks to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Vessel Sanitation Program.

CDC staff boarded the ship in Cabo San Lucas on Thursday and sailed to San Diego. They planned to conduct an investigation and make recommendations to protect future passengers, the CDC's Web site said.

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On the previous voyage, 110 of the 1,153 passengers on board reported sick to the infirmary, primarily for bouts of diarrhea and vomiting. More than a dozen crew members also reported illnesses on both voyages.

Two cruises last summer resulted in smaller numbers of crew members sick and a total of 163 passengers ill. The norovirus, a gastrointestinal illness, was found to have caused both outbreaks.

After each outbreak, the crew stepped up cleaning and disinfection procedures while notifying passengers and collecting stool samples for analysis.

The ship, 2½ football fields long, has always received overall satisfactory inspection scores from regulators, but deficiencies have turned up. A July inspection, for example, found that "numerous previously cleaned plates were soiled and stored as clean. Several plates were heavily soiled with food residue."

The most recent inspection, from January, noted this violation: "Foods such as eggs and steaks were cooked to temperatures below what is required for pathogen destruction."

Tom Karnes of Oceanside stepped off the ship yesterday with his wife, Helen. He said he fell ill the first day, the same day the ship deposited the previous large group of sick passengers in San Diego.

He said crew members stocked the ship with sanitizing hand lotions and "told us not to shake hands."

Good News And Bad

There has been a dramatic reduction in the number of total losses of merchant ships since the year 2000.

New statistics released by the International Union of Marine Insurance (IUMI), which represents marine underwriters worldwide, indicate that 67 ships (of 500 gross tons and over) were total losses in 2006, compared to 140 in 2000 and a peak of 182 during the 1990s.

However, this news is heavily diluted by an equally dramatic increase in serious partial losses, up by 200% since 1998. IUMI stresses these are preliminary figures for 2006 as both total and partial losses or constructive total losses can rise in the early months of this year.

The 2006 losses equate to approximately 0.1% of the world fleet, compared to 0.3% in 1996 and nearly 0.5% in 1990. There was a slight increase in actual tonnage lost in 2006, particularly in the bulk carrier sector, but this is largely explained by the total loss of a capesize bulker accounting for 37% of the total gross tonnage.

The statistics, relating to the marine and offshore energy markets, comprise 43 graphics and four pages of commentary. The marine figures cover losses, the world fleet, construction activity, scrapping, freight rates and vessel values and repair costs. The energy statistics cover the world fleet of mobile offshore drilling units, newbuildings, the financial dynamics and losses.

They are the first statistics of their kind to be produced by IUMI as part of its commitment to respond to members' requests to provide more technical information to underpin underwriting decisions.

De Schelde stroomt even langs Maassluis.

In het Nationaal Sleepvaart Museum te Maassluis is vanaf 10 maart een nieuwe wisseltentoonstelling te zien onder de titel "**Slepen op de Schelde (II)**". De tentoonstelling is een vervolg op de expositie die het museum in 1986 presenteerde.



In de afgelopen twee decennia is er dermate veel gebeurd met de sleepvaart in de Westerschelde dat het maken van een update alleszins gerechtvaardigd is. Immers, er was jaren geleden een hevige concurrentie in het Zeeuwse. Verbaal in niet mis te verstane bewoordingen en een enkele keer zelfs met de vuist werden meningsverschillen beslecht. Die tijd is gelukkig voorbij en in overdrachtelijke zin is de regio wat betreft de sleepvaart in rustiger vaarwater terecht gekomen. Niet alleen Nederlandse bedrijven proberen een boterham te verdienen in de altijd drukke en grillige zeearm. Met name de Belgen manifesteren zich daar nadrukkelijk, vooral omdat het de vaarweg naar Antwerpen en Gent betreft. Het plezierige is dat er nauwe banden bestaan tussen de Belgische **Unie van Redding- en Sleepdienst** en de Nederlandse scheepvaartwereld. Het bedrijf is voor 50% eigendom van **Smit** te Rotterdam en heeft bovendien een fors aantal landgenoten in dienst. Dat kan ook haast niet anders, omdat men veel vanuit Vlissingen en Terneuzen opereert. De uitnodiging van het nationale museum aan de Belgische kapitein De Block, een der directeurs van de **URS**, om de expositie te openen is daarom helemaal niet zo vreemd als op het eerste gezicht zou kunnen lijken.



In de tentoonstelling wordt ook aan de vroegere geschiedenis van de sleepvaart op de Schelde niet voorbij gegaan. De geschiedenis van de sleepvaartbedrijven **URS**, **Willem Muller** (Terneuzen), **Polderman** (Hansweert), **Van den Akker, Dijkhuizen** (beide Vlissingen), de **SHV**, de **Nieuwe Vlissingse Sleepdienst** en **Van Aerde** wordt belicht. De nadruk ligt echter op de laatste twintig jaar. Willem Muller werd in de tachtiger jaren verkocht aan Wijsmuller en jaren later aan de **URS**. De karakteristieke witte "M" in de schoorstenen van de sleepboten van Muller verdween daarna volledig. Een nieuw bedrijf werd door de familie Muller in recordtijd uit de grond gestampt. Multraship Towage

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and Salvage is in 20 jaar wat betreft vlootomvang die van **Willem Muller** ruimschoots voorbij geschoten. Met veel modern materiaal is het bedrijf in het Zeeuws Vlaamse en op zee niet meer weg te denken. In Bulgarije werd een plaatselijke onderneming overgenomen en elders in het voormalige Oostblok werd voortvarend wrakopruiming ter hand genomen. Niet voor niets werden zowel Kees Muller als zijn echtgenote verkozen tot havenman en -vrouw van het jaar.

Calamiteiten als met de **Pelican I**, de **Aya II**, de **Pioner Onegi** en recentelijk de **Fowairet** komen inde tentoonstelling in fotografisch opzicht natuurlijk aan de orde. Fraaie scheepsmodellen van o.m. de **URS** en **Multraship**, nog niet eerder getoond, zijn in Maassluis te bewonderen

De **Unie van Redding- en Sleepdienst** heeft in rap tempo een vlootvernieuwing gerealiseerd, die nog niet helemaal is voltooid. Niet minder dan acht sleepers zijn momenteel in bestelling. Daarnaast timmert men internationaal aan de (vaar)weg met reuzen onder de sleepers als de **President Hubert** en de **Union Manta**.

De vrijwel complete geschiedenis van de sleepvaart op de Schelde wordt ter begeleiding van de expositie in een geïllustreerd boekwerkje van 24 pagina's uit de doeken gedaan. Deze tentoonstellingswijzer is voor elke bezoeker tegen geringe vergoeding verkrijgbaar.

De expositie duurt tot en met 14 oktober a.s. U bent van harte welkom! Het museum aan de Hoogstraat 1-3 is alle dagen geopend van 14.00 tot 17.00 uur, behalve op maandag, 1e Paas- en Pinksterdag.



The **MINERAL LONDON** seen at the Clyde
Photo : Tommy Bryceland – Scotland ©

Passagiersschip de mist in

De Waterpolitie van het Korps landelijke politiediensten (KLPD) in Harlingen heeft zondag 4 maart de schipper van een passagiersschip bekeurd omdat hij in dichte mist op de Waddenzee voer zonder gebruik te maken van radar. Het schip moest de vaart staken en wachten op beter zicht.

Het zicht op de Waddenzee bedroeg ongeveer honderd meter. Volgens het Binnenvaartpolitiereglement mag bij slecht zicht op de vaarwegen tussen de zee en de havens aan de Waddenzee slechts gevaren worden als het schip gebruikt maak van radar. Een schip dat niet op radar vaart moet op de dichtstbijzijnde geschikte plaats gaan stilliggen.

De Waterpolitie hoorde omstreeks 12.45 uur over de marifoon dat een schip problemen had met de navigatie. Het schip kreeg af en toe informatie van de Brandaris. De Waterpolitie trof even later in de Blauwe Slenk een schip van de

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zogenaamde 'bruine vloot' aan zonder radar. Bij controle aan boord bleek dat het schip met twintig passagiers onderweg was van Vlieland naar Harlingen. Toen het schip uit Vlieland was vertrokken was het zicht nog goed; even later was het in dichte mist terecht gekomen.

Er was een radar aan boord maar de 43-jarige schipper uit Harlingen was niet in het bezit van een radardiploma en mocht het apparaat dus niet gebruiken. Hij maakte wel gebruik van een elektronische zeekaart op zijn laptop. Tegen de schipper werd proces-verbaal opgemaakt en het schip staakte de vaarten wachtte in Pannegat op zichtverbetering.

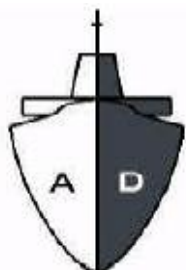


The Trailing suction dredger **HAM 311** seen operating in the port of Flushing
Photo : Jack Geluk ©

NAVY NEWS

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Big E Underway to Conduct Carrier Qualifications

The nuclear-powered aircraft carrier **USS Enterprise (CVN 65)** left its homeport Feb. 28 for the first time since returning from its regularly scheduled six-month deployment in November. For the next few weeks, Enterprise, along with embarked Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 1, will conduct carrier qualifications while underway in the Atlantic to maintain combat readiness. Preserving the Enterprise's ability to remain in surge status is key to the Navy's Fleet Response Program (FRP), which gives the Navy the ability to deploy up to six carrier strike groups at a moment's notice to wherever in the world a mission calls.

"Staying at the top of our game at all times is a critical component of retaining a high level of combat readiness," said Capt. Larry Rice, **Enterprise's** commanding officer. "As the surge carrier, we could be called to action in the event of unexpected threats or contingency operations. We need to continue to train like we fight, be ready for anything that may come our way, and always remember we are a combat-ready strike force." The Big E is the centerpiece of the **Enterprise Carrier Strike Group (CSG)**, which also includes **USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51)**, **USS Stout (DDG 55)**, **USS Forrest Sherman (DDG 98)**, **USS James E. Williams (DDG 95)**, **USS Gettysburg (CG 64)**, **USS Philadelphia (SSN 690)** and the fast combat supply ship **USNS Supply (T-AOE 6)**.

LPD-17 San Antonio Class: The USA's New Amphibious Ships

LPD-17 San Antonio Class amphibious assault support vessels are a new class of ship which is just entering service with the US Navy. Much like their predecessors, their mission is to embark, transport, land, and support elements of a US Marine Corps Landing Force. What changes are the capabilities and technologies incorporated to perform that mission, including internal technologies as well as accompanying platforms like the V-22 Osprey and Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle.

Navy sources note that the 9 scheduled ships of this class (reduced from 12) are slated to assume the functional duties of up to 41 previous ships. These include the USA's older **LSD-36 USS Anchorage Class** dock landing ships (all decommissioned as of 2004, LSD-36 and LSD-38 transferred to Taiwan) and its **LPD-4 USS Austin Class** ships (12 built and serving, LPD 14 Trenton now India's INS Jalashva). The **San Antonio Class** ships may also replace 2 classes of ships currently mothballed and held in reserve status under the Amphibious Lift Enhancement Program (ALEP): the **LST-1179 Newport Class** tank landing ships, and **LKA-113 Charleston Class** amphibious cargo ships. The PMS 317 FAQ notes that the LPD-17 San Antonio Class' projected average cost once all ships are built is \$1.2 billion.

The **San Antonio Class** has had its share of teething problems, and so has the New Orleans shipyard to which most of this contract has been assigned. This is not uncommon in new ship classes, but it does bear noting. This is DID's FOCUS Article for the **San Antonio Class**, detailing the ships' unique features and capabilities as well as its program innovations and issues. We'll also include an updated list of related contracts awarded throughout the program's history. As has become DID custom, the most recent additions are highlighted in green type.

The latest items include a contract for work on **LPD 18 New Orleans**, and FY 2007/2008 budget figures that include a request for funds to build **LPD 25 Somerset**. Somerset is named for the heroic passengers of Flight 93, who crashed their plane in Somerset County, PA instead of the White House or Congress. This is a theme in several **San Antonio Class ships**; **LPD 21 New York**, for instance will have steel in its bow from the remains of the World Trade Center.

China conducts sea trials of nuclear subs

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A US naval intelligence report says China is conducting sea trials of the first of five new nuclear-powered submarines armed with longer-range ballistic missiles.

The report which has been made public says the sea trials are part of a broader push by China to check US naval power in the western Pacific with a more modern fleet of nuclear-powered ballistic missile and attack submarines.

The Office of Naval Intelligence says the first of the new nuclear ballistic missile submarines, could begin operating as early as 2008. The submarine "will provide China with a modern and robust sea-based nuclear deterrent force," .

It will be equipped with a sea-launched ballistic missile with range of 8,000 kilometers, a big gain over China's only other ballistic missile submarine.

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AHTS orders for Aker Yards

Aker Yards has entered into a contract with DOF ASA for the construction of two AHTS vessels, and an option to build another two vessels. The value of the contract is approximately NOK 750 million (US\$ 121.8 million) per vessel.



The vessels are Anchor Handling Supply Vessels, based on the Aker design AH 04. Delivery is scheduled in Q4 2009, and Q2 2010.

The vessels will have a bollard pull in excess of 300 tons, a length of 108 m, a beam of 24 m and depth to main deck of 9.8 m.

Each will be outfitted with a triple

drum winch of 500 tons.

Accommodations are planned for 90 persons. The hulls for the vessels will be built at Aker Yards, Tulcea in Romania and outfitting will be at Aker Yards in Norway.

Namegiving of Newbuilding L 206 from Odense Steel Shipyard

On Saturday March 3, the Odense Steel Shipyard presented its latest newbuilding, an 11,000 TEU container vessel, for the A.P. Moller – Maersk Group. Berit Jensen, accompanied by her husband, Erling Jensen, Managing Director, Dansk Supermarked A/S, honoured A.P. Moller – Maersk and the Yard by naming the newbuilding **Evelyn Maersk**. Like her three predecessors, **Evelyn Maersk** will be part of the series of the world's largest container vessels, and she will like her sister vessels set new standards for safety and environment. Environmentally friendly silicone paint covers the hull of the vessel below the waterline – reducing water resistance and cutting the vessel's fuel consumption by 1,200 tonnes per year. With her 14-cylinder Wärtsilä RT-flex diesel engine which develops 110,000 BHP, **Evelyn Maersk** will after delivery enter Maersk Line's worldwide service and thereby together with the other vessels contribute to a global, competitive and flexible transport for the Company's customers. **Evelyn Maersk** will be registered in Copenhagen and will be commanded by Captain Niels Beyer Nielsen with Oskar Vestergaard Jensen as Chief Engineer.

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Pacific Askari starts work for BP Caspian

Swire Pacific Offshore has confirmed that **Pacific Askari**, the first of Swire Pacific Offshore's new UT755L PSVs, which arrived in Baku, Azerbaijan, on the coast of the Caspian Sea, towards the end of last year, is now at work for BP Caspian.



The vessel was built at Pan United shipyard, and has received several modifications for conversion to a multi-role vessel.

Under the instruction of the charterer, **Pacific Askari** was fitted with a crane (of 60 tonnes), a carousel (of 410 tonnes), a spooling tower, a winch (of 38 tonnes), an over-boarding chute, two mezzanine decks, two deck generators, two accommodation containers and two remotely operated vehicles (ROVs).

The vessel is designed to house 68 personnel on board when fully operational. The vessel was due to have started work with BP Caspian in mid-February, and the charter with BP Caspian is for a minimum period of 20 months plus options, in support of installation activities for subsea infrastructure.

Stena Bulk Reports Profit for 2006

Stena Bulk finished another successful year with a profit of almost \$141m. With a deployed fleet of 60 vessels totaling more than 6 million dwt, Stena Bulk is the largest tanker shipping company in Sweden. The company has a market share of 40% in the Caribbean, 20% on the North Sea and 15% in the Baltic Sea. A total of about 2,000 persons are involved in Stena Bulk's activities, including about 50 persons ashore at offices in Gothenburg, Houston, London, Moscow, Singapore and Beijing.



The **STENA CONCEPT** seen in Willemstad (Curacao)

Photo : Els Kroon ©

Five new vessels were delivered in 2006 and a further six have been ordered for delivery up until 2010. These six units are all so-called Stena P-MAX tankers and will join the fleet of ten vessels of the same design, which Stena Bulk manages operationally and commercially on behalf of its listed sister shipping company Concordia Maritime.

PSA International profit increase

Container port operator PSA International has reported a 14% increase in net profit at S\$1.2Bn (\$784M) for the year 2006 on the back of strong growth in international trade. However, the Singapore-based operator, which participates in 25 port projects in 14 countries across Asia, Europe and the Americas, revealed that economic growth was slower than in 2005. Turnover was almost flat at S\$3.7Bn.

The year was characterised by the group's "single largest" overseas investment with the purchase of 20% stake in Hutchison Whampoa's global port portfolio that included terminals in Hong Kong and China. The group has noted that profits rose despite high fuel prices and attributed the healthy financial performance to higher throughput and cost reduction initiatives.

Globally volumes at PSA terminals rose 18% to 51Mteu with Singapore terminals accounting for 51% of group turnover. To cater to more volumes and bigger ships new berths are being built in Singapore, Antwerp's Deurganck Terminal, Incheon in South Korea and Tianjin in northern China. Group asset base amounts to S\$17Bn.

Silver Whisper passenger vessel in Sri Lanka

The Five Star Super Passenger cruiser **'Silver Whisper'** made its maiden call at Sri Lanka Ports Authority controlled passenger Jetty at Colombo Port carrying 260 passengers on board on March 03.



The ship under silver sea Cruisers Ltd; visited Colombo from Phuket in Thailand on her way to Kochin in India during the Indian Ocean Cruise. The huge building consists of 11 levels has a tonnage 28,258 tonnes.

File photo : Piet Sinke ©

The ship is of 610 feet length and 81.8 feet width. She sails at 21 knots. Built in 2000-2001 this huge building has been registered under Bahamas flag.

The ship facilitates 382 passengers on board in full

capacity and 295 crew members.

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GRIMALDI SET TO TAKE OVER FINNLINES BOARD

THE Grimaldi Group is set to take control of the Finnlines board at the company's AGM on 16 March.

A press release says that Grimaldi Group companies, which now own 50.7 % of Finnlines, will propose that the board should consist of Emanuele Grimaldi, Gianluca Grimaldi, Heikki Laine, Diego Pacella, Antti Pankakoski, Olav. K Rakkenes and Jon-Aksel Trogersen.

Finnlines Group's recently announced a 2006 operating profit of euros58.2m on revenues of euros632m compared to euros42m and 584.1m respectively for 2005.

The queen of liners pays KL a call

The **Queen Mary 2** – the world's most expensive passenger ship – sailed in majestically with 4,000 passengers and crew for a brief visit in Port Kelang

The grand dame of the sea anchored at the Star Cruises terminal in Pulau Indah yesterday, her maiden call into Port Klang as part of her cruise around the world in 80 days.

Transport Minister Datuk Seri Chan Kong Choy, who was guest of honour, said that the arrival of Queen Mary 2 was memorable because it coincided with the Visit Malaysia 2007.



The Queen Mary 2 docking upon its arrival at the Star Cruises terminal in Pulau Indah, Port Klang,— AP

"As this is the luxury liner's maiden world cruise, we are proud that the ship has selected Kuala Lumpur as one of her cities of call, in addition to 20 other world famous and great cities, including Rio de

Janeiro, San Francisco, Honolulu, Sydney and Paris," said Chan in his welcoming speech on board the ship.

He hoped more cruise ships would include Malaysia among their ports of call, saying that the support of major world cruise lines would pave the way to develop Malaysia into a regional cruise hub.

The master of **Queen Mary 2**, Commodore Bernard Warner, said the ship had "fitted nicely" into the port and had not encountered any problem in disembarkation of the passengers.

The ship began its globe-circling voyage from Fort Lauderdale in Florida, United States, on Jan 10 and will return on April 2. The ship cost US\$800mil and stretches almost four football fields in length. It is a luxury-floating haven, with a host of "firsts" to her credit.

It features the world's first floating planetarium, the largest library at sea and a huge ballroom with the most spacious dance floor.

Cruise liner stranded in remote port by cyclone

A cruise ship caught in an Indian Ocean cyclone was forced to limp into an isolated island port where its elderly passengers were trapped for five days.

The Saga liner **Spirit of Adventure**, with 250 British passengers aboard, suffered mechanical damage as it sailed through Cyclone Gamede last week.

Passengers said that, amid the 50-knot winds and 45ft swells, windows were broken, people were falling off chairs, and they even had to avoid a falling grand piano.

Fortunately, only minor injuries among the passengers, all of whom were over the age of 50, have been reported.

Martin Breen, the captain, took the decision to abort the 14-day cruise and headed for the nearest port of refuge, Antsiranana at the northernmost tip of Madagascar, where they arrived last Tuesday. Engineers then found a length of rope was entangled around one of the ship's two propellers.

But the company was then unable to charter enough planes to fly the passengers to the island capital of Antananarivo where they could get international connections.

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One passenger John Talbot, 76, told The Times after arriving back in Crawley, West Sussex, yesterday that he was relieved the ordeal was over. "It's been a chapter of adventures," he said.

Last night 42 passengers were still in the Madagascan capital waiting to be flown back to Britain.



The **PRINSENDAM** visited the port **PARINTINS** along the Amazon River where the crew was greeted by the locals as can be seen at the picture above.

Photo : Paul Kroonenburg + Prinsendam Samba Officers ©

Fire-fighting system on ship rendered virtually useless

A SINGAPORE-flagged vessel had its Halon 1301 fixed fire extinguishing system rendered virtually useless during an engine room fire two years ago because the fire had prevented the crew from shutting off the ventilation opening to the engine room.

This was one of the findings in the investigation into the incident by the Australian Transport Safety Bureau, which also pointed out the vessel was lucky the fire occurred in harbour for if it had been at sea, the crew may have had to abandon ship without access to all its emergency life rafts.

The incident took place at about 5:40am on May 24, 2005 while the general cargo ship **Java Sea** was berthed in Cairns. The fire started in the engine room adjacent to the oil-fired thermal fluid heater. Initial attempts by the crew to fight the fire using a fire hose were unsuccessful and the decision was taken to use the Halon 1301 fixed fire extinguishing system.

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However, the Halon 1301 proved ineffective because the heat prevented the ship's crew from closing the ventilation opening at the top of the engine room exhaust funnel.

The fire was eventually extinguished by the Queensland Fire Service using high-expansion foam injected through a hole cut in the base of the funnel directly above the seat of the fire. No one was hurt in the fire but the engine room and accommodation of Java Sea were so badly damaged that the vessel had to be towed to Singapore for permanent repairs.

According to the Australian Transport Safety Bureau, but for the actions of the Queensland Fire Service, the damage to Java Sea would have been far worse and the fire may have spread to the wharf and the adjoining port facilities.

In its report, the Bureau concluded that a leakage of hot pressurised thermal fluid (mineral oil), possibly in the form of a spray, probably ignited when it came into contact with a section of the thermal fluid heater exhaust piping.

According to the investigation report, a combination of the ventilation openings on the upper funnel casing and the intensity of the fire had created a 'chimney effect' that drew the Halon out of the machinery space almost as soon as it was released.

The requirements of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) applicable to Java Sea require a 'means of control' for the closure of openings in exhaust funnels and for the controls to be located such that they will not be cut off in the event of fire.

However, the ventilation opening in **Java Sea's** funnel casing could not be closed remotely. As it turned out, manual closure was also not possible because the location and intensity of the fire led to flames and large amounts of heat and smoke escaping through the ventilation opening. To make matters worse, the vessel's chief engineer had failed to activate the engine room quick-closing valves, including the generator fuel supply. As a result, the No 1 diesel generator was still running when the Halon 1301 was released.

This meant that the concentration of Halon 1301 in the engine room would have been depleted when it was drawn into the diesel generator's air intake.

According to the Bureau, this loss of Halon 1301 would have been eliminated if the diesel generator had been shut down before the release of the Halon 1301, which would have mitigated the size and intensity of the fire. The report also found that the damage to the ship and risk to its crew would have been far more severe if the incident had occurred away from the port.

'If the fire had occurred while the ship was at sea or at anchor, the limited options available to the crew in fighting the fire following the unsuccessful discharge of Halon 1301 would have probably resulted in the ship being abandoned,' said the Bureau.

Java Sea was equipped with a rescue boat and four inflatable life rafts, with the rescue boat to be used to retrieve persons from the water, marshal the rafts and then tow them clear of the abandoned ship. Two of these life rafts were situated on the starboard side of the ventilation funnel casing. The rescue boat was positioned just forward of these two life rafts and adjacent to the accommodation. 'Given the location of the fire and its heat and intensity, these life-saving appliances probably would not have been accessible to the crew if there was a need to abandon the ship,' said the Bureau.

The Bureau has called on ship owners, managers and masters of ships with ventilation openings in exhaust funnel casings similar to that on **Java Sea** to immediately assess their adequacy in consultation with their ships' class societies and flag state administration.

MOVEMENTS

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The **SAMPOGRACHT** seen enroute Antwerp

Photo : www.tugspotters.com

Today Tuesday 6th March @ 1500 the German Navy 404 Class Multipurpose tender **FGS ELBE A511** is sailing from Valletta. AFM Alouette helo will conduct deck landing trials on her outside Grand Harbour, weather permitting.

On Thursday 8th March @ 1030 the Danish Navy FLYVEFISKEN Class Large Patrol Craft **HDMS GLENTEN P557** is calling Valletta. Sailing same day



The new DEME dredger **REYNAERT** commenced her yard trials

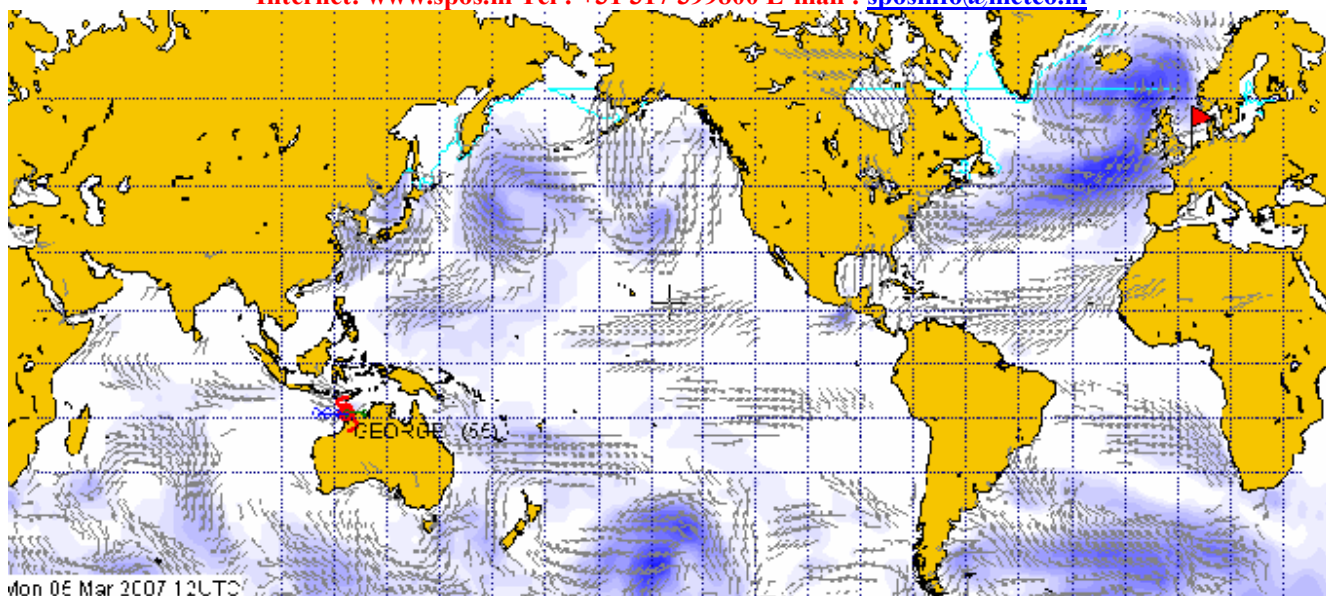
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MARINE WEATHER

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Today's wind (+6Bft) and wave (+3m) chart. Created with SPOS, the onboard weather information & voyage optimisation system, used on over 500 vessels today.

.... PHOTO OF THE DAY



The new **UNION AMBER** seen enroute from Antwerp to her new homeport Zeebrugge
Photo : Richard Wisse ©

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