

DAILY COLLECTION OF MARITIME PRESS CLIPPINGS - 129



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Last week the brandnew tugboat NEPTUN 10 was delivered in China and departed for Hong Kong, where the tug will receive all it's towing equipment, bunkers, food, provisions.

Thereafter the tug will "set sail" for Singapore or Rotterdam, awaiting further orders, preferably a tow to north west Europe. This new (53 tons bollard pull – twin screw – double drum winch) anchorhandling utility tug is the third new tug for Dutch International Towage Company (a joint venture between Landfall Transport & Towage bv and Neptune Marine Services bv, both located in the Netherlands).

Photo via Landfall Transport & Towage bv, Slidrecht, the Netherlands

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EVENTS, INCIDENTS & OPERATIONS



Bluewater's **GLAS DOWR** seen moored at Sembawang Shipyard in Singapore

Photo : Piet Sinke ©

Ship delays expected due to spill, but none yet

Shippers and ports on the Gulf of Mexico prepared Friday for a worst-case oil spill impact, including vessel delays for cleaning, but ships so far had passed through the mess without contamination, officials said. "We have seen no impacts at all," said an oil trader for a major refiner that receives oil via the Gulf and Mississippi River. "If the oil gets to the mouth of the Mississippi, we think there may be some delays, but nothing substantial."

There could be some delays for ship cleaning from New Orleans to Mobile, Alabama, if the spill spreads farther into shipping lanes, but officials hoped to avoid major slowdowns, said Judith Adams of the Alabama State Port Authority.

"We really need to try and keep commerce moving but also protect the environment," she said. Onshore preparations accelerated Friday as oil kept spewing after the blowout and explosion of a BP Plc well in the Gulf off Louisiana April 20, killing 11 workers, sinking a drilling rig and spawning a giant oil spill.

A practice run cleaning a ship Friday went smoothly at Southwest Pass, deepwater entrance to the Mississippi River and New Orleans, officials said. Work continued installing a boom system with a gate for ships at the entrance to Mobile Bay in Alabama. Sensitive areas were being boomed off without blocking ship channels at Pascagoula and Gulfport, Mississippi.

Louisiana Offshore Oil Port officials said oil had drifted through LOOP's security zone Thursday but they did not expect to halt operations. Winds, currents and a rising Mississippi River - due to flooding rains upstream - appeared favorable Friday for keeping the spill away from key Gulf shipping lanes, but officials cautioned conditions could change.

The spill had not seriously threatened the Mississippi-Alabama coast as of Friday, but it was onshore in parts of Louisiana, though it had not seriously marred the Mississippi River entrance as of Friday.

The practice cleaning of a vessel at Southwest Pass Friday was intended to streamline a system "almost like a carwash," said Captain Jason Bosley of the Associated Branch Pilots.

Sheen contamination can be hosed off in an hour or two, but dirtier ships might have to anchor at Pilottown or Boothville, Louisiana, and face delays up to two days, officials said. Two cleaning boats were put at Southwest Pass, but more resources could be made available, and cleaning stations were being set up at the other ports. One boat at the pass was dedicated to outbound ships to clean them for their next stop.

"This is not going to be voluntary. If a ship has oil on it, it is going to be cleaned," Bosley said, but he added "every effort is being made" to keep the process speedy. One ship at Mobile and at least two others at the mouth of the Mississippi reported passing through the spill but were inspected and found not to be contaminated.

They may have benefited from the fact that the oil has been treated with dispersants, which are supposed to make the oil less sticky, Bosley said.

In Alabama, a double boom was being stretched across the Mobile Bay entrance, anchored by pilings and featuring tugboat-driven gates to let ships pass without letting oil into the bay, Adams said. "What we're trying to do is protect the environment, but we still have a business to run," Mississippi State Port director Don Allee said. **Source :**
DNAIndia

Probe concludes torpedo sank South Korea ship

Investigators probing the deadly sinking of a South Korean navy ship in March near the North have concluded that a torpedo was the source of an explosion that destroyed the vessel, a news report said on Friday. The team of South Korean and foreign investigators found traces of explosives used in torpedoes on several parts of the sunken ship as well as pieces of composite metal used in such weapons, South Korea's Yonhap news agency said quoting a senior government official.

South Korean officials have not officially accused the North but made little secret of their belief Pyongyang deliberately torpedoed the 1,200-tonne corvette **Cheonan** in March near their disputed border in retaliation of a naval firefight last year.

The metallic debris and chemical residue appear to be consistent with a type of torpedo made in Germany, indicating the North may have been trying to disguise its involvement by avoiding arms made by allies China and Russia, Yonhap quoted the official as saying.

North Korea has denied involvement and accused South Korean President Lee Myung-bak's government of trying to use the incident for political gains ahead of local elections in June. **Source : Reuters**



Above seen Allseas **Audacia** during project preparations in Trinidad - Chaguaramas Bay.

Photo : **Audacia Deck Mechanics** ©

Innovative concept to combat Gulf of Mexico oil spill

Two Dutch organisations – Deltares, an expertise centre for delta technology located in Delft and Rotterdam-based dredging company Van Oord – have together come up with an innovative concept to combat the oil spill threatening the US's southern coast. Their proposals consist of a set of radical measures that will do more to limit the environmental impact of the spill than has been assumed until now. Not only must the offshore slick be cleaned up, but the oil must also be kept away from vulnerable wildlife areas. Deltares and Van Oord have the required knowledge, experience and capacity to design and execute the sweeping measures required. The oil, which has been spilling into the Gulf of Mexico since 22 April from various leaks at 1500 metres depth, is situated approximately 80 kilometres off the coast of the state of Louisiana, threatening the Mississippi delta ecosystem. Experts fear that it may turn into the biggest oil spill ever. Hundreds of animal species along the coast are under threat. It may take weeks or even months before the leaks have been sealed.

Given the size of the slick and the possibility that oil will continue to spill out for several weeks or months, it will be impossible to clean up the oil before it reaches the coast. Additional measures are needed to limit the impact on the ecosystem as much as possible. Everything possible must be done to prevent oil residue from ending up in the wetlands of the Mississippi Delta. Van Oord and Deltares have together developed a concept ensuring that any oil that does reach the coast causes as little damage as possible.

The concept has been brought to the attention of the relevant American parties through various networks of American and Dutch parties (for example the US Army Corps of Engineers, the Dutch embassy and the Dutch Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management/Department of Public Works), which evolved after the Hurricane Katrina disaster. The parties are now discussing using the concept to supplement existing containment measures.

In Zweden vaart waarschijnlijk de oudste vrachtvaarder ter wereld



Onder een stralende zon legt de **Sydfart** aan de Oceankaai in Karlshamn in Zweden aan om een lading koolzaad te lossen. De 81-jarige kapitein **Larry Hansson** maakt een retourtje met een van de oudste vrachtschepen van Zweden. Ze werd gebouwd in 1879. Hij zegt : "- Ik denk dat de **Sydfart** het oudste nog actieve droge lading schip is in de wereld. De **Sydfart** vaart regelmatig tussen Kalmar en Karlshamn, een reis van acht of negen uur. Nu is er 300 ton koolzaad aanboord om te worden gelost.

Larry Hansson, welke voor eerst naar zee ging in 1944, houdt het oude schip is in goede conditie en en het schip onderging de laatste keuring in Denemarken zonder problemen. Nu heeft hij delen van het hout in het stuurhuis te vervangen door aluminium, want het was verrot.

[http://www.blt.se/nyheter/karlshamn/landets-aldsta-lastfartyg-med-veteranskepparen\(1906099\).gm](http://www.blt.se/nyheter/karlshamn/landets-aldsta-lastfartyg-med-veteranskepparen(1906099).gm)

Bulker sinks after collision

Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, Ltd. today said that that the Hong Kong registered, MOL-owned bulker **Bright Century** collided with a freighter in foggy conditions while under way on the high seas approximately 23 miles east of the Shangdong Peninsula, China. It sank some 40 minutes later, on May 2, 2010, at around 5:30 a.m. local time (GMT+8 hours). The crew of 23 (all Indians) was rescued by another vessel steaming nearby. The vessel with which Bright Century collided was the Liberia-registered **Sea Success**. That vessel's crew was rescued by helicopter and all are safe. It has been reported that the **Sea Success** is now docked.

The 178,739 dwt **Bright Century** left Dampier, Australia, with about 170,000 tons of iron ore bound for the port of Bayuquan, Liaoning Province. At the time of its sinking, the vessel had around 400 tons of fuel oil and about 70 tons of diesel oil left in its tanks. An oil slick approximately 5,500 meters long and 1,000 meters wide has been observed, and Chinese authorities are taking the necessary countermeasures. As of May 7, none of the slick had touched shore.

The cause of the accident is currently under investigation. **Source: MarineLog**



The **SEA HALIBUT** seen arriving in Great Yarmouth – Photo : Paul Gowen ©

Russia, Turkey may ban oil tanker transportation across Black Sea

Russia has proposed clearing Turkey's Black Sea straits from oil tankers and transport oil via two pipelines, which are under construction to pump crude to Europe across the sea, Russian daily Izvestia reported. The idea to clear the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits, which serve as the boundary between Europe and Asia, and send oil via the Russia-backed Burgas-Alexandroupolis and the Turkish Samsun-Ceyhan oil pipelines, will be discussed by a bilateral inter-governmental commission and the issue will be raised by the presidents of both counties on May 11-12, the paper said.

Russia argues that the Black Sea straits are overloaded and it takes a long time for ships to pass through them. It is also proposed that both pipelines be managed from a single center.

Oil companies, however, say that oil shipment by sea is cheaper and tankers can take several blends of oil at a time. The idea of Russia's oil pipeline monopoly Transneft is that the straits can be used only to ship petroleum products while crude can be supplied via the two pipelines.

Experts view the proposal as bold. Burgas-Alexandroupolis is a project between Russia, Greece and Bulgaria to pump Russian and Caspian oil from the Bulgarian Black Sea port of Burgas to the Greek Aegean port of Alexandroupolis. The three countries signed an agreement to build the 280-km (174-mile) Trans-Balkan pipeline in 2007, following several years of talks. The construction of the pipeline, in which Russian companies will hold 51% while Greek and Bulgarian firms will possess the remainder, had until recently been delayed by Bulgaria seeking better economic and environmental terms for the project.

Meanwhile, the Turkish Samsun-Ceyhan oil pipeline is already under construction but Russian companies have no stake in it so far. However, an available memorandum of understanding could offer non-Turkish (Russian and Italian) companies a shareholding of up to 50% in the project, the paper said. Although both projects seem to be quite different and can be regarded as rival undertakings, the idea of their management from a single center does not look so absurd, if the roles of the pipes are clearly defined, the paper said.

In particular, one pipe can be used to pump crude with a high content of sulfur and the other can be used for low-sulfur crude. Moreover, the Turkish pipeline will run to Ceyhan, which Turkey has pledged to make almost the most powerful oil port in the world, the paper said.

The negotiations are not easy as Turkey estimates future oil transits across the Black Sea at 200 million metric tons (1.5 billion barrels) of crude annually and seeks guarantees for oil supply volumes. Russian oil pipeline monopoly Transneft, however, has inferred some 132-136 million tons (968-997 million barrels) of oil annually and says it can only ensure the technical conditions for oil transportation, the paper said. Experts say, however, that although both pipelines can be merged technically, it is more logical to use the scheme "two pipelines - two management companies," the paper said. **Source: RIA Novosti**

THE PRIDE OF THE NOORDHOEK FLEET "NOORDHOEK CONSTRUCTOR"



Photo's : Nick de Jonge ©



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The **IRENE** seen enroute Amsterdam Photo : Marcel Coster ©

Greek crisis hangs heavily over Arab oil meeting

Ministers likely to meet on sidelines to discuss crude price situation

Arab oil ministers gathering in Qatar have crude prices where they want them even after a more than 10 per cent fall driven by concern other European nations could suffer a debt crisis similar to that of Greece. Members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) attending an Arab Energy Conference will be watching international oil markets for further falls, but also have the challenge of meeting rapidly rising energy demand at home high on their agendas.

"The concern for producers will be what happens if the sovereign debt crisis spreads across Europe and over the Atlantic," said Victor Shum, an analyst at energy consultancy Purvin & Gertz. "This will scupper the global economic recovery."

The conference in Doha from tomorrow until Wednesday is not an Opec gathering, but oil ministers will probably hold informal meetings on the sidelines of the four-day event. Ministers from Opec members Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Algeria and Libya are expected to attend.

"Issues related to Opec supply will be discussed," said one Opec delegate. "But the oil price is not based on fundamentals and is moving on fluctuations in the US dollar." US crude hit a 19-month high on Monday of \$87.15 (Dh320.53), but has since fallen back sharply, dropping to an intra-day low below \$75 a barrel on Thursday, its weakest since February. It was back above \$77 yesterday.

The extent of the fall and the volatility could worry some Opec ministers, but the price is back in the \$70 to \$80 per barrel range the group's largest producer Saudi Arabia has said was fair for consumers and producers.

"The price is still in a good place for the Saudis," said Bill Farren-Price of consultancy Petroleum Policy Intelligence. "I don't hear anybody complaining. Below \$70 would be a different story." Oil has mostly traded above \$80 since early March, and Kuwait's oil minister last week talked of stepping in to calm the rally if the price hit \$100.

Opec ministers question the link between the price and oil market fundamentals. The price has stayed high in defiance of brimming global inventories, tepid demand growth in most of the world and a relatively high level of spare capacity among Opec members.

Opec is not scheduled to meet formally until October and has kept oil supply targets steady since late 2008. Higher prices have encouraged some members to boost output informally, but core Gulf Arab members Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Kuwait have stuck to output restraints.

A petrodollar-fuelled economic boom in much of the Arab region has left governments in some of the world's top oil producing countries struggling to meet domestic demand for gas and power. "Unfettered growth in demand in these countries as a result of cheap or subsidised prices is something they will have to deal with at some point," said Farren-Price. **Source : GulfNews**



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Series of failures led to oil rig blast

The deadly blowout of an oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico was triggered by a bubble of methane gas that escaped from the well and shot up the drill column, expanding quickly as it burst through several seals and barriers before exploding, according to interviews with rig workers conducted during BP's internal investigation.

While the cause of the explosion is still under investigation, the sequence of events described in the interviews provides the most detailed account of the April 20 blast that killed 11 workers and touched off the underwater gusher that has poured more than 3 million gallons (11.36 million litres) of crude into the Gulf.

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Portions of the interviews, two written and one taped, were described in detail to an Associated Press reporter by Robert Bea, a University of California Berkeley engineering professor who serves on a National Academy of Engineering panel on oil pipeline safety and worked for BP PLC as a risk assessment consultant during the 1990s. He received them from industry friends seeking his expert opinion.

A group of BP executives were on board the **Deepwater Horizon** rig celebrating the project's safety record, according to the transcripts. Meanwhile, far below, the rig was being converted from an exploration well to a production well.

Based on the interviews, Bea believes that the workers set and then tested a cement seal at the bottom of the well. Then they reduced the pressure in the drill column and attempted to set a second seal below the sea floor. A chemical reaction caused by the setting cement created heat and a gas bubble which destroyed the seal.

Deep beneath the seafloor, methane is in a slushy, crystalline form. Deep sea oil drillers often encounter pockets of methane crystals as they dig into the earth.

As the bubble rose up the drill column from the high-pressure environs of the deep to the less pressurized shallows, it intensified and grew, breaking through various safety barriers, Bea said.

"A small bubble becomes a really big bubble," Bea said. "So the expanding bubble becomes like a cannon shooting the gas into your face."

Up on the rig, the first thing workers noticed was the sea water in the drill column suddenly shooting back at them, rocketing 240 feet (73 metres) in the air, he said. Then, gas surfaced. Then oil.

"What we had learned when I worked as a drill rig labourer was swoosh, boom, run," Bea said. "The swoosh is the gas, boom is the explosion and run is what you better be doing."

The gas flooded into an adjoining room with exposed ignition sources, he said. "That's where the first explosion happened," said Bea, who worked for Shell Oil in the 1960s during the last big northern Gulf of Mexico oil well blowout. "The mud room was next to the quarters where the party was. Then there was a series of explosions that subsequently ignited the oil that was coming from below."

According to one interview transcript, a gas cloud covered the rig, causing giant engines on the drill floor to run too fast and explode. The engines blew off the rig and set "everything on fire," the account said. Another explosion below blew more equipment overboard.

BP spokesman John Curry would not comment Friday night on whether methane gas or the series of events described in the internal documents caused the accident. "Clearly, what happened on the Deepwater Horizon was a tragic accident," said Curry, who is based at an oil spill command centre in Robert, Louisiana. "We anticipate all the facts will come out in a full investigation."

The BP executives were injured but survived, according to one account. Nine rig crew on the rig floor and two engineers died. "The furniture and walls trapped some and broke some bones but they managed to get in the life boats with assistance from others," said the transcript.

The reports made Bea, the 73-year-old industry veteran, cry. "It sure as hell is painful," he said. "Tears of frustration and anger." On Friday, a BP-chartered vessel lowered a 100-ton concrete-and-steel vault onto the ruptured well, an important step in a delicate and unprecedented attempt to stop most of the gushing crude fouling the sea.

"We are essentially taking a four-story building and lowering it 5,000 feet (1,500 metres) and setting it on the head of a pin," BP spokesman Bill Salvin told The Associated Press. Underwater robots guided the 40-foot(12-meter)-tall box into place in a slow-moving drama. Now that the contraption is on the seafloor, workers will need at least 12 hours to let it settle and make sure it's stable before the robots can hook up a pipe and hose that will funnel the oil up to a tanker.

"It appears to be going exactly as we hoped," Salvin said on Friday afternoon, shortly after the four-story device hit the seafloor. "Still lots of challenges ahead, but this is very good progress." By Sunday, the box the size of a house could be capturing up to 85 per cent of the oil. The task became increasingly urgent as toxic oil crept deeper into the bays and marshes of the Mississippi Delta.

A sheen of oil began arriving on land last week, and crews have been laying booms, spraying chemical dispersants and setting fire to the slick to try to keep it from coming ashore. But now the thicker, stickier goo -- arrayed in vivid, brick-colored ribbons -- is drawing ever closer to Louisiana's coastal communities.

There are still untold risks and unknowns with the containment box: The approach has never been tried at such depths, where the water pressure is enough to crush a submarine, and any wrong move could damage the leaking pipe and make the problem worse. The seafloor is pitch black and the water murky, though lights on the robots illuminate the area where they are working.

If the box works, another one will be dropped onto a second, smaller leak at the bottom of the Gulf.

At the same time, crews are drilling sideways into the well in hopes of plugging it up with mud and concrete, and they are working on other ways to cap it.

Investigators looking into the cause of the explosion have been focusing on the so-called blowout preventer. Federal regulators told The Associated Press Friday that they are going to examine whether these last-resort cutoff valves on offshore oil wells are reliable.

Blowouts are infrequent, because well holes are blocked by piping and pumped-in materials like synthetic mud, cement and even sea water. The pipes are plugged with cement, so fluid and gas can't typically push up inside the pipes.

Instead, a typical blowout surges up a channel around the piping. The narrow space between the well walls and the piping is usually filled with cement, so there is no pathway for a blowout. But if the cement or broken piping leaves enough space, a surge can rise to the surface.

There, at the wellhead of exploratory wells, sits the massive steel contraption known as a blowout preventer. It can snuff a blowout by squeezing rubber seals tightly around the pipes with up to 1 million pounds of force. If the seals fail, the blowout preventer deploys a last line of defence: a set of rams that can slice right through the pipes and cap the blowout. Deepwater Horizon was also equipped with an automated backup system called a Deadman. It should have activated the blowout preventer even if workers could not.

Based on the interviews with rig workers, none of those safeguards worked. **Source : Canoe**

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Passenger injured on Gozo Channel ferry complains of 'lack of safety'

The last thing Stella Vella expected on her way to Gozo was to break her arm on the ferry and, infuriated by what she felt was lack of safety and negligence on the part of the ferry operator, she yesterday filed a judicial letter. Ms Vella, 58, said she was walking onto the **MV Gaudos** at 7.30 a.m. last Friday in Ċirkewwa when she slipped in a pool of oil and fell, fracturing her arm. She was on the loading deck at the time and the fall put her at risk of being hit by cars driving onto the ferry.

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Ms Vella said her relatives saw Gozo Channel employees wash the oil off the deck two trips later, confirming just how dangerous it was. After the incident, she was taken to the passenger deck and the only first aid given to her was some ice from the bar and a chair to sit on.

The pain and the shock of her injury made her faint and the employees failed to tell the emergency services she had fallen, saying only that she had fainted. As a result, when the ambulance arrived it did not have the necessary equipment to transport her properly to the hospital because of her injuries.

Ms Vella is holding the company responsible for damages on the basis that the crew acted irresponsibly and the ship was not equipped for such accidents. Lawyer Stefano Filletti signed the letter. **Source : timesofmalta**



Rock laying ship "**Frans**" seen entering Malta on 6/5/10 in the very early morning.

Photo : Anthony Vella ©

NAVY NEWS

NEW ZEALAND NAVY CONCLUDES SINGAPORE VISIT



Yesterday late afternoon during heavy rainfall the New Zealand navy ships **HMNZS A 11 ENDEAVOUR** (top) and the **HMNZS F 77 TE KAHA** (below) departed from Singapore Sembawang – **Photo's : Piet Sinke ©**



HMNZS Te Kaha (F77) is one of ten Anzac class frigates (German MEKO 200ANZ design), and one of two serving in the Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN), her sister is named **Te Mana(F111)** The name **Te Kaha** is Maori, meaning 'fighting prowess' or 'strength'

Te Kaha was laid down by Tenix Defence Systems in Williamstown, Victoria, Australia on 19 September 1994. She was launched on 22 July 1995 and commissioned into the RNZN on 22 July 1997.

Te Kaha is 118 metres long and can travel at 27 knots. The frigate carries a 5-inch (127 mm) gun, Sea Sparrow missile system, Phalanx Close In Weapon System, six torpedo tubes, and numerous small arms ranging from 9 mm pistols to 50-calibre machine guns. **Te Kaha** carries one KAMAN SH-2G Super Seasprite helicopter.

Northrop Grumman-Built U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Waesche (WMSL 751) Commissioned

May 7th the Northrop Grumman Corporation-built National Security Cutter (NSC) **USCGC Waesche** was commissioned, allowing the service's most capable and technologically-advanced maritime asset to join the Coast Guard fleet.



"Today's commissioning completes the cycle from christening to commissioning of this highly capable ship," said Vice Admiral David Pekoske, Vice Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard. "It is through the strong partnership with industry, from concept to delivery, that you see this fine ship behind me. I thank our industrial partners, Northrop Grumman and Lockheed Martin for their industry best practices that built Waesche. Your employees who built this ship are providing a service to this nation and I thank you."

Waesche is named for Adm. Russell R. Waesche, who was the first Coast Guard commandant to achieve the rank of admiral. He led the Coast Guard from 1936 to 1946, which is the longest tenure of any USCG commandant.

Adm. Waesche's granddaughter and ship's sponsor Marilla Waesche Pivonka ordered the men and women of the **Waesche** crew to "man our ship and bring her to life." The crew responded with an "aye aye ma'am" and double-timed it through the spectators on Coast Guard Island in Alameda, Calif.

"This is a proud day to be a shipbuilder," said Irwin F. Edenzon, vice president and general manager of Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding-Gulf Coast. "When you see the Coast Guard bring **USCGC Waesche** to life, for us it represents the culmination of years of hard work by thousands of shipbuilders. I believe Admiral Waesche would understand the skills and experience required of craftsmen and women and the millions of hours of hard, yet careful, labor and striving every day to get it right and do it better."

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U.S. Coast Guard Capt. Lance Bardo assumed command as commanding officer of **Waesche**. The ship will be homeported in Alameda.

Waesche is the second of eight planned ships in the new class of highly capable, technologically advanced multimission cutters. Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding is responsible for the construction and testing of the NSC's hull, mechanical and electrical systems, while Lockheed Martin is building and integrating the command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C4ISR) capabilities onboard the cutters.

The NSC is a 418-foot vessel with a 4,488 ton displacement at full load and is powered by a combined diesel and gas turbine power propulsion plant driving twin screws with a maximum speed of over 28 knots. The cutter includes an aft launch and recovery area for two rigid hull inflatable boats, an expansive flight deck able to accommodate a range of rotary wing manned and unmanned aircraft and state-of-the-art command and control systems. In addition, the cutter features improved habitability, and a design to facilitate optimized crewing and enhance onboard quality of life for a mixed gender crew.

Northrop Grumman Corporation is a global defense and technology company whose 120,000 employees provide innovative systems, products, and solutions in information and services, electronics, aerospace and shipbuilding to government and commercial customers worldwide.

SHIPYARD NEWS



The **MSC DYPHNA** (IMO 8608195) seen during a drydocking period at the Desan Shipyard in Tuzla, Turkey.

Photo : Ralf Kroon ©

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Russia's United Shipbuilding mulls merger with 2 Ukrainian companies

Russia's OJSC United Shipbuilding Corporation (USC) is considering merging with two Ukrainian companies - Zorya-Mashproekt gas turbine scientific and industrial complex (Mykolaiv) and OJSC Feodosiya More Shipyard, according to the company's president Roman Trotsenko. "Zorya-Mashproekt is a very strong turbine plant, which can produce gas turbines. More is a large shipyard that produces ships from light metal alloys and aluminum. The two companies are state companies..., which suffer difficulties with finding work, and we could settle the issue if the companies integrate with the USC," reads a posting on the Russian government's Web site, citing Trotsenko, who was speaking at a meeting with Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin on Tuesday. **Source: Ukrainian Kournal**

South African firm to establish ship yard in Nigeria

Southern African Shipyard has indicated interest in developing a shipyard in the country. The company's Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Prasheen Maharaj who led a delegation to the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency in Lagos explained that ship building was a major source of employment for artisans such as welders, electricians, carpenters and technicians. He added that ship building had a multidisciplinary field. Maharaj described their venture into the Nigerian maritime industry as that of partnership. He said: "We will like to see ourselves as partners rather than investors. As partners, we seek more protection and minimum guarantee from NIMASA for our investment. Our goal is to create employment for Nigerians and ultimately add appreciable value to the nation's economy." The team inspected facilities at the Naval Dockyard in Lagos, before proceeding to Warri and PortHarcour for further feasibility studies.

Southern African Shipyard is the biggest shipbuilding firm in South Africa. It has the capacity to construct tug boats, vessels up to 30 meters in length, Yatch which are as long as 95 meters in length and also construct naval vessels. In a statement by Ms ego Nwokocha, head, Public Relations, the Director General of NIMASA, Mr Temisan Omatseye urged the firm to commence immediate operations in the country by providing ship repair services before graduating to ship building.

He also added that the project will develop both human capacity and physical facilities for the Nigerian maritime sector. Omatseye told the delegation that the agency was needed patrol boats, barges and passenger vessels. He explained that building a shipyard in Nigeria will be a criterion for selecting the company to supply the patrol boats to NIMASA. He also announced a zero tax level incentive for any company desirous of building shipyard in Nigeria. The director general explained that the Nigerian economy operated an open market system which allows multiple participation. Omatseye said: "We cannot exclude other participants. We want people to come to Nigeria and grow to the stage of building Very Large Crude Carriers, VLCC, LNG Vessels, and Large Tankers. We have a very vibrant market so we cannot restrict participation. We will guarantee your political risk by assuring you of stability in government policies. However, we cannot guarantee your commercial risk. But I can assure you that the Nigerian market has the potentials to absorb all your services. An example is your colleague from South Africa, the MTN Group who came to Nigeria in 2001 with a projection to sell 30,000 lines in 6 months and ended up selling over 1,500,000

lines in 3 months.” He described the Nigerian maritime sector as key to the development of the Nigerian economy. He informed them that the services of the South African shipyard(SAS) will play an important role in the vessel replacement programme of the Agency. He also expressed optimism that the coming to Nigeria of the SAS will greatly enhance manpower development in the Nigerian maritime sector. **Source: Compass Newspaper**



The bulker **Valparaíso** (at the Synchrolift) and the **Almirante Irizar** seen at the **Tandanor yard** in Buenos Aires
Photo : Clemens Smits ©

Ernstig ongeval bij CDM

Een man die gisteren werkzaamheden verrichtte in de buurt van een schip dat bij de Curaçaose Dok Maatschappij (CDM) wordt gerepareerd, raakte op een bepaald moment ernstig gewond. Alhoewel onderzoek nog moet uitwijzen wat er precies gebeurde, verklaarden omstanders dat hun collega geraakt werd door rondvliegende objecten, veroorzaakt door vallend materiaal.

Het slachtoffer werd met ernstig letsel aan onder andere zijn hoofd en de rest van zijn lichaam door het personeel van de Curaçao Emergency Medical Services (Cems) naar het St. Elisabeth Hospitaal (Sehos) vervoerd. Hij is gezien de ernstige verwondingen opgenomen in de Intensive Care Unit van het ziekenhuis.

De werknemer zou volgens de lezing van zijn collega's in de namiddaguren werkzaamheden aan het verrichten zijn in de buurt van een schip. Ook zou in de nabije omgeving een kraan bezig zijn met het optillen van zwaar materiaal afkomstig van dit vaartuig. Op een bepaald moment echter viel één van deze niet goed gekoppelde zware objecten van de kraan. Die zou terecht zijn gekomen op ander werkmateriaal, waarvan rondvliegende onderdelen de werknemer raakten. **Bron : Amigoe**

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The Swedish tug **Per** built 1972 was bought by Alfons Håkans (Rederi Ab Fakir) and she is seen at Turku on 7.5.2010. She will be renamed **Atlas** and will be stationed at Helsinki.

Photo : Risto Brzoza ©

Newsletter from Wikborg Rein: The Deepwater Horizon spill – the implications for voyage orders in the U.S. Gulf

The tragic explosion and subsequent fire and loss of **Deepwater Horizon** in April 2010 has had more far reaching consequences than were ever imagined in the immediate aftermath of the casualty.

THE DEEPWATER HORIZON SPILL – NEW ORDERS FOR SHIPPING?

The tragic explosion and subsequent fire and loss of **Deepwater Horizon** in April 2010 has had more far reaching consequences than were ever imagined in the immediate aftermath of the casualty. As we go to press the slick is close to ports in Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana. These states handle 20% of US refining. The Mississippi river is the single busiest waterway in the US with 5-6000 ship calls a year and is close to the large LOOP offshore oil handling facility.

The incident is clearly having a wider effect on shipping. Shipowners have already sought advice from Wikborg Rein's global English law team as the threat impacts on day to day operations, voyage orders and new fixtures. Concerns have come first from the tanker sector; but it has the potential to affect many ports and therefore many forms of shipping. Similarly those who charter tonnage will soon be concerned by the flip side of the owner's questions.

The obvious concern is that a port becomes unreachable either physically due to the deployment of booms or legally due to restrictions imposed upon vessel movements.

The questions posed by the industry so far have included:

- Can we/should we still accept fixtures or voyage orders for ports in the Gulf of Mexico, when there is a risk the ports could be closed by the spreading slick.
- What can owners do if they are under orders on passage to a Gulf Port or terminal and the port/terminal becomes unreachable.
- What happens if the vessel is discharging alongside and it becomes clear we cannot finish discharge before the slick will hit the port and close it, thus trapping the vessel.
- Are we still on hire/ can we claim demurrage or detention if a vessel is unable to leave due to port closures or slick related restrictions.
- How does this impact on a final voyage if the laycan dates for the next fixture are missed because of unexpected delays.

This bulletin seeks to briefly outline some of the key aspects of English law that are likely to apply in this situation. We take time and voyage charters in turn.

Voyage Orders – a Time Charter perspective

Broadly speaking, owners should not be unduly concerned about receiving orders to proceed to the US Gulf either laden or in ballast.

Lawful orders

The starting point is that under a time charter there is an ongoing obligation upon the charterer to give lawful orders and owners must comply with those orders. However, should it become unlawful or impossible to reach a port due to restrictions, the owner can legitimately call for new orders and his time charterer is obliged to give them. Meanwhile the vessel remains on hire.

Safe ports

It is also a clear principle of English law that charterers are obliged to order vessels to ports which are "prospectively" safe (ie safe when the ship is to call) at the time the order is given.

For an existing voyage, a legitimate order may have already been given, but:

the port may then become unsafe due to the oil slick if the vessel cannot reach or leave without risk of pollution damage (aside from bottom fouling there is the risk of tracking oil upstream into clean waters on a dirty hull), or once a port is reached the vessel runs the risk of being trapped in port by a movement ban or the deployment of booms etc.

This becomes altogether more difficult for a charterer where new orders are given today involving a port currently at risk or potentially at risk.

A question of fact: when is an oil slick affected port unsafe?

The question whether a port is situated in a region affected by an oil spill is an easy one to ask. Answering whether a port is "unsafe" is not so straightforward. If a charterer orders a vessel to such a port, it will be in breach of its obligations under the charterparty with potentially serious exposure for the charterer, therefore this is a key question.

There do not appear to be any authorities on whether a port affected by an oil spill can be an "unsafe port". The vast majority of the authorities on this question relate to the safety of a port being determined by either its physical or political characteristics. Whether a port can be considered unsafe because it is in a region affected by the oil spill is a question of fact -essentially centred around the magnitude of the risk to the vessel approaching, lying at or leaving that port. It is therefore an issue owners must consider carefully. What is clear is that the approach route to a port is part of the port itself. Of course if the danger can be avoided by an alternative safe route, the port is not unsafe.

Blocking in a port without any physical risk to the ship is unlikely in itself to render the port unsafe if this is short term. But the risk of prolonged detention can make a port unsafe. However an owner entitled to hire may suffer no loss.

It is also well established that a vessel will need to be trapped for a very long time before considerations of frustration/repudiation come into play. Where an owner legitimately fears that his ship will not be damaged but will certainly be detained (ie trapped) for an extended period of time a Court might indeed be sympathetic to an owner's objections to an order: ships are intended for trade not to be trapped. Each case will have to be considered on its own facts and by reference to the charter clauses.

Why might it matter that a slick affected port is potentially unsafe?

Firstly, if it becomes apparent at any point that a port is prospectively unsafe (ie unsafe at the time the ship is to call) after the voyage order has been given, then under a time charter the position is that the charterer comes under an obligation to cancel the order and issue fresh orders to the owners. Indeed, absent an express clause in the charter to the contrary, it is probably the case that the owner may refuse to go to a prospectively unsafe port once he becomes aware mid voyage of that unsafety.

It may become clear whilst a vessel is loading/discharging/ working cargo in port that is about to become unsafe. If the Master can avoid the approaching danger by leaving the port, the charterers are equally obliged to order the vessel to leave and to issue fresh orders.

It is noteworthy that some charters (eg Shelltime 4) seek to substantially reduce the charterers' liability for the unsafety of any port. Shelltime in its unamended form restricts charterers' obligations to just exercising due diligence to ensure the vessel is employed to safe ports. It also seeks to deny liability for losses caused by any port being unsafe except where the loss is due to failure to exercise due diligence. This type of clause substantially reduces the ability of the owner to claim an indemnity from the charterer where the vessel suffers damage after being ordered to a port which is unsafe.

Abnormal Occurrence

Charterers may be tempted by a feeling of comfort that an Act of God or similar is letting them off the hook. However that is a potential trap for the unwary.

The test of what is a safe port is:

Whether it can be reached, used and left safely by a particular ship at the particular time which absent some abnormal occurrence -without danger save for the type which can be avoided by good navigation and seamanship.

Generally the decided cases have concerned events which happen very quickly such as sudden and unpredictable violent storms, or unforeseen one-off accidents. An earthquake, tsunami or a coup d'état may similarly be abnormal occurrences. To qualify, there is a 'wholly exceptional test' to overcome. In the current circumstances one would have to be living on a different planet to be unaware of the situation in the Gulf. There is no suggestion either that this has suddenly caught vessels unaware or that it will do so. Rather, knowledge of the slick is very public as is news of its progress. Accordingly, it seems likely that a Court may find that even though the change in characteristics of any port in the Gulf is sudden and temporary, it is not so sudden or temporary that a charterer would be relieved from liability for unsafety if a vessel suffers damage.

Implied Indemnity

Aside from any safe port warranty, many charters (eg NYPE clause 8) do, of course, give rise to an implied indemnity for following the charterers' orders. Therefore an owner who is ordered to a port which is subsequently shut due to the slick, may have a further avenue of redress through this indemnity even if there is an express exclusion of any port safety warranty. This indemnity is likely to be wide enough to cover damage to the ship for complying with an order which the owner has the right to reject but chooses for good commercial reasons to follow but then leads to some damage to the vessel.

Owners duty to act reasonably

Owners are not obliged to conduct their own enquiries to check the safety of a nominated port before accepting an order. Commonsense suggests that this be monitored and a dialogue with charterers take place if there is concern, however owners should tread carefully. It is likely that charterers will find owners reserving their position and notifying charterers that a claim will follow in the event of any damage. Meanwhile, of course, owners cannot sail into trouble and expect charterers simply to pick up the bill: owners are always expected to act reasonably to mitigate any loss or threatened loss.

Waiver or acknowledgment

Owners need to take some care not to unequivocally accept a potentially unlawful nomination. Otherwise although charterers remain liable for the safety of the port, owners may be found by their actions to have abandoned their right to refuse the nomination – though a claim for damages against the charterer remains.

Off-hire

With regard to off-hire this will almost certainly turn entirely on the wording of the particular off-hire clause. The Shelltime 4 form suggests the vessel would remain on hire unless one of the excepted perils comes into play over and above the existence of the slick.

Last voyage

There are clear implications arising from an unexpected delay in port which may lead to a laycan date being lost on a new fixture. Owners and charterers will wish to give early consideration to this risk and whether there is likely to be an actionable breach by charterers giving rise to a claim by owners for damages.

Port Nominations - a Voyage Charter perspective

The key difference under a voyage charter is that the vessel, if detained, will not be earning hire. Unless demurrage is running or it can be shown that there is an actionable breach by the charterer, the risk falls upon the owner and in particular does so where the safety of the nominated port or berth has been agreed by the owner.

Impossibility at time of nomination

Where a charterer nominates a port which is simply impossible to reach because of the oil spill - for example if the nominated port is shut at the time of nomination, or if the slick prevents port access - the charterer is obliged to make another nomination.

Supervening impossibility

If at the time the charterer makes the nomination the port is open but it is subsequently closed, an issue arises whether a voyage charterer has to nominate another port for loading or discharge.

If a charterer has validly nominated a load or discharge port under a voyage charter, that nomination can be changed but only with the agreement of the owner. Absent agreement, the vessel may proceed to the port "or so near thereunto as she may safely get/ reach" (as found for example in ASBATANKVOY or BPVOY4) and there give notice of readiness and sit there earning demurrage until the port clears. A charterer will be advised to negotiate revised terms well in advance if there are real concerns that the port will not promptly re-open.

Safe ports

The concept of safe port exists equally in voyage charters.

Where a charterer nominates a port that was originally safe but is subsequently considered unsafe after the spill incident, the charterer is not obliged to re-nominate unless expressly provided otherwise in the charter. Again, the owner can rely on his liberty to take the vessel only "so near thereunto as she may safely get/reach" if there is such a provision in the charter.

Delay or damage at the port

If the vessel has called at a port which is affected by the spill, she is likely to be on demurrage as a result of delay– or half demurrage under BPVOY4 if the delay was not within the reasonable control of owners or charterers. Owners who have complied with charterers' orders to proceed to an unsafe port may also have a claim in damages if there is any physical damage or delay.

Named ports

Clients should be aware that in recent decisions charterers were found to have warranted the safety of a port notwithstanding that the port was an agreed port in the voyage charter. Likewise whether there is an implied warranty of safety will turn on the precise wording of each charter.

Fixing tips:

- Where a fixture refers to, say, Shelltime 4, clear language in the recap indicating the parties intend to reintroduce a warranty of safety would protect owners.
- Owners may find charterers stipulating voyage charter clauses along these lines - "Owners guarantee that ... they have satisfied themselves to their full satisfaction with and about the port specifications and restrictions prior to entering into this Charter Party". This clause was found to be binding on owners after the vessel hit an underwater obstruction.
- A "so near thereunto as she may safely get/ reach" provision may prove very useful in voyage charters – see comments above.
- Parties may be tempted to turn to the extensive clausing that is found nowadays in ice bound fixtures, although these will require considerable amendments to work for oil.

Conclusion

Owners not wishing to suffer delays or other uncertain consequences of calling at a port likely to be affected by the oil spill are advised to be on alert when taking vessel nominations. Alternatively they may consider working in a bespoke clause in the charterparty allocating any damage that may be caused due to calling at an affected port to the charterer. No doubt the safest way to proceed will be to seek consensus with the charterer.

This above note is produced for the benefit of clients. It does not purport to be comprehensive or to give specific legal advice. Before action is taken on matters covered by this note, specific legal advice should be sought. Should you have any queries on anything mentioned in this note, please get in touch with your usual contact at Wikborg Rein, or Simon Tatham and Clare Calnan in London, Chris Grieveson and Clara Tan in Singapore, Trond Eilertsen in Oslo or Øystein Meland in Bergen.

Download the deepwater horizon spill newsletter [here](#)

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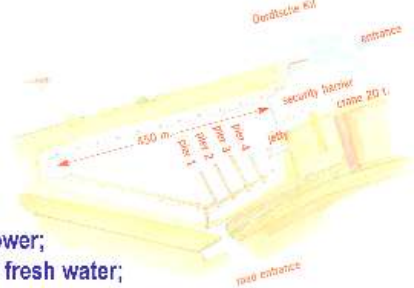
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The tug **SEA LION** seen assisting the **BRITISH WILLOW** upon arrival at the Sembawang shipyard in Singapore

Photo : Piet Sinke ©

MISC's profits hit by lower box and tanker rates

MISC Bhd's full year profits fell as a down cycle hit both tankers and container shipping. The Malaysian shipowner reported a profit after tax of RM822m for the year ended 31 March, 2010, down from RM1.48bn in the previous year. Revenues fell to RM13.77bn last year compared to RM15.78bn a year earlier. "The year 2009 saw the trough of the freight rate cycles for liner, chemical and petroleum shipping in tandem with the global economic turmoil," the company said. The fourth quarter of the year saw a bounce back in MISC's profitability with a profit of RM233m, compared to RM175m in the same quarter a year previous. The company said higher profits were mainly due a better performance of its LNG and offshore businesses, as well as cost reductions lowering operating costs. Looking to the year ahead MISC said the continued recovery of freight rates would track the speed and trajectory of global economic recovery. **Source : Seatrade Asia**

Paragon Shipping Inc. Announces Exercise of Options for Four Newbuilding Vessels

Paragon Shipping Inc., a global shipping transportation company specializing in drybulk cargoes, announced May 6th that it has exercised its previously announced options to build two additional Handysize drybulk carriers and two additional Kamsarmax drybulk carriers with expected deliveries in the third and fourth quarters of 2012, respectively.



The **MSC ORCHESTRA** seen moored in Amsterdam – **Photo : Joep van Dam ©**

Transas wins contract to upgrade VTS at the Port of Wellington

Greater Wellington Regional Council has announced Transas Group, manufacturing VTS system, a winner in a bidding for contract to upgrade Port of Wellington with the Transas Navi-Harbor VTS system, the Transas press release said.

The upgraded system configuration includes 12 ft radar, AIS interface and VHF with integrated recording of all the VHF communication.

The project to upgrade VTS system of the Port of Wellington may be considered as successful confirmation of Transas presence in New Zealand, following the Ports of Auckland and Picton Harbor (Marlborough) installation, the Transas statement said. Commissioned in 2006, Transas Navi-Harbor system in the Port of Picton was designed to reduce the risk of serious accidents involving vessels transiting the difficult waters between two ports – Picton and Wellington. Since that time the system has successfully performed its functions, contributing to safety and efficiency of maritime traffic in New Zealand's coastal waters.

Australian ports of Headland and Fremantle have also tested Transas VTS systems in action. The first Transas installation in Australia took place in 2000. The Transas Group will continue its partnership with other Australian ports in following years, the Company statement said. Transas is a world-leading developer and supplier of a wide range of software, integrated solutions and hardware technologies for the aviation and marine transportation industry, including both onboard and shore-based applications. **Source : PortNews**



The **FJELL** seen moored in Rotterdam – **Photo : Michel Kodde ©**

Songa Offshore Provides April fleet update

DAILY COLLECTION OF MARITIME PRESS CLIPPINGS - 129

Songa Venus has achieved operating efficiency of 97% during the month; the rig is currently working on the first out of 3 firm wells for Shell Development (Australia)..

Songa Mercur has during the month continued carrying out its 5 yearly SPS in Singapore, the rig successfully completed earlier announced dry dock repairs at Keppel FELS and is currently in process of finalizing and completing SPS inspections and work. The rig is scheduled to complete client required modifications and upgrades by 10 May and will then commence tow from Singapore for upcoming one well Gazflot contract in Sakhalin, Russia. .

Songa Saturn has achieved operating efficiency of 97% during the month. The rig completed the second of two firm wells for CNOOC in Equatorial Guinea and commenced de-mobilization back to Malta on 20 April with estimated arrival 12 May. The Company continues to actively market the rig and has received positive indications from clients for onwads work with only limited waiting periods between contracts..

Songa Dee has achieved operating efficiency of 97% during the month, the rig continues to operate for Marathon and Lundin in Norway, a scheduled maintenance period of approx 2 days took place during the month. .

Songa Delta has achieved operating efficiency of 99% during the month; the rig is currently working for Wintershall and Det Norske Oljeselskap in Norway..

Songa Trym has achieved operating efficiency of 100% during the month; the rig continues to operate for Statoil in Norway.

As per separate announcements the Company earlier in the month entered into an agreement with Deepwater Driller Ltd for acquisition of 31.25% of that company's shares. Also as part of the mentioned agreement, Songa Offshore took contractual responsibility for construction, marketing and operation of their 10.000 ft UWD unit currently being built at Jurong shipyard in Singapore. The rig has now been renamed **SONGA ECLIPSE**, and future fleet updates will cover status and progress of this unit in addition to the above listed 100% Songa Offshore SE owned rigs..

Source: Songa Offshore.



The tug **TARKA 3** seen outward bound from Rotterdam with the Boskalis Backhoe dredger **NORDISK GIANT**

Photo : Enrico Versfelt ©



The **PELAGIA** seen after completion of her overhaul in Den Helder – Photo : Piet Kerseboom ©

Lauritzen in Hafnia deal?

Start-up Danish chartering company Hafnia Management appears to be growing fast with reports that some J Lauritzen vessels have swelled its fleet.

News of the apparent new deal follows hot on the heels of the defection of 11 products tankers from Torm pools to the Marininvest spin-off. It is unknown how many ships Lauritzen has switched to Copenhagen-based Hafnia but sources suggest the deal has been struck on Friday.

Nobody was available for comment at J Lauritzen on Friday afternoon. Lauritzen Tankers currently has a fleet of 13 vessels on the water, all between 37,000-dwt and 54,000-dwt. It also lists in its fleet seven 50,300-dwt newbuildings for delivery between the end of this year and the first half of 2013.

Swedish shipping and investment group Marininvest only recently set up Hafnia as a chartering company aimed at operating products tankers of over 30,000-dwt. The Copenhagen-based outfit, which is not looking to operate as a pool, is to focus both on charter-in and charter-out business and will consider chemical tankers also.

TradeWinds reports in Friday's paper edition that Marininvest and Swedish owner Gotlandsbolaget have defected from Torm's products-tanker pools in favour of Hafnia with the switch due to be completed in the next three months. The changes mean a loss of 11 ships for Torm's pools.

Marinvest is pulling six tankers from Torm's long-range-one (LR1) pool with Gotlandsbolaget withdrawing four tankers from the Dane's medium-range (MR) pool and one from the LR1 pool. Gotlandsbolaget will keep one vessel in Torm's long-range-two (LR2) pool, however. Last week Torm was hit by the defections of seven key personnel, including the head of its tanker division, to Hafnia. Anders Engholm has become the start-up's new chief executive with other ex-Torm personnel assuming senior roles.

Jacob Meldgaard, Torm's chief executive, shrugged off the personnel defections, claiming he expected "business as usual". While it search for a new permanent tanker team an interim tanker-management team led by Meldgaard himself and filled out by other tanker executives has been put in place.

Sources in Europe continue to suggest there is dissatisfaction within Torm over the role played by major shareholder Gabriel "Villy" Panayotides. Torm has in the past denied there is any issue with Panayotides' role. But one external source this week described the relationship between Panayotides and Torm management as a cultural divide that has never been fully bridged. **Source : Tradewinds**

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OLDIE – FROM THE SHOEBOX



The Holland-Afrika liner **JAGERSFONTEIN** homeward bound heads into a north-westerly in Table Bay, Cape Town in the 1960's. **Photo: Robert Pabst ©**

.... PHOTO OF THE DAY



The **TRANSSHELF** seen arriving in Rotterdam-Europoort - **Photo : Marijn van Hoorn ©**

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