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**The PRINCESS SEAWAYS seen arriving 05.03.11 for the ferry terminal at North Shields.
Photo : Kevin Blair ©**

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Yesterday the sheerlegs **MATADOR 3** lifted the crane back onto the **SOLITAIRE** in Rotterdam-Caland canal

Photo : Henk Dekker – RPA 14 ©

French bank fails to sell SeaFrance

SeaFrance, the struggling ferry operator being run by administrators has failed to find any buyers. It was revealed last September that Credit Agricole, France's biggest retail bank group, was looking for bidders. Four potential buyers were reportedly interested in SeaFrance, which operates ferries between Dover and Calais. A deal could have taken the form of a partnership or a partial takeover. Though LD Lines and Brittany Ferries were rumoured to be amongst the interested parties, no deal has been secured. The news was announced last week at a meeting between chairman Pierre Fa and staff representatives. Following the meeting, MD Robin Wilkins broke the news that the firm would now

attempt to recapitalise. He said the ferry company's parent firm, France's state-run railway company SNCF, will seek permission for the recapitalisation from Brussels. The proposed refinancing would see SNCF arrange financing and hold on to its ownership of SeaFrance.

He added that the ferry operator could still be sold in the future but sorting out the company's finances was the immediate imperative. Wilkins said that though no suitable buyers had been found, there was no reason a suitable offer couldn't be made in the future. SeaFrance has battled for years against soaring costs and industrial unrest. Management has struggled to rebuild the business by slashing expenses. A total of 725 jobs were lost in the course of restructuring, though none of those positions were in the UK. **Source: Ferry Online**



The **AS FRANCONIA** seen outbound from Rotterdam – **Photo : Kees Torn ©**

U.S. looking at new moves on Somalia piracy

The United States is looking at new strategies to fight pirates off Somalia, who last month killed four Americans and represent a growing threat to sea traffic, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said. "I'm fed up with it," Clinton said in testimony to the Senate appropriations committee. "We need to do more, and make it clear that the entire world better get behind what we do and get this scourge resolved."

Pirates shot dead four U.S. hostages on a private yacht in waters off Somalia on February 22, the deadliest incident yet involving Americans kidnapped for ransom in an expanding lawless maritime region crossed by key shipping lanes. Pirate gangs preying on shipping lanes through the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean typically target large merchant ships, with oil tankers the prize catch, but the snatching of foreigners can also yield high ransoms. There were around 750 pirate hostages at the end of January.

Clinton said that existing efforts to stop the piracy, which include naval patrols by a number of nations, had failed to significantly dent pirate operations which are increasingly distorting world fuel trade due to higher insurance premiums. We have put together an international coalition, but frankly we're not in my view getting enough out of it ... we're looking at a lot of different options," Clinton said, saying the problem demanded a "much more comprehensive approach" by agencies including the Defense Department. Clinton declined to say what options were under consideration, but did outline factors she said would have to be addressed including a willingness by some shipping companies to sidestep the issue. "One of our big problems is that a lot of major shipping companies in the world think it's the price of doing business," Clinton said. "They pay a ransom and they just go on their merry way. That has been a huge problem."

Clinton said many foreign naval vessels now patrolling the area were not effective -- "when push comes to shove they're not really producing" -- and not enough was being done to go after the pirates' safe-haven ports on the Somali coast. Clinton said there was no question of U.S. military operations in mainland Somalia, where the United States withdrew after the killing of U.S. troops in late 1993 depicted in the movie "Black Hawk Down." But she said the piracy issue was moving up Washington's priority list as attacks continued unabated. **Source: Reuters**

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The **TRINA** seen loading two newbuild GOTTWALD cranes in the port of Gent for further transportation to Dahej in India - **Steven Oppeel** - <http://www.stevo.be> ©

Tidewater pays \$6.3 million to settle Nigeria case

In an SEC filing, Tidewater Inc. reports that it has reached agreement with the Federal Government of Nigeria to settle and resolve the previously disclosed investigation by the FGN relating to allegations that the Nigerian affiliate of a Swiss-based freight forwarder had made improper payments to government officials in Nigeria on behalf of Tidewater's foreign subsidiaries. The FGN's investigation in this regard focused on facts and circumstances associated with Nigeria operations in 2007 and previous years that were detailed in Tidewater's previous settlements with the U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

Pursuant to the settlement agreement, the FGN has terminated the above-mentioned investigation and agreed not to bring any criminal charges or civil claims against any Tidewater entity or associated persons arising from these allegations. In return, Tidewater agreed to pay \$6.0 million to the FGN and to pay an additional \$0.3 million for the FGN's attorneys' fees and other expenses. The total \$6.3 million (\$0.12 per diluted common share) settlement payments will be made promptly and will be reflected in Tidewater's fourth fiscal quarter results ending March 31, 2011. Among other provisions in the settlement agreement, Tidewater also affirmed a continuing commitment to good corporate governance and compliance. **Source : MarineLog**



The **MTS PROGRESS** of **TENDERSERVICE MAASMOND** seen returning to her base Maassluis after some deliveries off Hoek van Holland, contact **Charles** at info@tenderservicemaasmond.nl or +31 (0) 6 23 17 17 15 for enquiries of crew / personnel transportation in/ around the port of Rotterdam and deliveries to passing ships.

Photo : Henk van der Heijden ©

Cunard Line's Queen Victoria Meets Queen Mary in Long Beach Harbor for Historic Cunard Royal Rendezvous

Amidst fireworks and much fanfare, Cunard Line's **Queen Victoria** met **Queen Mary** for a historic Cunard Royal Rendezvous. Thousands of Cunarders and maritime enthusiasts alike gathered along the shores of Long Beach Harbor and aboard Queen Mary for a celebration that began with a series of whistle salutes between the two ships. Spectators were treated to a celebratory fireworks show, which illuminated the skies above the harbor during the first-time meeting between the two ships. Queen Victoria then departed on her 15-day Panama Canal voyage as she completes her debut Americas season.

The meeting of the two Queens marks only the second time in Cunard's 171-year history that a modern Queen has visited her docked sister ship; the first rendezvous occurred in February 2006 when flagship **Queen Mary 2** met her namesake during her maiden call to Los Angeles. The momentous Cunard Royal Rendezvous of **Queen Victoria** and **Queen Mary** also signaled the celebration of another significant milestone in Cunard history: the 75th anniversary of

Queen Mary's maiden voyage from Southampton, England (27 May 1936). Yesterday also marked **Queen Victoria's** fourth and last visit to the Port of Los Angeles as part of her debut Americas season, where she traversed both coasts through the Panama Canal.



Queen Victoria returns to the West Coast again in late 2011 when she reprises her Americas season. Debuting in December 2007, **Queen Victoria** is the third largest Cunarder ever built, weighing in at 90,000 tons. The 2,000 passenger liner is infused with a sense of luxury and tradition, from the Royal Court Theatre, which includes the first private viewing boxes at sea, to the signature two-storey library featuring a spiral staircase and nearly 6,000 volumes.

During Cunard's legendary 171-year history, the iconic **Queen Mary** epitomized the Golden Age of Ocean Travel and served as a Cunard liner for more than 30 years. Additionally, she served as a troopship during World War II and a Royal Mail Ship, under contract with the British Royal Mail service. **Queen Mary's** influence lives on today serving as interior design inspiration for the modern Cunard fleet – the youngest at sea – and continues to be a popular destination for maritime enthusiasts. She retired from service in 1967 and is permanently docked in Long Beach, Calif. as a hotel, museum and tourist attraction. For more information about **Queen Mary**, visit www.queenmary.com

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The **SALVARILE** seen moored in the port of Walvis Bay (Namibia) – Photo : Ian Shiffman ©

European Union to help countries in Gulf of Guinea secure maritime waters

The head of the European Union mission in Congo, Marcel Van Opstal, says the EU would help countries in the Gulf of Guinea to secure their maritime waters. Speaking on Wednesday in Brazzaville at the end of talks with the Congolese deputy minister for merchant navy, Martin Parfait Aimé Coussoud Mavoungou, he said the EU wished to tighten the security conditions on the western coast of Africa, from Mauritania to South Africa.

Mr Opstal stressed the vulnerability and resurgence of piracy, illegal fishing and drug trafficking in the Gulf of Guinea.

"We are not only concerned by the expansion of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, but also by other problems linked to security. We realise that the waters in the Gulf of Guinea are used for drug and child trafficking," he said. He said the objective was to define the problems, to hold dialogue with national and regional authorities to be able to set the types of intervention and cooperation which the EU could develop with countries from the region to tighten security.

Source : afriquejet

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NAVY NEWS



The Dutch MCM **M 856 MAASSLUIS** completed a maintenance period in Zeebrugge and was towed back to Den Helder naval base by the navy tug **GOUWE** as can be seen above

Photo : Ron Damman – www.newdeep.nl ©

UK navy ship arrives in style for Seychelles Carnival

It certainly is mixing business with a little pleasure for the crew of the United Kingdom navy ship **HMS Richmond**, which docked in Port Victoria. The crew are here – among other things – to support the Seychelles Carnival



Entering the port, the Richmond glided gracefully up to the quay with a selection of its crew dressed in their military whites lining the quayside at attention. A very striking scene, this was also said to represent the unity and harmony that exist between Seychelles, the UK and other countries that have sent naval ships to take part in the carnival.

The **Richmond** – on a seven-month deployment – is part of the UK's contribution to the European Union taskforce patrolling the seas in the fight against piracy, protecting ships of the World Food Programme and the African Union's military mission in Somalia. British high commissioner Matthew Forbes was present to welcome the ship and said the carnival is the first such occasion for everybody on board. There is an air of eagerness and excitement ahead of tomorrow's launch, he added.

Mr Forbes said the UK is showing its support for the Seychelles Carnival by having the **Richmond** here. Also there to welcome the Richmond was Seychelles Tourism Board chief executive Alain St Ange who, along with Mr Forbes, was invited on board the ship to discuss its role in the carnival.

Mr St Ange, who made the appeal for naval ships to be in Victoria for the Carnaval International de Victoria, said Seychelles is thankful for the support of the community of nations in their drive to make the shipping routes of the Indian Ocean safe. "We needed to send out a message that the world stands together to rid the shipping routes of pirates, and what better way to do that than by taking part in a media opportunity with a difference," he said.

"We salute the support of the British, Russian and Indian naval ships to echo this commitment on behalf of all the other partners from the community of nations." Besides the **Richmond**, the anti-submarine warship Admiral Vinogradov from the Russian fleet and the Indian naval ship **Sukanya** are here to show the international commitment to combat piracy.

Led by commanding officer Captain Mike Walliker, the crew will also see whether they can provide capacity building to the Seychelles Coast Guard, to help them in their efforts to counter maritime-based crime in the region. "Over the next couple of days, we will have sailors talking to the Coast Guard about the things we can do to help, and when we come back again in about three and a half weeks' time we will follow up on progress made," he said.

In the carnival parade on Saturday, two platoons from the Richmond dressed in their normal working uniforms will be marching behind the floats from the UK's Notting Hill carnival. Captain Walliker said after the carnival it will be back to business as usual, as the Richmond will resume its duties protecting the maritime community. **Source : Nation.sc**

Sea surveillance ship launched



China Marine Surveillance No 50, the most advanced maritime administration ship in China, was launched in Wuhan, Hubei province, on March 2, 2011.

Photo : Asianewsphoto

Source : ChinaDaily

Iranian Warships Headed Home Via Suez

Two Iranian warships that entered the Mediterranean last month, sparking an outcry from Israel, have passed through the Suez Canal back into the Red Sea, naval commander Rear Adm. Habibollah Sayari said March 5.

"The flotilla ... has completed its mission successfully in the Mediterranean Sea and has returned to the Red Sea transiting through the Suez Canal," the official news agency IRNA quoted Sayari as saying. It was the first time since the 1979 Islamic revolution that Iranian warships had entered the Mediterranean, and Israel described the move as a "political provocation." The frigate **Alvand** and supply ship **Kharg** passed through the Suez Canal on Feb. 22 and docked two days later at the Syrian port of Latakia. Sayari did not say when the warships began their return journey, but said it took them "10-12 hours to transit" the canal. He said the flotilla conveyed a message of "peace and friendship to friendly countries." Israel, which considers Iran its biggest threat after repeated predictions by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of its demise, put its navy on alert during the flotilla's mission. Analysts say the deployment was an attempt by Iran to project its clout in the region at a time when anti-government protests sweeping the Arab world from Casablanca to Cairo are shifting the regional balance of power. The Suez Canal Authority said last month

that ships of any nationality can pass through "as long as the country is not in a state of war with Egypt." Source : defenseNews

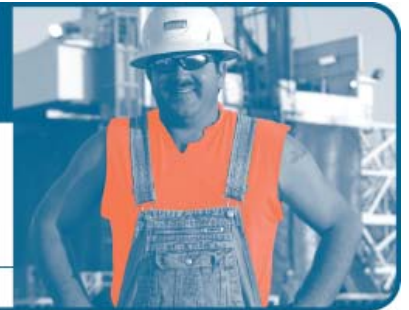
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At the Amels yard in Vlissingen the **AMELS 458** was driven out of the building hall onto the pontoon **Schelde** and was transported to deeper water for launching in a later stage assisted by the **Linge, Jumbo** and **Dieni**

Photo top : **Photo : Wim Kosten – www.maritimephoto.com (c) – below : Huib Lievense ©**



Shipyards are still taking newbuilding orders at full pace with container shipping in focus

Maersk's mega order with Daewoo for 10 (plus 20 as option) 18,000-TEU vessels sealed last week with a hefty multi billion dollar tag, has stirred things up in the container segment of the market, with competitors already planning their move as well. This is good news for shipyards able to cater to such ships, especially yards in South Korea, while China is now the place to be for dry bulk carriers and slowly but steadily tankers as well.

Daewoo has previously said that the company is aiming to secure \$6 billion in shipbuilding orders this year. So, this contract worth \$4 billion from Maersk is a positive indicator for the future. Under the first contract from Maersk, Daewoo Shipbuilding will build 10 container ships which will be able to carry 18,000 TEU, which are the largest vessels available in the sector. The additional 10 container ships would be similar vessels. Analysts say that container ships as large as these would most likely be used on trade between Europe and Asia as these regions have the deepwater ports that are able to accommodate such large vessels.

Analysts comment that this deal with Daewoo represents a big win for the Korean shipbuilder because ever since 1996, Maersk had built its largest ships in Denmark. Maersk decided some 15 years ago the company would maintain market position by operating the largest container ships in the world which would give Maersk an economy of scale over its competitors. The shares of Daewoo, which is currently the world's second shipyard by number of deliveries, rose close to 6% on the news and were even higher earlier. South Korean shipbuilder's shares jumped 5% on a positive order outlook.

According to Clarksons latest weekly report on shipbuilding "the container sector continues to deliver new business and maintain some momentum in the market. There remains a steady stream of enquiry going forward - particularly for the 3 - 5,000teu sectors and with Chinese yards now also becoming increasingly hungry for container orders - and Korean yards keen to take advantage of a strong demand story - the market is well placed to deliver competitive opportunities for owners ready to move.

With yards facing continuing upward pressure from their cost base - it is unlikely that they will be able to drive pricing further down in Dry and Wet to levels that are likely to entice buyers back to the market and start ordering in volume again - however with the Container sector continuing to bolster demand - they may well not need to address the broader weakening demand story - and with orderbooks continuing to be filled - the yards are going some way to giving themselves a healthy forward cushion to rely on and support themselves in the event of a further downturn.

In terms of reported business; In Dry, Ningbo Longsheng ordered 4 x 76,000dwt Panamax bulkers with Hudong Zhonghua for deliveries in 2012 at a price of circa USD34 Mill per vessel, we understand these vessels were signed just before the Lunar Holidays. Korea Ship Finance are reported to have ordered a pair of 37,000dwt Handysize bulk carriers at Hyundai Mipo with both vessels set for delivery in 2H 2012. In Containers, Maersk Line are reported to have ordered 10 firm units of 18,000TEU Container vessels with additional options for up to a further 20 which will begin delivering in 2013 and onwards, these vessels have been signed at a price reported to be USD190 Mill per vessel. Finally, in other sectors, COSCO Guangdong have contracted 3 option 1 x 15,000dwt Livestock Carriers at a price of circa USD 28.25 Mill per vessel and deliveries in 2013 and 2014" concluded the world's biggest shipbroker.

Source : Nikos Roussanoglou, Hellenic Shipping News Worldwide

Philippine shipbuilding alive and well

In Subic Bay Freeport, just a few kilometers northwest of the Philippine capital Manila, business is booming. You could be excused for thinking the Philippines' greatest contribution to shipping was in supplying seafarers to man the world's merchant navy. However, a huge chunk of maritime business in the country last year came from an area you wouldn't expect – shipbuilding. Yes, there is a Philippine shipbuilding industry.

Okay, so the business is dominated by Korean shipbuilder Hanjin Heavy Industries Corp, but the yard is in Subic Bay and has been busy making boats for export. The largest vessels built by the Korean outfit last year were two oil tankers, the Leyla K and its twin Eser K. They were delivered in January and March to Turkish-owned Kaptanoglu Shipping Line at a price of US\$68 million each. The tankers were the largest ever made in the Philippines at 114,000 deadweight tonnes and 241.27m long, 44m wide and with a draft of 21.35m. Hanjin Heavy raked in \$725 million in total ship deliveries from the Philippine yard last year. Compared to the company's revenue from its Korean yards, that is a drop in a bucket full of billions, but the Southeast Asia archipelago is a cost-effective place to set up a yard and the profit margins are healthy. The vessels helped Subic Bay Freeport exports reach a record \$1.34 billion in 2010, up

almost 25 percent, with \$3.48 billion coming in imports. There is no doubt that Subic Bay is a competitive free port and a growing manufacturing and trading centre, but it was another record broken last year that raised eyebrows. The most ever duties and taxes in a year were also collected, totalling \$153 million. That's not exactly something to trumpet. What should be of even more concern to the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, however, is that the top 10 exporters last year contributed almost 90 percent of the export total. More than 50 percent of that came from the Hanjin yard. Mother used to warn about keeping too many eggs in one basket. Now that Subic Bay Freeport is on a roll it should be aggressively trying to attract new manufacturers to its shores, and removing those duties and taxes may be a good place to start. **Source: Maritime Professional**

New crane arrives at Rosyth

The Goliath crane ordered by Babcock has arrived at the UK's Rosyth dockyard from manufacturer Shanghai Zhenhua Port Machinery. The crane will be used for final assembly of the QE class aircraft carriers, and arrived onboard a heavy lift ship 244m long with 39m beam. The crane was shipped partially-erected, with the girder and upper sections of the legs assembled, along with all components and erection equipment including temporary erection towers.

The crane will be erected to its full height on the ship deck over a six week period, before being transferred from ship to shore directly onto the crane rails. The rails were completed in February 2010, involving a total of 380 piles through varying ground conditions into the underlying bedrock, followed by reinforced concrete foundation beams, and the rail track. The crane is expected to be fully commissioned by 1 September 2011.

The Goliath crane will be the largest in the UK, at a height of 68m to the underside of the main beams, with a span of 120m. Its 1,000 tonne lifting capacity is provided by three hooks. Two of the hooks are suspended from an upper trolley (each hook having a 300 tonne capacity) and one from a central, lower, trolley with a 500 tonne capacity. While the three hooks have a greater cumulative lifting capacity than 1,000 tonnes, the total capacity is defined by the crane structure.



Rosyth's newly widened direct entrance allows access to what is claimed to be the largest non-tidal basin for ship repair in the UK, separated from the Firth of Forth by a sliding gate, with 42m width.

Commenting on the latest progress, Babcock project director Sean Donaldson said: "The arrival of the Goliath crane via the newly widened direct entrance is a significant visible milestone in the aircraft carrier programme, and an exciting step forward. The civil works, crane, electrical package and general shipyard upgrade forms a £80m programme designed to make the Babcock Rosyth facility capable of assembling the [Queen Elizabeth class](#) aircraft carriers. All projects within the programme are performing to budget and schedule, to high safety standards, and when complete the facility will be unique in the UK."

Aircraft carrier alliance programme director Geoff Searle said: "This is yet another important milestone for the aircraft carrier alliance. The Goliath crane will be the largest structure of its type in Europe and will dominate the skyline in Fife. The crane is a vital element in the programme to build both the QE Class aircraft carriers because the ships are being constructed in such huge sections, so we needed something capable of lifting up to 1,000 tonnes. It will be great to see the crane in action as blocks of the ship start to arrive in Rosyth in the months to come and **HMS Queen Elizabeth** starts to take shape." Source : The Motorship

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TOR DANIA COMPLETES REFIT

The **TOR DANIA** is back from her refit in Poland and once again operating on the Immingham - Cuxhaven route. Interestingly she has not been renamed the **DANIA SEAWAYS** which suggests she has no long term future with the company. Having been built in 1978 she is, with the **TOR BALTICA**, a lot older than the other vessels. The **TOR BALTICA** is currently on charter to P&O covering their North Sea fleet refit period and probably will also depart soon.

Source : Nick

Gazprom, Maersk talk Arctic cooperation

Gas giant Gazprom wants to engage the Danish-based Moller-Maersk Group in Arctic energy projects. In a meeting between the companies this week, Gazprom Deputy Aleksandr Ananenko invited the Danish energy and transportation company to cooperation in the Arctic. On the meeting agenda were joint initiatives related to all-year-round offshore drilling in Arctic fields, a press release from the Russian company informs.

The two parts now consider to establish a joint expert group which is to propose concrete action in the area. Gazprom in the meeting highlighted that a partnership on the development of offshore drilling technology will eventually have to include also Russian shipbuilding companies.

Gazprom controls a number of offshore licenses in the Russian Arctic and depends on foreign technology in field developments. The first Arctic offshore field to start production is the Prirazlomnoye project in the Pechora Sea, due to start up in 2012. Gazprom is also in the process of preparing for the development of the Shtokman field in the Barents Sea. The Copenhagen-based A.P. Moller - Maersk has activities in four main business segments: Container shipping and related activities; APM Terminals; Tankers, offshore and other shipping activities; Oil and gas activities; Retail activity; and Shipyards and other industrial companies Source : BarentsObserver

Noble exercises option for further HHI drillship

Noble Corporation reports that a subsidiary has exercised its first option with Hyundai Heavy Industries Co. Ltd. ("HHI") for the construction of an additional ultra-deepwater drillship, the third such drillship to be ordered this year subject to the parties executing a definitive construction contract which is expected to occur within the next week.

This increases the company's number of floating drilling units to 27, of which 15 are dynamically positioned. The new ultra-deepwater drillship, to be named at a later date, will be constructed on a fixed-price basis at HHI's shipyard in Ulsan, Korea, with an expected delivery from the shipyard in the second quarter of 2014. Following shipyard delivery, the unit is expected to undergo the customary 90-120 day period for mobilization and acceptance prior to being ready to commence a contract. The unit is uncontracted at this time.

The delivered cost of the new drillship is expected to be \$615 million and includes the turnkey construction contract, company furnished equipment, project management and spares, but excludes capitalized interest. The construction contract contains favorable payment terms that incentivize on-time delivery. Under the terms of its agreement with HHI, Noble has one remaining fixed-price option for an additional drillship. The expiration of this remaining option has been extended to August 31, 2011 with delivery taking place in the second half of 2014.

"With the addition of another high specification drillship, Noble continues its strategy of adding rigs with the latest technology, equipment, and capabilities," said David W. Williams, Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer, Noble Corporation. "These HHI drillships, with their true 1,250-ton load path ratings and ability to handle two complete BOP stacks and multiple subsea Christmas trees, will set a new standard for ultra-deepwater operations. When combined with the two Bully-class rigs and two Globetrotter-class rigs currently under construction, as well as the recently delivered **Noble Jim Day, Noble Danny Adkins, Noble Dave Beard, and Noble Clyde Boudreaux**, Noble's ultra-deepwater fleet is becoming one of the finest in the industry."

As with the two previously announced drillships, this unit will be based on a Hyundai Gusto P10000 hull design and is designed for operations in waters of up to 12,000 feet, although it may be outfitted for less depending on specific contract requirements. The unit will have DP-3 station keeping abilities, the ability to handle two complete BOP systems, a heave compensated construction crane to facilitate deployment of subsea production equipment and accommodations for up to 210 personnel, in addition to a number of other operational enhancements beyond the shipyard's base specifications. **Source : MarineLog**

Port Of Rotterdam To Support New Nangang Port In China

The Port of Rotterdam said Friday it signed an agreement with China's Nangang Industrial Port Complex to assist it with the management of the port for a period of five years, while it is also exploring the possibility to take a stake in the Chinese port. The Port of Rotterdam said it is the first international port operator to become active in a Chinese port. The new port in Nangang, which is currently being developed, is located 165 kilometers from Beijing, with a total surface area of 200 square kilometers. The total size of the port of Rotterdam, Europe's biggest port competing with Antwerp in Belgium and Hamburg in Germany, is 125 square meters. **Source: Dow Jones**

Shanghai Port's delayed Belgium port JV starts operations-exec

Shanghai International Port's joint venture with Belgium container terminal Zeebrugge has begun operations, a senior Chinese executive said on Saturday, following a delay during an industry downturn, Reuters reports. "The project had been postponed previously, but the venture is already up and running now," SIPG president Chen Wuyuan told Reuters on the sidelines of China's National People's Congress.

SIPG signed a framework agreement in late 2006 to buy 40 percent of a container terminal in Zeebrugge, Belgium, which was built by APM Terminals, part of A.P. Moeller-Maersk Group. But the project was postponed amid a global industry downturn. SIPG's container volume rose 16.3 percent in 2010 to 29.1 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEU). Net earnings jumped 43.6 percent to 5.4 billion yuan, according to unaudited data released by the company.

Source : PortNews



The **FAIRMOUNT SHERPA** and **FAIRMOUNT SUMMIT** seen passing Maasluis enroute Schiedam

Photo : Henk van der Heijden ©

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The two Fairmount sisters taking a well deserved rest at the Wilhelminahaven, Schiedam after completing a 15.400 mile long journey from Korea to Stord, Norway with **FPSO Skarv Idun**. Photo : Hans Hoffmann ©

See: <http://www.fairmount.nl/index.php/news/detail/219>

2010: turnover Van Oord rises to EUR 1,578 million

Turnover rises to EUR 1,578 million, net profit EUR 165 million, company financially very healthy, order portfolio stands at EUR 1.9 billion, new investment programme of EUR 1 billion. 2010 turned out to be an excellent year for Van Oord. A solid level of capacity utilisation, both staff and equipment, and the extraordinary tax gain led to an outstanding profit of EUR 165 million. We continued our 2009 strategy and achieved a balanced geographical distribution of turnover. Our markets developed favourably in the second half of the year, as world trade recovered and larger volumes of cargo passed through the world's biggest ports. This ultimately led to a higher tender volume than in 2009, although that volume remained well below 2008, our top year so far.

Van Oord's turnover in 2010 was EUR 1,578 million (2009: EUR 1,424 million). Net profits, including an extraordinary tax gain of EUR 40 million, rose to EUR 165 million (2009: EUR 120 million). There was some pressure on margins in 2010, but that was offset by a solid level of staff and equipment capacity utilisation. On balance, this resulted in a profitability of 7.9% of turnover (2009: 8.4%), excluding extraordinary tax gains. At 31 December 2010, our order portfolio stood at EUR 1,856 million, an improvement on the previous year (EUR 1,777 million). Capacity utilisation figures were higher in our most important fleet segments - trailing suction hopper dredgers and cutter suction dredgers - but lower in the flexible fall pipe vessel segment compared with 2009.

The activities

Netherlands

Compared with the previous year, the volume of activity in the Dutch market was stable in 2010. Projects were increasingly awarded on the basis of the 'most economically advantageous tender'. There is much momentum in the Dutch infrastructure market, but margins there remain under pressure. Van Oord is part (50% stake), of PUMA the consortium carrying out the Maasvlakte 2 port expansion project in Rotterdam. The project is making steady progress. By late 2010, some 180 million m³ of sand had been supplied and deposited (75% of the total) and more than 3 million tonnes of rock had been delivered (45% of the total). In December 2010, the Dutch Department of Public Works awarded the Sand Motor project to a consortium in which Van Oord has a 50% stake. The Sand Motor project involves depositing a huge quantity of sand off the coast of Delfland near the village of Ter Heijde. Wind, waves and ocean currents will gradually distribute the sand along the coast. Using the 'building with nature' principle makes it possible to protect the coast naturally against the sea.

Europe

Our activities in Europe suffered noticeably from the effects of the financial crisis that began in 2008. The United Kingdom, Ireland, France and Germany struggled with cuts in government spending and are facing further economy measures in the years ahead. The crisis also affected the Baltic States. There was no decline in activity in south eastern Europe and the region around the Black Sea and Caspian Sea, however.

Middle East and Mediterranean

There was relatively little activity in the Middle East in 2010. The nature of our work shifted from land reclamation to port development and energy-related projects. The recent award of a number of large-scale projects may indicate that the Middle Eastern market will recover in 2011. Nakheel in Dubai halted all projects in 2010, but we are working for other clients there. Dravo SA, a joint venture between Van Oord and the Spanish firm Dragados, had an excellent year in 2010, with projects in Spain and surrounding countries.

America and Africa

Van Oord was very busy in the America and Africa regions in 2010. Turnover was at a particularly high level in Nigeria and Brazil. Our company was closely involved in many projects carried out under a government-run port-expansion programme in Brazil.

Asia and Australia

Business continued to be relatively quiet in Singapore. Beyond Singapore, we carried out projects in Vietnam, Malaysia and Indonesia. India is the centre of our activities in South-West Asia. Much of our work there involved large port development projects carried out for private clients. The growing volume of raw material exports led to an upturn in the market in Australia.

Offshore

Our Offshore Division operates worldwide in the oil and gas market. Van Oord was once again very busy in this market in 2010. We undertook a number of important projects in Russia and the United Arab Emirates. We maintained our position in the market for rock installation projects in the North Sea. In Brazil we took on deep water rock installation projects to protect oil and gas pipelines.

Offshore Wind Projects

After commencing in the autumn of 2009, we continued work on the Belwind phase 1 wind farm project, which began operating officially in December 2010. This 165 Mw wind farm, located off the Belgian coast, was built in the record time of fifteen months. The project was carried out entirely under our management, based on an EPC (Engineering Procurement & Construction) contract.

Wicks

The Wicks business unit specialises in underwater drilling and blasting, soil compaction, and vertical drainage. In 2010, we took on more underwater drilling and blasting projects. We undertook projects in Australia and Sweden, among other places. Outside the Netherlands, Wicks carried out vertical drainage projects in Portugal, Latvia, Malaysia, Singapore, Mozambique and other countries.

Investments in equipment

Many of the new build investment projects launched in the 2006-2009 period were completed in 2010. The final three of a total of six sand carriers, four self-propelled split barges, and a gigantic backhoe were delivered in 2010. We also purchased four tugboats for the sand carriers. The newest and biggest flexible fall pipe vessel in the Van Oord fleet, the Stornes, was launched in August 2010 in China. It will be operational in mid- 2011. Construction of a large self-propelled cutter suction dredger **Athena** is right on schedule. The cutter was launched to enthusiastic applause on 12 February 2011 at the IHC Dredgers B.V. yard in Kinderdijk, Netherlands. The Athena will be operational by the autumn of 2011. Van Oord has decided on another extensive investment programme worth approximately EUR 1 billion. The company ordered a sister vessel for the Athena in December 2010. It will be named Artemis and will be operational by spring 2013. The decision to build a second large self-propelled cutter suction dredger demonstrates our confidence in the growing world market for port development. Van Oord placed a further order in December 2010 with Sietas in Hamburg, Germany, for a jack-up transport and installation vessel, used to construct offshore wind farms. The vessel will be completed in autumn 2012. Our long-term investment programme also includes other additions to our fleet, including trailing suction hopper dredgers and offshore equipment.

People

After staff reductions in 2009, the number of employees grew considerably in 2010 thanks to the recovering market and our busy schedule. Most of the staff increase took place at our branches outside the Netherlands.

Financing

Our company is financially very healthy. With solvency standing at 34.5% and our capital base at 37% of total assets, the company's financial basis is sound. At year-end, net cash in bank and at hand stood at EUR 200 million. The sum taken out in loans was EUR 216 million. The new investment programme will require extra financing capacity. In addition, many of the available lines of credit are due in the next two years and subject to refinancing. The necessary arrangements will be completed in the first half of 2011.

Prospects

The increasing world population, the growing world economy, the rising volume of world trade and the growing demand for energy are all having a positive influence on the development of our markets and activities. Countering these positive trends is the fact that governments in Western Europe are being forced to economise, and will do so in part by limiting their spending on infrastructure projects. Because the emerging economies beyond Europe are much larger than the markets in Western Europe we remain positive about the future.

The General Meeting of Shareholders will take place on 21 April 2011.



The IHC-Beaver built 1460 ton (in weight) cutter ladder for the **CSD ATHENA** was driven onboard a barge in Sliedrecht by **SARENS** – Photo : Jan van Heteren ©

DISA

DISA MARITIME BVBA

Ketelaarstraat 5c
B2340 Beerse
Belgium
T: +32(0)14 62 04 11
F: +32(0)14 61 16 88

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The TSHD **CORNELIS ZANEN** seen operating in the port of Walvis Bay – Photo : Ian Shiffman ©

Trans-Pacific Container Trade Predicted to Increase 9.1 Percent in 2011

Trans-Pacific eastbound(1) and westbound(2) container trade is forecast to grow at a healthy rate of 9.1 percent in 2011, versus 10.4 percent in 2010, despite continuing economic challenges in the U.S. and global economy. While still eluding peak volumes of 2007, eastbound trade is expected to increase 8.2 percent to 13.5 million TEUs and westbound trade growth will accelerate to 11 percent, from 4.3 percent in 2010, to 6.9 million TEUs. Complete details will be presented during the 11th annual Journal of Commerce (JOC) Trans-Pacific Maritime (TPM) conference, held next week in Long Beach, California.

The U.S. economy will continue to expand in 2011 as consumers increase spending by 3.2 percent, after growing by an estimated 2.9 percent in 2010. According to Mario Moreno, JOC Economist, "several factors contribute to the growth forecast of trans-Pacific eastbound trade, including payroll tax reductions, extension of the Bush-era tax cuts, and wages and salaries rebounding in 2010 by 3.5 percent after falling by 1.8 percent and 2.5 percent in 2009 and 2008 respectively."

Retail sales will continue their upward trajectory in 2011. Auto sales, accounting for nearly 25 percent of total U.S. retail sales, grew significantly last year, up 12.2 percent versus 2009, and subsequently, containerized imports of auto parts increased 40 percent, as indicated by PIERS data. Since auto sales are still running below replacement levels, Moreno expects sales will continue to increase in 2011. Given that monthly retail inventory levels for goods overall were on average lower than 2008 levels, there is positive indication that inventory levels have room to grow.

Trans-Pacific westbound trade growth is forecast to almost triple in 2011, following a 4.3 percent increase in 2010. Asian economies will expand, primarily Northeast Asia(3) at 4.8 percent, Southeast Asia(4) by 5.2 percent and the India subcontinent(5) by 6.5 percent.

This positive growth for U.S. exports will be led by China, the largest U.S. container export market. China's demand for U.S. goods will continue to rise driven by several factors including an increase in Chinese wages throughout 2011, enabling higher Chinese personal consumption, and the exchange value decline of the U.S. dollar over the Chinese RMB. Further supporting the positive growth forecast for U.S. exports is an adverse impact on global production due to a rise of extreme weather events. Southeast Asia growth will be led by Indonesia and Vietnam, with Vietnam growing primarily from private investment and consumption and the need for U.S. containerized commodities including soybeans and related products, waste paper and fabrics including raw cotton. The India subcontinent is improving its manufacturing capacity in order to boost its export performance which in turn means increased demand for U.S. raw materials moving in containers, like waste paper and scrap metals. U.S. exports to Pakistan and Bangladesh center mainly around raw cotton as both economies remain regional top sources for apparel.

While the forecast is positive, challenges persist which may impact forecasted growth rates. Americans continue to struggle with a high unemployment rate of 9.0 percent and slow job creation (only 909,000 jobs in 2010). American's household liabilities continue to be higher than disposable personal income by 21 percent. Oil prices are increasing at an alarming rate partly as a result of political unrest in the Middle East. And trade relations may sour if the U.S. government decides to punish countries like China alleged by the U.S. to be currency manipulators.

The outlook for trans-Pacific container trade will be presented at the 11th annual TPM conference held on March 7-8, 2011 in Long Beach, California. TPM is the largest North American container shipping and logistics event, attracting more than 1,600 attendees in 2011, a record turnout. The event takes place this year against a backdrop of the aftershocks of 2009-2010 in the trans-Pacific, considered to be hugely disruptive years in container shipping. As carriers and volumes recover along with the tepid U.S. recovery, major changes will unfold in 2011 that will receive thorough coverage at TPM. These include: carriers' exit from providing chassis, the long-term shift to rail intermodal for long-haul freight, carriers' newfound rapid-response capacity withdrawals, and the impact of fast-growing exports on the overall trans-Pacific market. As it has each year since 2001, TPM will offer BCOs, carriers, 3PLs, railroads and other industry participants a revealing, analytical, and educational two-day briefing on all the major moving parts of the trans-Pacific market in advance of service contract renewals and the 2011 peak season. With its consistently high-caliber program developed by the JOC editorial staff, attendees can expect a valuable networking and learning experience at the 2011 TPM conference. **Source: Piers**



The **NAVION GOTHENBURG** seen moored in Port of São Sebastião – Brazil – **Photo : Marcelo Vieira ©**



Completely in the **Peter Dohle colours** but named **MSC FILOMENA** seen enroute Antwerp passing Terneuzen
Photo : Richard Wisse – www.richard-photography.nl (c)

Maersk shares drops on fear of price war

Shares in Danish shipping and oil conglomerate A.P. Moller-Maersk fall 2.4 percent after a Lloyd's List report that container shipping lines are dumping rates to fill expanded capacity, traders say. "That bit of news is all it takes to push Maersk down," Danske Bank's chief of equities trading Mads Zink says.

Shipping daily Lloyd's List on Friday reports that freight forwarders have seen major shipping lines slashing rates on Asia-Europe westbound cargoes "in a desperate effort to fill up tonnage." Lloyd's List says some buyers of container transport are saying a return to the situation seen in first half of 2009 -- when freight rates were at a historic low pushing several carriers towards bankruptcy -- is not far away.

The disastrous price war in container shipping in 2009 knocked the Maersk group to its first ever annual loss.

The Shanghai Containerised Freight Index last week showed a 46th straight decline in Asia-Europe rates, ending the week at \$1,200 per twenty-foot container, its lowest since August 2009 and down from a March 2010 peak of \$2,164, Lloyd's List says.

First phase of AUS \$1.3 billion Gladstone dredging project awarded

The Gladstone Ports Corporation gave the news that the first phase of the AUS \$1.3 billion Western Basin Dredging and Disposal Project has been granted. The AUS \$387 million first phase of the project will begin immediately, with the Port of Gladstone becoming one of the world's major Liquid Natural Gas exporters.

The Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association (AAPA), in charge of the project gained approval from Federal Environment and Water Minister Tony Burke earlier this month, as reported by PTI. The approval was seen as the final hurdle for the project as lengthy negotiations continued to escalate over concerns that the dredging's environmental effect would be disastrous, yet measures have been taken to minimise the impact.

The Western Basin Master Plan covers around 12,000 hectares and is home to a host of marine wildlife including migrating dugongs, who will have no alternative but to find another grazing ground when they return to the area to feed.

Van Oord and Dredging International Australia have been granted the contract for the Western Basin Dredging and Disposal Project. The plan incorporates the deepening and widening of existing channels and swing basins, with the creation of new channels and swing basins over a 20 year period.

Material dredged during this project will be placed in a reclamation area to the north and immediately adjacent to the existing Fisherman's Landing reclamation area which will create a land reserve used to service new port facilities, according to the Gladstone Observer. Queensland Treasurer and Minister for State Development and Trade, Andrew Fraser, told the Gladstone Observer that it was a milestone day for the port.

"This is the largest dredging project undertaken in Australia and will ensure the economic future of the port and of Gladstone", Mr Fraser said. "This project has been conditioned by both state and federal governments and will serve as a template for future dredging works throughout Australia. The conditioning of the Western Basin Disposal and Dredging Project shows the commitment of both my government and the federal governments to the balanced and orderly development of the Gladstone region", Mr Fraser continued. **Source : Port technology**

OLDIE – FROM THE SHOEBOX



Svea's 3500 tons **FYLGIA** seen entering the port of Tunis in 1964 - Photo : Coll. Kees van Huisstede

BOEKBESPREKING

Door : Frank NEYTS

"Just Sea & Sky".

Bij Adlard Coles Nautical verscheen "**Just Sea & Sky**", geschreven door Ben Pester. **Ben Pester's** meeslepende verhaal van zijn epische tocht van Plymouth naar Nieuw Zeeland in 1953 biedt een boeiende kijk in de periode van voorbijgevoegen traditioneel zeemanschap. Zonder de voor zichzelf sprekende hedendaagse luxe zetten Ben Pester en Peter Fox destijds de reis aan zonder radio, GPS, navigatieëlektronica of zelfs elektrische kajuitverlichting, zwemvesten of een overlevingsvlot. In de plaats legden ze het 14.000-mijl lange traject af op hun 39 voet lange scheepje '**Tern II**', handgestuurd, navigerend op sextant, met olielampen, op vandaag nog moeilijk voorstelbaar. Echt een boekje om in een hoekje, als het buiten slecht weer is, van een uitzonderlijk verhaal intens te genieten.

"**Just Sea & Sky**" (ISBN 9781408128558) telt 191 pagina's. Het boek kost £8.99. Bestellen kan via de boekhandel, of rechtstreeks bij de uitgeverij Adlard Coles Nautical, 38 Soho Square, London W1D 3HB,UK. www.adlardcoles.com

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.... PHOTO OF THE DAY



The **TRINA** seen loading one of the newbuild **GOTTWALD** cranes in the port of Gent for further transportation to Dahej in India

Steven Oppeel - <http://www.stevo.be> ©