

Tanker suppliers news

Lloyds Register in USCG compliance program

www.lr.org

Lloyd's Register is able to act as a recognised ship survey organisation (RO) for US-flagged vessels after being admitted to the US Coast Guard Alternate Compliance Program (ACP).

This is a voluntary program enabling owners, operators, designers and builders of US-flag vessels to comply with USCG design and inspection regulations through authorised classification societies.

USCG will accept surveys performed by an authorised classification society as being equivalent to USCG tests and examinations for initial and in-service inspections for certification, periodic re-examination and drydock examinations.

Participating vessel owners and operators can obtain USCG Certificates of Inspection by citing the successful completion of these activities by a classification society which has been authorised to participate in ACP, such as Lloyd's Register.

Places of Refuge workshop presents results online

www.espo.be

The European Seaports Organisation (ESPO) in conjunction with the European Institute of Maritime and Transport Law recently organised an international workshop on Places of refuge at the University of Antwerp.

Speakers from different international institutions and organisations such as IMO, CMI, IAPH, the European Commission, the European Parliament, EMSA, ECSA and ESPO talked on a variety of matters.

The workshop decided that the issue needed further clarification from the European Commission and other institutions in order to make concrete recommendations, however there was widespread agreement that a proper system of compensation for places of refuge needed to be in place, covering both operational costs and damage. Some of the questions left unanswered were:

- Are the existing international funds sufficient and effective enough to cover all costs incurred and to cover both pollution and economic damage?
- Would it make sense to look at ports as salvors earning salvage rewards?
- Would a policing system based on mandatory insurance for all ships work (no insurance, no entry) ?

The presentations made at the workshop are available on the ESPO website, with the actual conclusions and proceedings being added shortly.

Record sales at Schottel

www.schottel.de

Schottel's sales rose 11% this year to achieve a record level of 90 million Euro with orders on hand for the following year totalling 42 million Euro.

This is due to the success of product lines such as the Schottel twin propeller (STP) and Schottel combi-drive (SCD), development of high power electric drive systems and the service department undertaking a large number of conversions and modernisations.

The STP is one of the most successful products, a higher efficiency version of the Rudderpropeller product range with two propellers mounted in the same direction on a single shaft.

The system is also in use in the Siemens-Schottel propulsor pop drive that is in use on RoPax ferries of the TT-Line, chemical tankers of the Swedish Donsötank Reederi

and heavy-lift carriers of the Chinese Ocean Shipping Company (COSCO) with power ratings up to 20MW.

The SCHOTTEL Combi Drive (SCD) is an electric pod drive featuring a motor integrated vertically into the support shaft, similar to a Rudderpropeller with a vertical power input.

Since this system requires neither an above-water gearbox nor a cardan shaft it is very compact and therefore suitable for a range of applications for example offshore supply vessels with limited interior height in the stern.

The new electromechanical SCHOTTEL Combi Drive features azimuth steering that can be implemented using either hydraulic or electric motors and will be available in both push propeller with nozzle and twin propeller versions. It covers the power range from 1900 to 3800 kW with propeller diameters from 2500 to 3500 mm.

Schottel expanded its product range to include electric propulsion systems in the megawatt range and advanced controllable-pitch propeller systems. These will be built at the recently modernised Wismar plant on the shores of the Baltic sea. It's subsidiary in China meanwhile produces Rudderpropellers and Transverse Thrusters in the lower power range, and components for larger systems.

Another electric system with power ratings up to the 5MW range, the SEP 2 SCHOTTEL Electric Propulsor, is being used to equip a multi-purpose vessel, which will go into operation as a spillage incident vessel and icebreaker on the Baltic Sea beginning this year.

MEP and Optum form water treatment alliance

www.mepi.net

Optum, a newly formed Australian company involved with environmental protection businesses, will market the MariSan water treatment products developed by Marine Environmental Partners (MEP).

MariSan uses patented electroionization and process systems to remove harmful chemicals and bacteria from ballast or waste water. The partnership with Optum will allow the company to move into the Australian market.

New orders for Wartsila

www.wartsila.com

Wartsila has secured several successes recently, with orders for four Sulzer RT-flex engines for four 110,000 tdw Aframax product tankers being constructed at Dalian New Shipbuilding Ltd in the People's Republic of China for the Danish owner A/S Dampskibsselskabet Torm.

Orders for dual-fuel engines are also steadily increasing with a contract for the French shipbuilder Chantiers de l'Atlantique to supply dual-fuel main engines for a new 153,000m³ LNG carrier.

The Sulzer RT-flex engines feature common-rail technology for fuel injection and valve operation replacing the traditional camshaft based systems.

This gives more flexibility in the way the engines operate, with benefits such as smokeless operation at all operating speeds, lower fuel consumption, reduced maintenance costs and lower steady operating speeds for better maneuvering.

The Wärtsilä 50DF dual fuel range is becoming popular for LNG, since it burns boil off gas from the cargo and offers a number of efficiency gains.

The units are capable of running off gas or liquid fuel, and can switch between automatically as needed without loss of power.

The new LNG vessel will use a combined gas-electric propulsion system with four Wärtsilä engines, three 12 cylinder 12V50DF engines and a single 6 cylinder 6L50DF to drive a generator to supply electricity for the single propeller plant. In normal operation gas is the main fuel with oil used just for ignition.

Since it runs mainly on gas, the engines have a much lower fuel consumption overall and thus lower operating costs than the conventional steam turbine plant.

They also have lower stack emissions than a steam plant and NOx emissions are about one-tenth those of the equivalent diesel engines. The combination of the engines' low fuel consumption and their maximum use of natural gas means the Wärtsilä 50DF engines also have low CO2 emissions.

Wärtsilä has also announced a joint venture to establish a manufacturing plant in China. This will be 55%-owned by Wärtsilä and 45%-owned by Zhenjiang CME Co. Ltd (CME), wholly owned by the China State Shipbuilding Corporation (CSSC). CSSC is the leading shipbuilding corporation in China and is looking to develop competitive supply lines while Wärtsilä will benefit from the development of its market in China.

The company will produce LIPS and Kaida brand propellers and will employ around 270 people at premises in Zhenjiang 220 km west of Shanghai. The Chinese company will supply the production equipment and personnel while Wärtsilä contributes its design and manufacturing knowledge. Operation should start early this year.

RungGrip ladder safety system secures BP orders

www.fibregrid.com

BP has ordered 1200 lengths of RungGrip, a piece of pre-formed fibreglass that is bonded to the rungs of a ladder to help stop slipping.

The product is produced by Suffolk-based FibreGrid Ltd., and was selected after extensive trials.

RungGrip presents a flat surface to the climber, with bonded carbon grit that provides very high friction even in wet conditions.

"We have always believed that our products offer an enhancement to safety but to have received this order, knowing that it has undergone the rigours of a BP product evaluation, makes us very proud," said FibreGrid spokesman Scott Cousin.

Converting single to double hull tankers

www.lr.org

Converting single hull to double hull tankers is possible, according to Lloyds Register. In its magazine "Horizons" it reports on a conversation made by Maritrans Operating Partners in the US, converting five 34,400 barges. The cost of converting the tanker equated to 25 to 35 per cent of the newbuild costs.

There were also ways to increase the capacity found, including adding a raised trunk, converting segregated ballast tank spaces back to cargo tanks.

Sole disadvantage is a slight speed loss, half to three quarters of a knot, due to changed hull form.

The designs were hydrodynamically tested by Lloyds Register.

Four new medium-sized tankers for Brostrom

www.brostrom.se

Brostrom has decided to modernise its tanker fleet with an order for four 14,500 deadweight product and chemical tankers, which will replace four vessels built in the late '80s, maintaining its fleet size of 37 tankers.

The ships will be delivered in 2006 and 2007 and are being constructed at Jinling Shipyard, Nanjing, China.

The four ships to be replaced are able to trade until 2014, but Brostrom has decided to replace them ahead of time mainly for reasons of efficiency and environmental issues such as NOx and SOx emissions.

All six diesel engines will employ catalysts to reduce NOx emissions by up to 98%. The vessels will also employ redundancy in propulsion and will have safety, cargo handling and manoeuvrability advantages over the older ships.

"By this investment Broström secures the position as being the largest provider of transportation services to customers in the European trade. Broström's capacity in product tanker shipping is covered to a great extent by Contracts of Affreightment. The design of the new ships and choice of features give Broström a competitive edge", commented Broström CEO Lennart Simonsson.

TOTAL signs Stena P-Maxes in long term charters

www.concordia-maritime.se

French oil company TOTAL has signed up the first two Stena P-MAX product tankers, currently under construction at Brodosplit yard, Croatia, under long term charters.

The P-MAX tankers cost about 15 - 20 per cent more than standard product tankers to build, covering the cost of additional safety features including two engine systems, double rudders and double propellers for maximum reliability and man-oeuverability, with bridge systems enhanced for better control of the ship and a 360 degree view. The vessels also have enhanced structural strength and ice design.

The vessels have a loading capacity of 65,000 ton and are scheduled for delivery in 2006. They were designed by a two year close co-operation between the technical and commercial departments of TOTAL and Stena.

"The P-MAX project reinforces TOTAL's policy of long-term commitment with high quality shipping owners and managers," said Bertrand Thouilin, general manager of TOTAL's Shipping Division.

"Our objective of providing ever safer tanker transportation is best met by close cooperation with the most demanding oil majors," said Dan Sten Olsson, CEO of the Stena Group.

DNV sets up "upper tier" project

www.dnv.com

Class society DNV has set up an initiative "upper tier," to try to quantify the safety, quality and environmental performance of a tanker operator.

The initiative covers total quality performance of shipmanagement, operation and technical condition, covering office and ship, including choice of flag state, company qualification and training program, company safety culture, ISM code performance. The scheme has already been tested on eight different companies with different fleets and quality policy. "The result was very encouraging," says DNV. "It is possible to separate the good from the bad."

"By looking beyond the technical aspect we got a more comprehensive picture of the operators' performance."

DNV is still working on the practical application of the scheme.

"Various alternatives are under evaluation, but the importance of the project is too large to ignore," it says.

"Quality attracts quality, and quality performance is the no. 1 strategic issue for DNV.

"Because the concept incorporates ship management, operation and technical condition at the same time, DNV believes this kind of methodology will be important in our drive to prevent the latest disasters being repeated.

DNV seafarer standards

Class society Det Norske Veritas has launched a system of seafarer competence standards, ensuring that seafarers from different nations, cultures and training institutes have a common, acceptable level of knowledge, skill and attitude.

Standard seafarer certificates, DNV says, only provide a partial picture of true competence because they give no indication as to the employee's attitude, only his skill and knowledge.

The idea is to build up a system of "classification" of personnel, also classifying shipping companies, training academies and training providers.

The system should fulfil the needs of ship-owners, management companies, crewing agencies, authorities, yards, training institutions and other players.

"Maritime academies, training schools, authorities and ship managers have all expressed a desire to see a global system of standards in place. DNV is responding to this demand in the market," says the company.

Need more competence

Modern ships have fewer crew but they need to be constantly updated on new technologies.

Meanwhile charterers are demanding more sophisticated logistics services, as well as increased safety and environmentally friendly operations.

The ISPS security requirements further drive up the training requirements of seafarers.

DNV strongly believes that the maritime training on offer today is fragmented and varies widely in content and quality, with seafarers trained all over the world.

DNV also believes that seafarers trained to the minimum standards is no longer acceptable.

"The industry has long since progressed beyond the minimum levels laid down by statutory requirements," says DNV.

"Today's maritime industry needs people who don't just have a ticket to trade, but are competent and able to perform their duties in the most effective manner possible."

The program

There is a competency management system certification, for shipowners, shipyards and regulatory authorities. This focuses on the ability of an organisation to plan, define, develop and improve the competence of employees, according to external requirements and defined business goals.

Then there is a training certification, intended to assess the quality of training, independent of location, operation and method. The DNV SeaSkill Standard of Certification of Learning Programmes is available.

Finally there are the DNV standards of competence for individuals, enabling DNV to offer Certificates of Competence for various non-STCW positions.

Around 200 training organisations globally have already been certified by DNV to train and assess if people and organisations meet the standards.

All certificates are only issued upon passing of appropriate examinations, conducted either by DNV or DNV-approved examination institutes.

The certificates are normally renewed every 3 years, with the candidate being required to pass an updated examination.

The certificates issued by DNV are renewable, usually every three years. To do this, the candidate has to pass an updated examination.

DNV hopes that the standards will eventually become a basis for competence management systems, training courses, testing and certification of individuals.

DNV is putting together committees of shipping experts to make sure it has a shipping company view on how to evolve them.

Further information about the program is available on www.seaskill.com.

OW Bunkers opens new branch in Antwerp

www.owbunker.com

Bunker supplier OW Bunkers is further expanding its presence in western Europe with the opening of a new office in Antwerp, Belgium. The move is in response to its successes in the Netherlands with a branch in Rotterdam opened in 2002, and the increasing demand of the market.

This is a step in the direction of development in the ARA range, and the two offices will be working closely together to make it easier to supply customers in the area with possibilities of physical supplies along the river Scheldt.