

DAILY COLLECTION OF MARITIME PRESS CLIPPINGS 2006 – 050



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**The EN AVANT 7 seen departing from Hoek van Holland port
Photo : Rob de Visser ©**

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**Worlds largest, the COSCO GUANGZHOU seen departing from Rotterdam
Photo : Dirk Kleijn ©**

EVENTS, INCIDENTS & OPERATIONS

Sri Lankan Navy searches for missing sailors after sea explosion

Sri Lanka's navy searched for eight missing sailors on Sunday whose vessel was destroyed in an explosion that the military blamed on Tamil Tiger rebels.

Suspected rebels blew up their fishing boat late Saturday to avoid capture by the navy patrol vessel off the west coast, leaving six rebels dead and eight government sailors missing, navy spokesman D.K.P. Dassanayake, said.

The Tiger rebels denied involvement in the blast.

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“Until now we have only found debris, no survivors and no dead bodies,” Dassanayake said. “They (the eight sailors) were thrown out by the blast and must have suffered severe injuries.”

The incident in Kalpitiya, a fishing village 140 kilometers (85 miles) north of the capital, Colombo, was the most serious since government and rebel negotiators met in Geneva last month to try to salvage a four-year-old cease-fire.

A military statement said on Sunday the navy received intelligence that trawlers in the area were transporting arms for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and launched an operation to investigate. When the navy ship pulled alongside a fishing boat and ordered it to cut its engines, the trawler suddenly exploded.

“An LTTE craft, disguised as a multi-day fishing trawler, heavily laden with explosives, blew itself up, destroying a naval craft,” the statement said. “The naval craft ... caught fire and sank.”

Eleven of the naval ship's 19 sailors were rescued, Dassanayake said. Seevaratnam Puleedevan, a top rebel leader, denied involvement by the Sea Tigers – the LTTE's naval wing.

“We have checked with the Sea Tigers' western command. They have confirmed that they are not involved,” Puleedevan said.

Tamil Tiger rebels have been battling the government since 1983 to create a separate state for ethnic minority Tamils, alleging discrimination by the majority Sinhalese.

More than 65,000 people died in the conflict before a Norway-brokered cease-fire was signed in 2002.

The truce has recently come under increasing pressure, however, with more than 160 people, including at least 81 government security personnel, killed since December.

In Geneva, both sides agreed to scale down violence and meet again April 19-20.

On Feb. 11, suspected guerrillas blew up their boat off Sri Lanka's northwestern coast, killing all four rebels on board and injuring a sailor on a naval vessel that had approached.

Ghost tanker 'riddle' solved



Empty vessel ... A broken tow rope hangs from the ship's bow

A GHOST ship mystery was solved when Customs officers boarded an unmanned tanker found drifting off the coast of Queensland.

Officials who boarded the 80m vessel 180km south-west of Weipa in the Gulf of Carpentaria believe it was used to supply foreign fishing boats and was abandoned after breaking free while under tow.

As plans were being made last night to bring the ship to shore, a row continued to rage over the effectiveness of Australia's border protection.

Senator Joseph Ludwig of Queensland, Labor's Customs spokesman, said the fact that an 80m tanker could get into the Gulf being before it was picked up by surveillance meant urgent

action was needed.

Customs Minister Chris Ellison rejected the criticism, saying the response to the mystery ship proved the effectiveness of the border protection system.

The tanker was spotted on Friday by a Coastwatch surveillance aircraft which was unable to make radio contact.



The life rafts were missing from the deck and the boat's name had been painted over, making it impossible to identify from the air. The Australian Customs vessel **Storm Bay** arrived in the area during the night but its crew waited until daylight yesterday before going aboard the tanker.

Left : Storm Bay
Photo : Capt Jelle de Vries ©

It is understood officers used an inflatable dinghy to reach the tanker because it was drifting in uncharted waters.

A Customs spokesman said there were no signs of anyone having been aboard recently nor any indication that the crew had left in a hurry.

There was no suggestion that the ship had been used for people-smuggling, he added.

"It has been identified by the boarding party as the Jian Seng but its port of registry and nationality is unknown," he said.

The tanker's engines were inoperable and a broken tow-rope was hanging from the bow. "The Customs boarding team believes the vessel was under tow when it broke free and was abandoned before drifting into Australian waters," the spokesman said.

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority was called in because the tanker was still drifting south in the Gulf yesterday.

A spokeswoman last night said a barge was on its way to the scene and crew would monitor the tanker until early tomorrow when a salvage tug is expected to arrive to tow it to Weipa.

Mr Ellison said: "It was detected in a remote stretch of Australian waters by a Customs helicopter. Photographs were taken and studied back at the base and a vessel was immediately despatched.

"We would say this proves the effectiveness of our response." But Senator Ludwig said: "The fact it was not intercepted earlier is extraordinary when you look at how far south it had come into the Gulf.

"This is in an area they are supposed to be targeting. "How can they hope to intercept illegal fishing vessels?"

Dr Michael White, a maritime law expert at the University of Queensland, said if the tanker's owner could be found, the vessel probably would be returned with a bill for its recovery.

'Ghost ship' sighted 17 days before interception

Customs Minister Chris Ellison has revealed that an abandoned ship was first sighted by **Coastwatch 17** days before being intercepted by Customs.

The "ghost ship" was first seen on March 8 outside Australian waters, near a number of other tankers, north-west of Darwin.

It was intercepted on Friday, inside Australian waters, in the Gulf of Carpentaria. Labor Senator Joe Ludwig has questioned how the tanker came to be in the area targeted for illegal fishing.

"Can the minister confirm whether this was part of the support fleet for the flotilla of illegal fishing vessels that are plundering our fish stocks?" A Customs spokesman says it is believed there was no-one aboard the ship when it entered Australian waters.

STAR PRINCESS for repairs

Passenger **Star Princess** has left Montego Bay bound for Grand Bahama and a repair facility where damage caused by a Thursday fire onboard the vessel will be examined. All of the passengers onboard the ship have been given other arrangements to return home, after Princess decided to send the ship to a repair facility instead of bring it back to Fort Lauderdale as originally planned. About 1,600 people were expected left Friday and the rest on Saturday, said Paul Pennicook, Jamaica's director of tourism. "We believe the best course of action is to terminate the current cruise in Montego Bay," Princess Cruises said in a statement. The passengerliner **Star Princess** was bound Freeport, Bahamas.

HYUNDAI FORTUNE SALVAGE UPDATE

By : SvitzerWijsmuller Salvage

SvitzerWijsmuller Salvage fire fighting and salvage crews continue stabilisation actions on board of the container vessel in Gulf of Aden



Photo : Crew Smitwijs Rotterdam ©

Work continued today Monday 27/3 on board of the casualty to stabilise the condition of the, at some locations still burning, vessel. Surgical fire fighting and pumping operations were conducted by the salvage team using equipment mobilized from the Netherlands. The progress made so far and the resources available on site allowed the salvage master to release one of the fire fighting tugs, which returned to her home port Salalah during the afternoon.

Could radar have averted disaster?

When the **Queen of the North** strayed off its usual course and sank, there was no blip on a Prince Rupert Canadian Coast Guard screen alerting anyone of the imminent disaster.

Marine traffic in the Inner Passage -- and along 75 per cent of the West Coast -- is not tracked by radar. Rather, ship crew radio in the location of their vessels to the coast guard as they pass specified points in their passage.

In the case of the **Queen of the North**, the last point the crew should have radioed in its location before sinking was Sainty Point. The ferry, which sank early Wednesday, had to make an alteration there to stay on a safe course.

Dan Bate, communications officer with the Canadian Coast Guard, said Friday that whether that call was made is part of the investigation into the sinking and the coast guard will not discuss it.

Bate said vessel-tracking equipment called automated information systems is present on all Canadian Coast Guard vessels, including the Sir Wilfrid Laurier, which attended the accident. He said B.C. Ferries has requested those records for the Queen of the North investigation.

Bate said the agency will upgrade navigational tracking systems by 2008, when AIS will be in place to cover all Canadian coastal waters.

AIS is an alternative to more costly radar surveillance, now in place in such high-traffic areas as Victoria and Vancouver. It is also in place in Tofino, where it is used as a security system to track foreign ships entering Canadian waters, Bate said.

The question is whether radar tracking the **Queen of the North** could have resulted in a warning to the ship's crew that it was dangerously off-course.

Matt Thirkell, coast guard maritime search and rescue co-ordinator in Victoria, gave a cautious indication that more sophisticated tracking systems could have averted the **Queen of the North** collision.

"They would have been able to observe that the **Queen of the North** was not on course," he said, while cautioning that an accident like Wednesday's could have happened anywhere.

Lewis Glentworth, a retired captain of the **Queen of the North**, said he does not believe radar in the region would have prevented the sinking. "In my years on my run, I never felt the absence of it (radar). The radar coverage is to alert me to the fact that there is someone else out there."

Ferry sitting intact, upright on seabed

The **Queen of the North** is lying intact on the ocean floor, BC Ferries announced Sunday evening after a deepwater submersible provided the first images of the sunken ship.

"The vessel has been located intact in 1,400 feet [427 metres] of water," said the brief statement, which noted a deepwater mini-submarine spent about three hours surveying the ship on Sunday.

"She is resting in silt on her keel," the statement said, adding there was no sign of two people who have been missing since the ship sank, and that there is "little oil emanating from the vessel."

Crews from the North Vancouver firm Nuytco Research began diving on the wreckage at 10 a.m. Sunday, five days after the ferry, which was carrying 101 passengers and crew, hit rocks off remote Gil Island just after midnight Wednesday. The vessel sank near Hartley Bay on the Inside Passage.

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Ninety-nine people made it into lifeboats and life rafts. Passengers Gerald Foisy and Shirley Rosette are missing and believed dead.

On Sunday, John Cottreau, a spokesman for the federal Transportation Safety Board, said initial dives by the manned submersibles will focus on mapping the wreckage, recording exact coordinates of the ferry's stem and stern, and examining the overall condition of the vessel.

"It's very preliminary," Cottreau said of this phase of the investigation.

Still photos and video taken from the site will not be made public, Cottreau said. Instead, the information will be shared only among the agencies involved in the investigation and resulting cleanup effort, including BC Ferries, the TSB and Environment Canada.

"Our goal is to find out what happened, how it happened and [determine] how we can prevent this from happening again," Cottreau said.

He said he did not know how long the investigation will take. Sunday night's statement said BC Ferries, the Transportation Safety Board, the minister's representative from Transport Canada and the RCMP had viewed the footage.

Jeff Heaton of Nuytco Research said dive crews will also be looking for the bodies of Foisy and Rosette. He said the submersibles accommodate a single pilot and have the capacity to dive to approximately 600 metres.

At the surface, the cleanup of diesel fuel and lubricating oil from the wreckage continued Sunday.

Andy Ackerman of Environment Canada said protective booms have been put in place to contain the spill, and to keep any of the diesel from polluting environmentally sensitive areas identified in Grenville Channel.

Winds blowing up to 28 km/h in the area have allowed the diesel sheen to travel approximately 10 kilometres up Grenville Channel in long, thin rows that are visible from the air.

Ackerman said the overall size of the diesel spill is "large," but is thinly covering the water surface. To date, no serious effect on clams, oysters or birds has been detected, he said.

At a press conference in Prince Rupert on Sunday, Mark West of Burrard Clean, the company hired by BC Ferries to deal with fuel coming from the sunken vessel, said clam beds are deep below the water in a muddy substrate, making it harder for the fuel to penetrate the shellfish.

Japan, S. Korea Ships Troubled by Whales

High-speed ships connecting the southwestern Japanese city of Fukuoka and the South Korean city of Busan are having trouble with increasing collisions with whales near Tsushima Strait. Some experts claim that whales collide with ships when they rapidly surface from deep water, while others say female whales raising calves have trouble avoiding fast-moving ships.

Ship operators are trying hard to pinpoint the cause. Some experts say, however, accidents of this kind are unavoidable to some extent. The service jointly run by Japan's Kyushu Railway Co. and South Korea's Miraejet Co. normally provides five round trips a day. Their passenger vessels are powered by hydrofoils in front and back that enable the ships to travel at more than 80 kilometers per hour while floating about 2 meters above the surface of the water. The company's high-speed ships have had six collisions since December 2004, with four of them reported this year.

According to TMCnet, the accidents have not affected the number of passengers but have cost about \$4.2 million in repairs.

Empress refloated

Salvors have refloated the 231-passenger **Empress of the North** (built 2003) after it went aground on a sandbank off the US west coast early on Friday. The ship, owned by American West Steamboat Co, is now being taken to a drydock facility in Portland, Oregon in order to fully survey the damage.

Late on Saturday 20,000 gallons of diesel fuel was removed. The remaining fuel was transferred to port side tanks, away from the grounded side of the ship. Passengers were transferred to a sister ship, the **Queen of the West** (built 1995) using a barge placed between the two vessels; a process that took less than an hour.

"This decision was made with the cooperation of the Coast Guard as well as local authorities. It is a precautionary measure to assure the ultimate safety of our 180 guests," said David A Giersdorf, president of American West Steamboat Co.

The **Empress of the North** left Astoria, Oregon on 19 March for a seven-night Columbia River cruise. It was scheduled to return to Astoria on Sunday. An initial attempt to refloat the **Empress of the North** on Saturday proved unsuccessful. There has been no pollution discharge during the incident.

The **Empress of the North** is a replica of sternwheeler steamship and operates on the rivers of the Pacific Northwest and in the sheltered waters of Alaska's inside passage.

FIRE-DAMAGED STAR PRINCESS'S CRUISE CANCELLED

THE Princess Cruises 108,977 gt, Bermuda-flag vessel **Star Princess** is reported to have sailed from Montego Bay, Jamaica, for Grand Bahama Island and for repairs following last Thursday's severe fire onboard.

A company statement says: "Following a preliminary assessment over the weekend of the damage to cabins aboard Star Princess resulting from last week's fire, it has been determined that additional out of service time is required. We are therefore regretfully cancelling the ship's April 2 voyage, a Caribbean sailing scheduled to depart from Fort Lauderdale. We sincerely apologize to passengers booked on this cruise for any disappointment and inconvenience this may cause."

Passengers booked on the cancelled cruise will get a full refund of their cruise and air fare and also a future cruise credit equal to 25% percent of the cruise fare paid on the cancelled cruise.

The Carnival subsidiary adds: "We are continuing to evaluate the situation and will communicate any new information as it becomes available. In the meantime, we appreciate the patience and understanding from our passengers."

CASUALTY REPORTING

Two men rescued from Lake Okeechobee after tug capsizes

Two Michigan men were rescued Saturday after they were tossed into chilly Lake Okeechobee when their commercial tugboat capsized, authorities said.

Nathaniel Dozman, 19, of Wayland, Mich., and Josh Ruprecht, 27, of Twin Lakes, Mich., were pulled from the lake early Saturday after spending at least four hours in the water, clinging to the foundering vessel.

They were operating the Birdie B, a 38-foot tug and barge, heading west on the Intracoastal Waterway when the vessel capsized in 6-to-7-foot waters that were roiled by a passing storm, authorities said. The men sent out an alert before going in the water near 3 a.m. They clutched the vessel as the Coast Guard, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the Okeechobee County sheriff's searched, commission spokesman Jorge Pino said.

The men were spotted by a rescue helicopter and were removed from the water at about 7 a.m., Pino said. They were transported to St. Mary's Hospital in West Palm Beach in fair condition, but they were suffering from dehydration and hypothermia, he said.

It was not clear how cold the water was, but southern Florida was in the midst of a cold snap early Saturday that lowered air temperatures in the northern section of the lake to the mid-to-high 40s, Pino said.

"I can only imagine that the water was frigid," Pino said by telephone Saturday. "It's a miracle that these two individuals were able to make it." The sunken tug is submerged but is not blocking the intracoastal, and approximately 500 gallons of diesel fuel on board is contained, the Coast Guard said.

'Overtaking boxship' sank Sa bulker

An overtaking boxship is said to have holed the 76,000-dwt bulker **California** (built 1979) in the early morning hours Friday. The vessel is one of four 1970s-built bulkers in the fleet of New York-based Standard Shipping (Stanships), headed by Paul Sa, who is the chairman of the American Club.

Representatives of Stanships describe the company as the commercial manager of the **California**. They cite 'early indications' that the containership was overtaking when it holed the bulker in way of the engine room on its starboard aft quarter. The ship sank some 11 hours later in the Malacca Straits, where it now lies in the main shipping channel in Malaysian waters. All seafarers were safely rescued by the crew of the boxship, the 1,450-teu **Sinokor Seoul** (built 1980), owned by Sinokor Merchant Marine of South Korea.

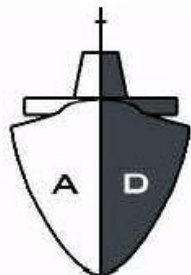
The Stanship representatives say pollution control is the first priority now. **Smit Salvage** vessels have been on scene since early on Friday. The vessel had some 90 tonnes of fuel oil and eight tonnes of diesel on board. The bulker's representatives do not believe significant pollution has occurred but acknowledge that "a slight oily sheen surrounds the wreck".

They add that the Panama-flag, Russian Register-class bulker was fully laden with iron ore from India destined for China. In November, another Stanships bulker, the 64,000-dwt **General Trader** (built 1976), was sold for some \$3.7m in a scrap deal that allowed the buyer to trade the vessel for up to six months. The transaction followed a scathing detention report on General Trader by port-state control officers of the US Coast Guard (USCG).

NAVY NEWS

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The decommissioned aircraft carrier **USS Oriskany (CVA 34)** is towed March 22nd from the Intracoastal Waterway to Allegheny Pier on board Naval Air Station Pensacola. Known as the "Big O," the 32,000-ton, 888-foot **Oriskany** is being delivered to the air station while it is being prepared for its final journey. The ship is scheduled to be sank 22 miles south of Pensacola in approximately 212 feet of water in the Gulf of Mexico May 17, 2006, where it will become the largest ship ever intentionally sunk as an artificial reef. After the **Oriskany** reaches the bottom, ownership of the vessel will transfer from the Navy to the State of Florida.



The Dutch support vessel **A 832 ZUIDERKRUIS** visited the port of Rotterdam
Photo : Michel Kodde ©

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The **BOURBON HESTIA** was handed over in Singapore

Photo : Capt. Jelle de Vries (c)

Malta Shipyards awarded Lm3m FPSO upgrade project

Following the conversion contract of the heavy lift vessel announced last week, another significant project, this time in the offshore sector, has been awarded to Malta Shipyards Ltd, a company statement said.

Securing this second contract has ensured that the shipyards are loaded with a balanced combination of offshore and conventional work utilising available skills and resources. The Ikdam, which was converted from a tanker to an FPSO at Malta Shipyards in 2001, will be returning this time for an extensive upgrade project. An FPSO (Floating Production, Storage and Offloading) vessel is a tanker with equipment to process oil on the deck used by the offshore oil and gas industry. The FPSO Ikdam will come to Malta Shipyards for upgrading of the process facilities, drydocking and ship re-classification works.

On this project Malta Shipyards is also responsible for design engineering, procurement, construction and commissioning. This upgrade contract is worth in the region of Lm3 million and will commence in May and is scheduled to be completed by early August.

With both these upgrade and conversion projects at the yard, it is envisaged that Malta Shipyards will be quite occupied for the rest of the year, with the busiest period forecasted to occur between May and July, the company added. The long-term nature of these projects will enable shipyard management to plan and organise for the best use of available resources and for the workforce to focus on the jobs that have to be done.

Both these contracts are within the capabilities of Malta Shipyards and can be completed on time and profitably. Total commitment from all levels of the shipyard workforce will ensure the success of these projects, the company concluded.

Mitsui Eyeballs Shipyard

Japan's Mitsui & Co is eyeing up an ownership stake in Poland's Gdansk shipyard as a way of securing LNG newbuilding slots, reports Tradewinds. The Japanese company could buy shares in the historic shipyard despite rumours earlier this month that Polish energy company Energa was set to take over.

The plan is thought to be part of Mitsui's strategy of investing in a shipyard where it can build LNG ships.

Earlier reports suggested Energa was set to pay around \$30.8m for Gdansk in a deal that had the blessing of the yard's supervisory board and the trade unions.

Aker Yards to Build Supply Vessels for Farstad



Aker Yards has signed a contract with Farstad Supply AS, a company within Farstad Shipping ASA in Ålesund, Norway, to deliver one UT 751 E platform supply vessel and one UT 712 L anchor handling tug supply vessel. The total value of the contract is approx NOK 570 million. This is the 18th and 19th contract between the shipowner Farstad Shipping and Aker Yards. The hulls for the vessels will be built in Romania and outfitted at Aker Yards, Brevik. Delivery of the vessels are scheduled for December 2007 and March 2008.

Volharding Shipyards Delivers Heavylift

After successful sea trials Volharding Shipyards delivered the yard number 625 "BBC Ireland" to the customer. The heavylift is aimed for the transportation of the projected cargo.



S. Korea's shipbuilders challenged by Chinese rivals

South Korean shipbuilding companies are facing mounting challenges from their Chinese rivals in the global container ship and very large crude-oil carrier (VLCC) markets, a report by a local ratings agency showed Monday.

Shipbuilders in South Korea, the world's leading shipbuilding nation, held 42.6 percent of the VLCC market last year, down 14.2 percentage points from 2001, Korea Ratings said.

Daewoo delivers tankers from Romanian shipyard



Daewoo Shipbuilding & Marine Engineering Co. said yesterday it delivered the first three vessels built at its eastern Romanian shipyard in Mangalia.

Daewoo Mangalia Heavy Industries recently delivered three 69,000-metric-ton crude carriers, the largest-ever built around the Black Sea, to LMZ Transoil Shipping Enterprises S.A. of Greece. The shipbuilder won the deal in October 2003. With design and technological support from Daewoo Shipbuilding on Goje Island, South Gyeongsang Province, as requested by LMZ, the tankers were built and delivered 40 days earlier than the scheduled date.

DMHI is currently building 18 container carriers including a 4,860 TEU (20-foot equivalent unit) vessel for Germany's NSB. Daewoo Shipbuilding acquired Romania's Mangalia Shipbuilding in 1997 and boosted its sales by more than 10-fold to \$127 million last year. The amount takes up 1 percent of the Romania's total exports.

DMHI targets to receive orders worth \$1 billion by 2008 and reach annual sales of \$500 million by 2010.

Separately, Daewoo Shipbuilding's major shareholder Korea Development Bank is reportedly not planning to sell the world's third-largest shipbuilder to foreign bidders for national security reasons as the company also builds and repairs Korean naval vessels. "It is technologically difficult to separate or pull down the facilities for defense vessels from the shipyard in Okpo, Goje," said a bank official.

Korea Development Bank chairman Kim Chang-rok recently said that sale of the shipbuilder is expected to take place next year after thorough discussions with the government.

EASTERN CAR CARRIERS AND FESCO IN DEAL

TOKYO-based ro-ro, breakbulk, heavy lift, and project cargo operator Eastern Car Liners Limited (ECL and FESCO Ocean Management Limited (FOML) have agreed a charter deal.

Under the agreement, ECL will provide a monthly eastbound liner service from Japan to the US West Coast, which includes delivering two multi-purpose and ro-ro vessels to FOML. FOML will, in turn, provide a monthly liner service westbound from Everett, Washington to the ports of Vladivostok, Korsakov, and Busan/Masan.

The companies say: "Through this time charter arrangement, both ECL and FOML will optimize their operations by utilizing the vessels in an economically efficient manner, while providing improved services to the shipping public."

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The **OLA** is operating at Curacao port – **Photo : Aad Horians ©**

Change of management for Normand Rover

Island Offshore in Norway has announced that it has taken over management of the UT745 **Normand Rover** from Solstad Shipping.

Normand Rover is currently operating in the Gulf of Mexico as a subsea construction vessel

Maersk Supply Service provides more details on anchor handler order

Maersk Supply Service has provided more details of the eight 15,300bhp VS 472 anchor handling and supply vessels it has ordered from Aker Yards AS in Norway.

The vessels are of Vik & Sandvik design and the first vessel is expected to be delivered during the first quarter of 2008 – the following vessels are expected to be delivered at two-monthly intervals afterwards.

As part of the contract, Maersk Supply Service has options for an additional two vessels. The above mentioned vessels will join the current Maersk Supply Service fleet of more than 60 vessels.

The newbuilds will be 73.20m overall with length between perpendiculars of 64.20m, breadth moulded of 20.00m, depth to main deck of 9.10m, draft (max) of 7.60m, and draft (max) including skeg, of 8.40m.

The AHTS will have a bollard pull of 160 tons, main winch (waterfall type, with three drums) of 400 tons capacity, two Triplex shark jaws of 700 tons, two stern rollers of total capacity 1m000 tons, and a deadweight at maximum draft of 3,700 tons. The deck load will be 1,200 tons and deck area 600m². Speed at draft of 6.00m, sea trial conditions, 85 per cent MCR, will be 16 knots.

The ships will have capacity for 670m³ of fuel, 635m³ of fresh water, and rig chain lockers of 555m³.

They will have a pair of CP propellers of 4.00m diameter, two 700bhp tunnel thrusters aft, and two forward of 1,20bhp each. Accommodation will be provided for 30.

Maersk Vega delivered by Keppel FELS

Maersk Supply Service has confirmed that Maersk Brazil LTDA took delivery of the PSV **Maersk Vega** on March 16th from Keppel FELS Brasil shipyard. The vessel has joined the existing fleet of 55 vessels operated by Maersk Supply Service.

More Capacity On EuroBridge

DFDS Tor Line will increase its EuroBridge capacity (Goteborg - Ghent) through a vessel switch from the beginning of July.



The service will continue to offer six sailings a week in each direction, but with three vessels on the run instead of four. The vessels to be deployed will be of the company's latest-generation, four-deck ro/ros. All Ghent shipments will be handled at Port of Goteborg's Ro/ro Terminal Arendal

Left : **TOR BEGONIA**
Photo : **Ricardo van Liere** ©

Test Drive of New "Delta St.Petersburg" Vessel

On March 26 the second new vessel of the Delta Shipping Line was added to the Rotterdam - St.Petersburg route .

"**Delta St.Petersburg**" - is the 145 meters long, 917 TEUs capacity vessel built by the Volharding Shipyards. The speed of the vessel is 18.5 knots. This boxship will replace the "**Matfen**" (548 TEU).

On March 30 "**Delta St.Petersburg**" will be loaded in St.Petersburg; it will call the Hamburg port on April 3, 2006.

Let us remind that the first ship of the series of 3 - "**Delta Rotterdam**" is already working on the route. The vessel departed the Rotterdam port on January 21. By the time the "**Delta St.Petersburg**" joined the service, "**Delta Rotterdam**" has already made 10 voyages. In June 2006 the third vessel of the Delta Shipping Lines - "**Delta Hamburg**" will be added to the service. Thus within the 6 months of 2006 the 3 boxships of 917 TEU capacity will replace the 548 TEU and 510 TEU ships.

Ports rotation: St.Petersburg - Hamburg - Rotterdam - St.Petersburg.

Shetland to Cut Ferry Costs

Shetland Islands Council may set up an arms length company to run its inter island ferries in a bid to stave off potential competition on the route, while saving the authority \$1 million over three years. Councilors will decide whether to implement proposals put forward by a working group which has spent the past year examining ways of

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improving the SIC's expensive ferry service. Proposals include setting up a private firm to run the ferries, employing crews through an offshore company and reducing staff at the ferry operations center, at Sella Ness.



Left: **St ROGNVALD** seen departing from Aberdeen bound for the Shetlands
Photo : Piet Sinke ©

Consultants Strategic Transport Solutions (STS) have advised that the council could save money by creating an independent company which would not have to maintain wages at local authority levels through the single status agreement. The crew could also be employed via an offshore company, which would mean the employers would not have to pay national insurance contributions. The council would have to hand over the running

of the ferries to the new Shetland Transport Partnership, who in turn may be forced to put the service out to competitive tender. The ferries task force, which has been meeting since January 2005, also wants to redesign the management structure of the service, getting rid of four superintendent posts through natural wastage, while creating three new positions for a fleet safety officer, resources coordinator and customer/IT coordinator. The biggest savings would be achieved through new staffing arrangements, including a reduction in overtime.

Aboitiz counts the cost



Aboitiz Transport System Corp, the Philippine ferry group, said higher expenses had depressed earnings in 2005.

SUPERFERRY 14
Photo : Paul Firet ©

The owner posted net profit of PHP 65.7m (\$1.28m) for last year, on a 20% rise in revenue to PHP 11.7bn. It did not provide a 2004 profit figure in its statement, although it said last year it made PHP 310.5m in that year.

Total costs rose 25% to PHP 11.5bn, largely due to a 32% expansion in operating expenses. Its fuel and lubricants bills also rose 23% to PHP 3.3bn. "The company is currently working on several initiatives to continuously bring costs down," it said, though it did not specify what those initiatives were. It has cut inter-island fares by 50% this year as a response to airline competition.

Tidewater sells Chief

Broker Marcon says Tidewater Marine's PSV **Chief** has been sold to private Caribbean interests for an undisclosed sum. The 1982 Bender Shipyard-built vessel with principle dimensions of 190ft x 40ft x 14ft and a loaded draft of 12ft on 1,100 long tons deadweight with a clear deck of 135ft x 31ft, will now pass to it's fifth owner since being built.

In former times, the vessel has been known as the **HOS Chief**, **Point Chief** and **State Chief**. The **Chief** handle will continue on with its new owners who will rename her **Midnight Chief**. Marcon International acted as brokers on behalf of the sellers, whilst Bellem Marine Bureau acted as brokers on behalf of the buyer.

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The ex Sydney harbour tugs **Warilla** and **Warang** arrived in Singapore, the **Warang** with some weather damage on bow as can be seen at the picture. The rumors are going that the tugs will be used in the Singapore region

Photo : Capt.Jelle de Vries ©



Seen in Werkendam the **SUNERGON** (Imo 9362580) owned by Gebr Trommel-Nijkerk , is measuring 89 x 12.5 mtr with a DWT of 3200 ton.

Photo : Huug Pieterse – www.shipspotter.nl ©



The **SEACAT DIAMANT** seen passing Hoek van Holland outward bound with pilot tender **PIONEER** steaming alongside

Photo : Dirk Kleijn ©



The **TORE** seen with the **AMT MARINER** and the **EERLAND 5** – Photo : Frits Janse ©

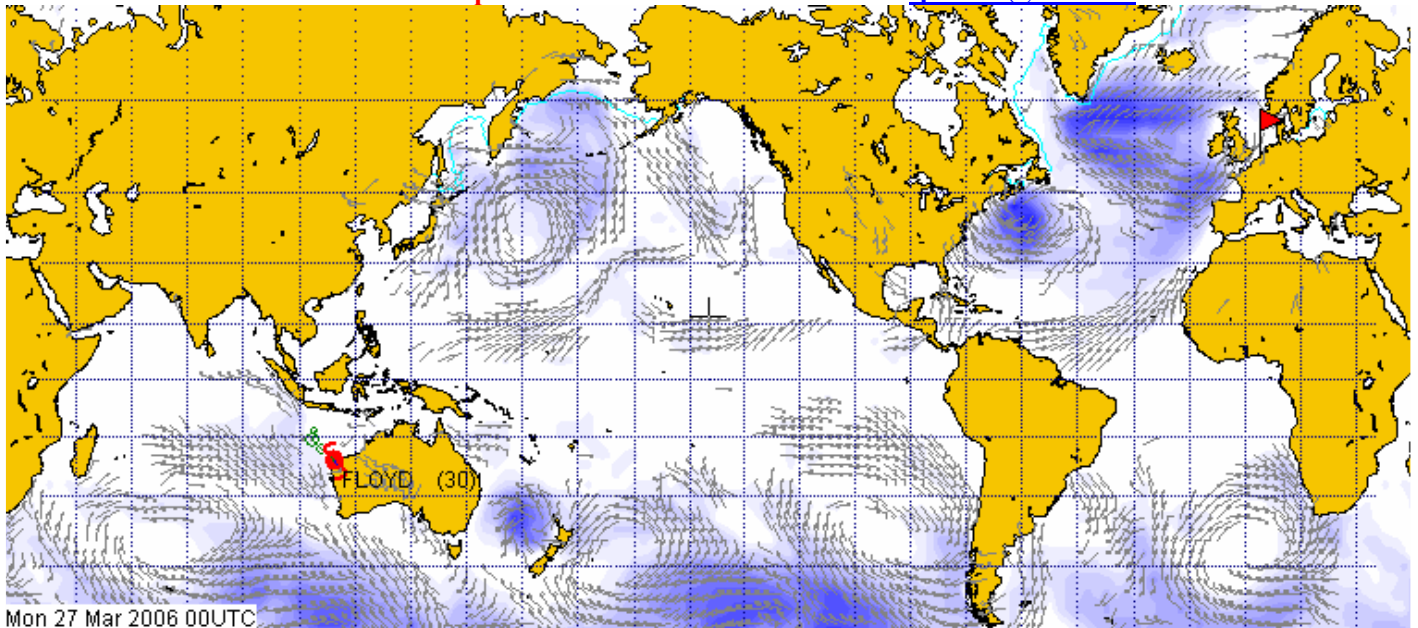
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.... PHOTO OF THE DAY



The latest addition to the **AUGUSTEA** fleet, the **CARLO MAGNO** during her naming ceremony
Photo : Max Iguera ©

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