

Ships Made in Germany

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Encouraging signals for »Made in Germany«

Things are happening in the German shipbuilding industry – quite a lot of them, in fact. Shipyards are holding their own amidst a tense market. The sector has rarely been as dynamic as it has been in recent months. And that's a good sign, as the various transformation transactions will help shipbuilders maintain their competitive edge.

Want a small selection? Just to name a few (as more can be found on the following pages) ...

- The shipbuilding groups Rönner and Lürssen are taking over the insolvent shipyards FSG and Nobiskrug. Et voilà ... construction is underway again in Flensburg on a RoRo vessel.
- The Meyer Werft is receiving the necessary political support. Et voilà ... construction and delivery is resuming. Then, at the end of 2025, a real highlight: The MSC Group, a close customer of Fincantieri in Italy for decades, notified a major order worth around €10 billion. Suddenly, even Federal Minister of Economics Katherina Reiche could be spotted on the podium, to be quoted with favorable remarks about the shipyard and the national shipbuilding industry as a whole.
- Thyssenkrupp Marine Systems separates from its parent company. Et voilà ... Courage pays off: A successful IPO and, under the new brand TKMS, even inclusion in a major stock market index follow within just a few weeks.
- The Lürssen Group has built up its naval division, NVL. Et voilà ... Appetite is seen in the defense industry and the Rheinmetall Group intends to acquire NVL. Obviously, someone has great confidence in the shipbuilder. In case of an authoritative approval, a systems house with considerable power for surface naval shipbuilding will be created in Germany. The future of the F126 frigate project may still be uncertain. But, as we hear, intensive work is underway behind the scenes to find a solution.
- Kick-off for the MEKO A-200 DEU project: The Kiel-based shipyard TKMS and Germany's federal authorities have signed a preliminary contract for new frigates. The first ship is scheduled for delivery by 2029.

- German Naval Yards in Kiel is refocusing on its expertise in yacht building. Et voilà ... An order for completion and outfitting of comes in.

And yes, some pessimists are talking about an increasing concentration of larger, but generally fewer players in the German shipbuilding industry as a risk. This may be true, and there may be reasons for caution – keyword »concentration risk«. However, if shipbuilding is understood much more than before as part of a strategically conceived German industrial policy, as is already the case in other European countries, then the advantages are a strong argument. Larger players have more clout, can operate more efficiently, and respond more effectively to tenders. Of course, an industrial place like Germany also needs smaller, highly specialized, and medium-sized shipyards. But having large players can be very important and strategically worthwhile.

However, policymakers still have some work to do: the government must create an appropriate business framework and advocate more strongly for fair competition on the international stage. And it can certainly think and act much more strategically when it comes to awarding contracts for public sector ships. This requires a genuine industrial policy that truly deserves the name.

You can read more about all of this in this issue, as well as about our »Ship of the Year« award and activities of the various German shipyards for seagoing and inland ships. Enjoy exploring the current state of German shipbuilding!



Michael Meyer
Chief Editor

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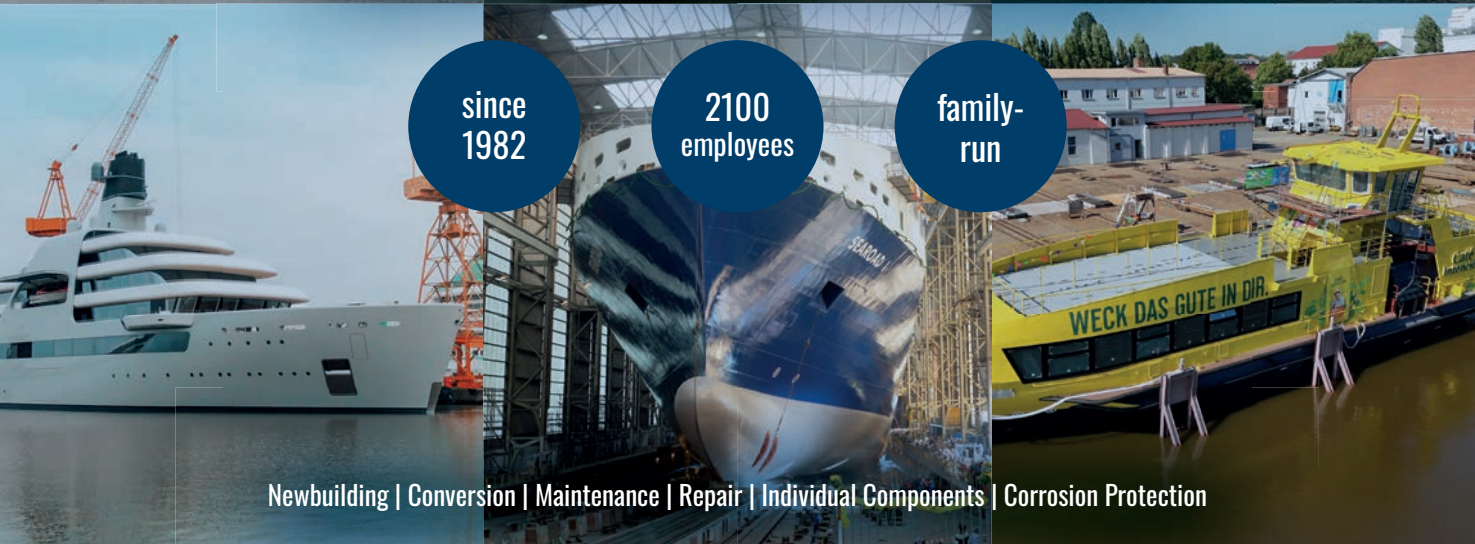
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Reinhard Lügen

General Manager
German Shipbuilding
and Ocean Industries Association (VSM)



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In an era defined by rapid technological change, geopolitical realignments, and an unwavering global demand for resilient and sustainable maritime solutions, the German maritime industry continues to demonstrate strength, innovation and promising long-term prospects.

For years, »Ships made in Germany« has served as a unique showcase of our sector's capabilities – from advanced ship design and world-class engineering to cutting-edge propulsion and innovative digital systems in manufacturing. Today, as the world navigates unprecedented waters and opportunities, this industrial platform remains more relevant than ever.

German shipyards, marine suppliers and services stand at the forefront of the global energy transition. Our industry has embraced decarbonization not as an abstract goal but as a concrete roadmap, delivering vessels and technologies that reduce emissions, boost energy efficiency, and integrate novel fuels.

And yet, sustainability extends beyond environmental performance. Resilience, reliability, and safety are equally crucial to our identity.

Whether it is about constructing specialized offshore vessels that support renewable infrastructure or equipping naval platforms to enhance security and sover-

eignty - German-built ships embody the highest standards in quality and dependability.

This Edition of »Ships made in Germany« highlights a diverse cross-section of projects, companies, and innovations that define our present and will shape our future. It reflects the collaboration between shipyards, suppliers, research institutions, and policymakers – a partnership that has kept Germany on the world stage.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to strengthening our industrial base, fostering innovation ecosystems, and expanding international cooperation. The global challenges of the 21st century demand not only excellence in engineering, but also longterm strategic thinking, sustainability by design, and a shared commitment to press for steady improvement and alignment with our common goals of prosperity, stability and cooperation.

On behalf of the German Shipbuilding and Ocean Industries Association, I would like to thank all contributors – shipowners, designers, shipyard teams, and suppliers – whose work and dedication make the German shipbuilding industry a benchmark for others to follow.

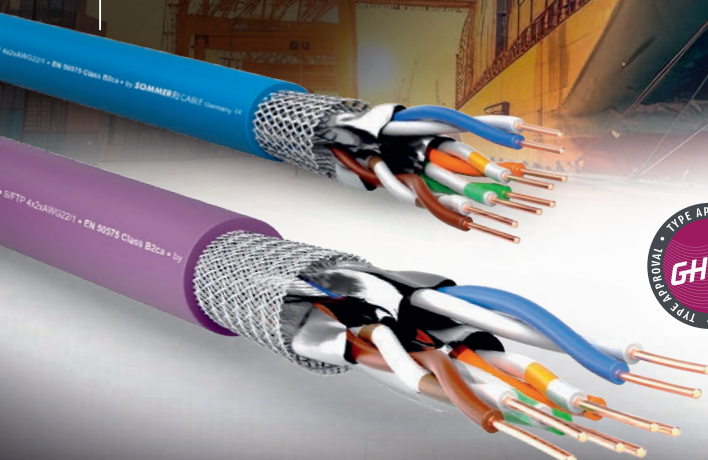
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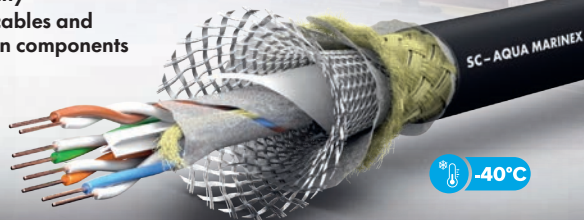
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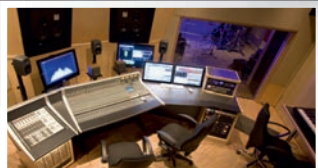
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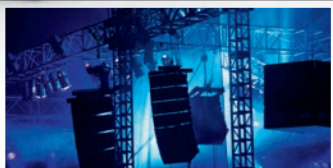
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Christoph Ploß

Coordinator of the Federal Government
for Maritime Economy and Tourism



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German shipbuilding is a strategic core of our technological sovereignty

German shipbuilding is a fundamental pillar of our maritime economy and a strategic core of our technological sovereignty. In a 2026 market environment characterized by shifting geopolitical alliances and rapid technological change, this sector serves as a decisive anchor for industrial value creation and strategic autonomy within Europe. My work as the Federal Government's Coordinator for Maritime Economy and Tourism is focused on ensuring that we maintain our leading position and secure the technological expertise necessary for Germany's and Europe's maritime future.

In Germany, the sector's primary strength lies in its radical specialization. Our domestic shipyards lead through the management of extreme complexity. Whether developing advanced research vessels, government vessels or zero-emission specialized ships, our ability to master intricate system architectures and integrate them with a world-class domestic supplier network is a unique selling point. This industrial ecosystem ensures that specialized shipbuilding remains a key driver of our national industrial strength and a frontrunner in climate-friendly technologies. By investing heavily in alternative propulsion and smart ship concepts, our yards are making a substantial contribution to sustainable shipping.

A particular stronghold of this expertise is the naval shipbuilding sector, where German yards are exceptionally well-positioned as global leaders in the design and construction of conventional submarines, frigates, and highly sophisticated surface combatants. This capability is not just an industrial asset but a vital component of our national security,

contributing significantly to the protection of sea lanes and critical infrastructure. The high level of innovation in German naval yards, ranging from stealth technologies to advanced propulsion systems, ensures that we remain a partner of choice within NATO and the EU. In a world of growing geopolitical uncertainty, maintaining these sovereign construction capabilities in Germany is essential for our ability to act and defend our interests at sea.

However, technological leadership alone is no longer enough. We face significant structural challenges as large corporations from Asia, often benefiting from extensive state support, capture increasing market shares. We cannot allow our shipyards to lose further ground in this unequal competition. Once these complete value chains migrate out of Europe, the investment required to rebuild them would be enormous.

The answer must be a unified European one. To address this, I am championing a comprehensive European Industrial Maritime Strategy. Together with our Dutch partners, we have initiated a joint effort to enhance favorable ship financing conditions, support fleet modernization, and strengthen maritime security. While I expect the EU Commission to deliver targeted solutions, I am committed to flanking these efforts with national measures that create reliable incentives for private investment and ensure that more specialized orders remain with German yards.

With strong shipyards, a skilled workforce, and a resilient industrial network, German shipbuilding is well positioned to shape the maritime world of tomorrow and deliver solutions that define international standards.

Solid conditions for German shipbuilding

The German shipbuilding industry can look back on a successful year: The sector is well positioned, with a record level of newbuilding orders. However, the German Shipbuilding and Ocean Industries Association (VSM) warned of geopolitical uncertainties while welcoming signals for growth in Europe.«

During a Parliamentary Evening in Berlin, Harald Fassmer, President of the German Shipbuilding and Ocean Industries Association (Verband für Schiffbau und Meerestechnik, VSM) stated that the German maritime industry requires a reliable political framework to realise its growth opportunities. Addressing Members of the German Bundestag as well as representatives from ministries, diplomacy, the Navy, industry and the media, Fassmer called for decisive political action in support of Germany as a maritime industrial location.

»Industries of the future«

»Shipbuilding and marine technology are not only rich in tradition, but above all industries of the future: highly innovative, export-oriented, security-relevant and indispensable for Germany's sovereignty«, Harald Fassmer said. German companies are holding their own worldwide with highly complex naval vessels, special-purpose and research ships, as well as maritime system solutions—despite an increasingly distorted international competitive environment.

Together with partners such as VDMA, BDSV and IG Metall, the VSM has submitted key position papers for an Action Plan for the Maritime Industry. These now need to be taken up

and implemented without delay. Reforms at Germany as an industrial location are urgent, but feasible: »Complaining does not solve problems. What matters is leveraging our own strengths and moving into action«, the VSM President said.

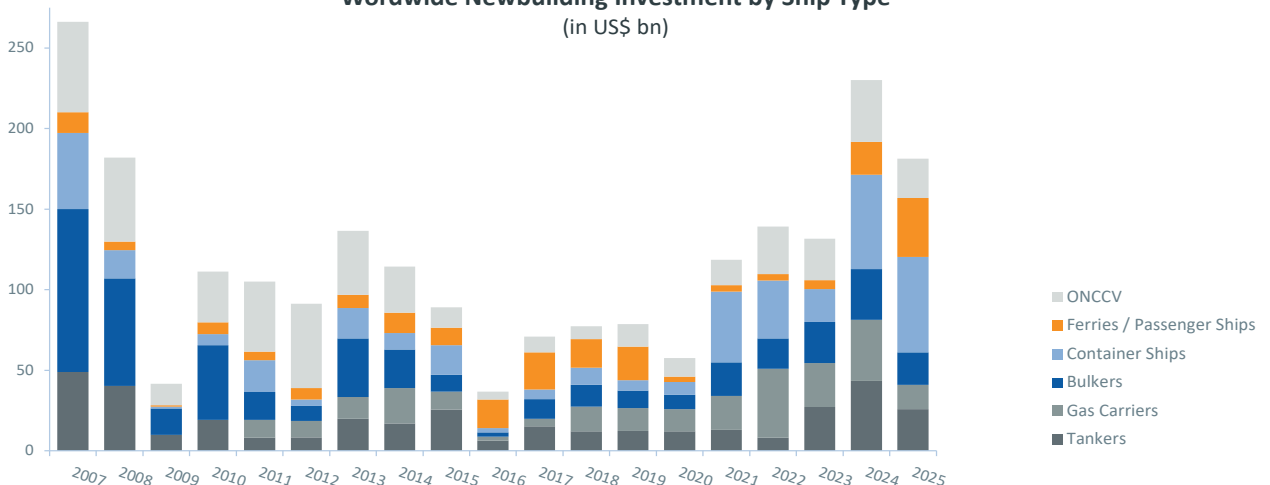
He welcomed signals from Brussels pointing towards a stronger »Made in Europe« orientation, saying that taxpayers' money must contribute to value creation. »This has long been standard practice internationally—and it is an important step towards stronger growth in Europe.«

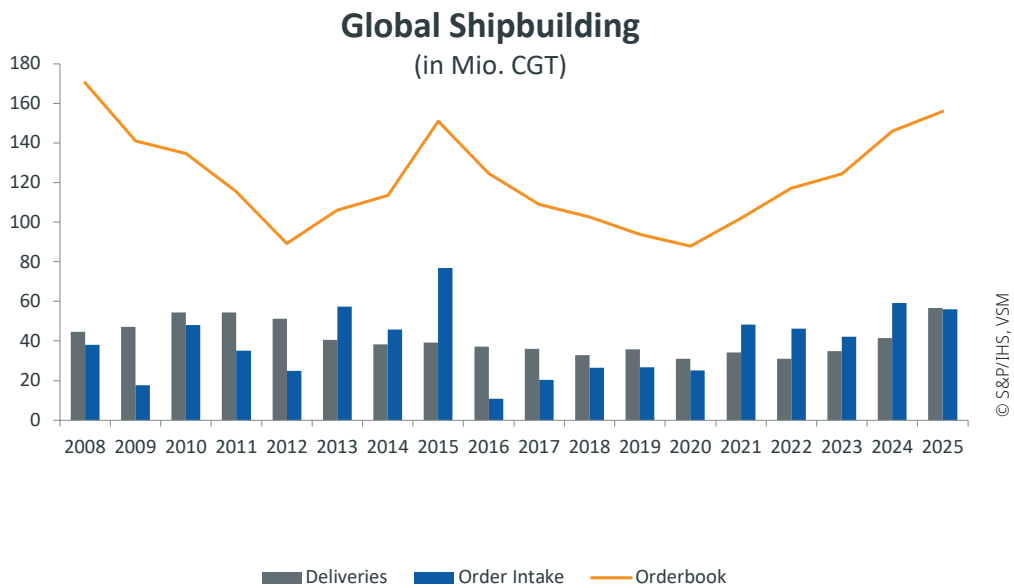
FSG and Nobiskrug saved

There were a number of notable developments in the German shipbuilding industry over the course of 2025. One of the early highlights was the acquisition of the FSG and Nobiskrug shipyards by Rönner and Lürssen, just six weeks after the insolvency filing. »At last, it is possible to look ahead again and shape the future there«, the VSM commented. »Our statement that we need every dock, every slipway and every square metre of heavy-load area still holds true.«

In Flensburg, work on the ferry »SeaRoad I« resumed shortly thereafter. The vessel was launched in November, delivery is scheduled for July 2026.

Worldwide Newbuilding Investment by Ship Type
(in US\$ bn)





An all-time high

The solid economic environment for the maritime industry is reflected in the sector's key figures. »At our annual press conference, we report a historic record level of newbuilding orders in Germany«, the VSM stated. As of May 2025, civilian order intake amounted to € 10.7 billion — an all-time high for the industry. According to an earlier announcement, the repair business, naval shipbuilding and strong global demand for newbuildings also generated a high volume of orders across the entire value chain.

Following the rebranding of MAN Energy Solutions to »Evertelligence«, Thyssenkrupp Marine Systems followed suit and

has since officially operated under the abbreviation TKMS. »The bigger headline came a few months later with the successful IPO and the company's entry into the MDAX just days afterwards«, said the VSM. »With a record order backlog, the Kiel-based company impressed investors and, by upgrading and expanding the additional site in Wismar, set a course for sustainable growth.«

An earlier »big bang« in naval shipbuilding had already been triggered by the announcement of Rheinmetall's acquisition of NVL, combined with growth plans for the new division in Düsseldorf. One of the most important developments in that past year were the ongoing discussions of the »F126«

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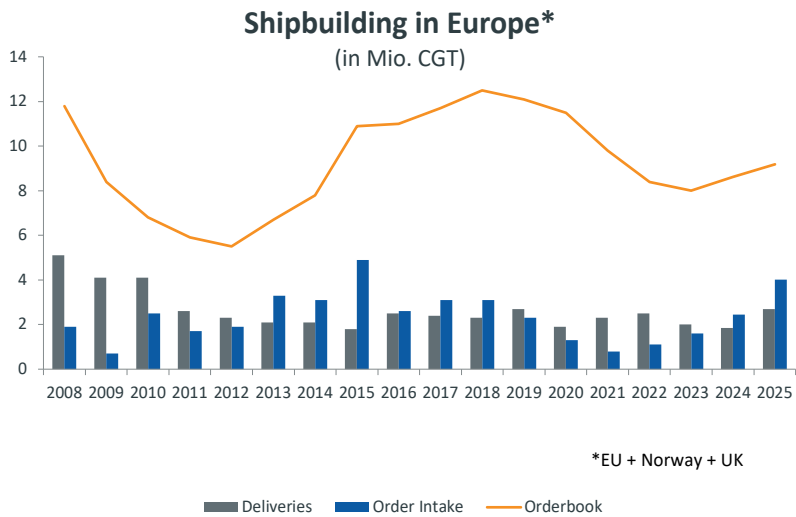
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became apparent that TKMS is going to play a key part in the construction of new frigates (type MEKO A-200) for the German Navy, while talks for »F126« continue. »We are not giving up on the »F126«, said Defense Minister Boris Pistorius from the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD). »But we want to pursue a two-pronged approach.« A precontract with TKMS was signed in February, enabling the company to begin initial construction works. Delivery of the first vessel is scheduled for 2029.

Major contract for Meyer

The VSM also explicitly mentioned the press conference in Berlin shortly before Christmas, at which Federal Minister Katherina Reiche and Lower Saxony's Minister President Olaf Lies announced a major contract worth




frigate program, initially placed with German Naval Yards and Damen Group in the Netherlands. The project

suffered from planning difficulties, forcing the German government to consider alternatives. In early 2026, it

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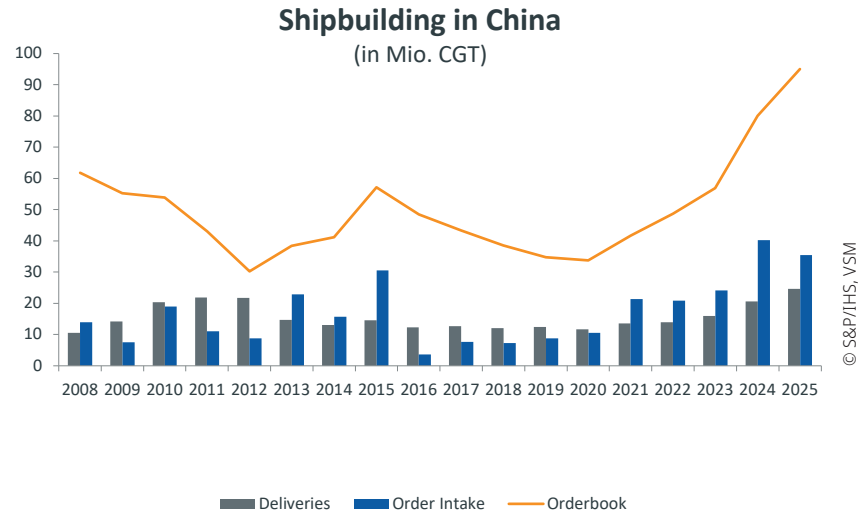


around €10 billion for Meyer Werft. Nevertheless, the order is not expected to be included in the VSM order statistics until 2026, once the final shipbuilding contract has been signed. »Even so, this provides the best possible conditions to now put the helm hard over in Papenburg«, said the VSM. »From restructuring back onto the growth and investment trajectory for which the yard stood for decades.«

»Geopolitical strains«

Looking ahead to 2026, the Association's focus is primarily on the National Maritime Conference in May and SMM, which will once again take place in Hamburg in September.

However, the title of »world-leading trade fair« may have to be shared with Marintec China. »The exhibition im-



pressed visitors with sparkling stands, hordes of guests and a dynamic, euphoric atmosphere«, said the VSM.

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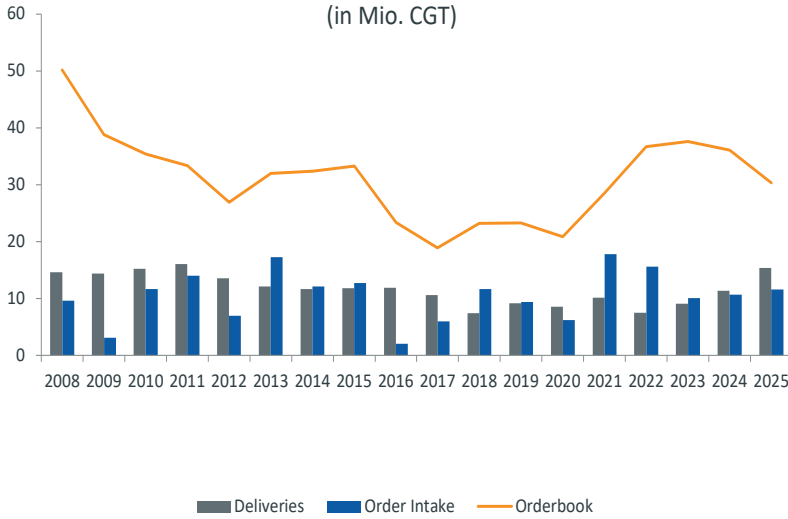
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Shipbuilding in South Korea (in Mio. CGT)



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of the Chinese Navy — during which Japan and Taiwan reported violations

of their operating areas — may not have dampened the trade fair mood.

Observed from Hamburg, however, it still sent a shiver down one's spine.«

The VSM characterises 2025 as »a year full of geopolitical strains«. Russia is cited first, as it continues on its imperial course of war, as is China, which is increasingly asserting power within the global order. The outlook on the United States is also critical: the Trump regime is described as an unreliable partner that has »rebuffed« a rules-based order and European institutions; the National Security Strategy from the White House is said to precisely describe Europe's dilemma. »None of these developments truly came as a surprise, and yet suitable responses are lacking everywhere«, the Association stated.

The VSM places the coming year in context for the industry. »For the maritime industry, we jointly bear responsibility for providing answers. It helps to be aware of our own capabilities.«



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A technological lead by China — now assumed in some other sectors — cannot, according to the VSM, be attested in German shipbuilding and marine technology. The situation is different in the United States, where a technological backlog in shipbuilding is now to be addressed with investments amounting to many billions in order to prepare for systemic competition with China. Germany, which in recent years has built around six times the amount of ship tonnage, should, by comparison, be able to safeguard its technological sovereignty with manageable effort.

»And so we enter the new year with great confidence. Business is booming and customers value our expertise. Our goal is to contribute to the growth impulses that Germany so urgently needs.«

Global output rising

On the international level, 2025 marked another active year in the shipbuilding sector. According to data provided by Clarksons, the market saw »rising output, a recovery in ordering in the second-half and record levels of containership and cruise orders«.

Global ordering, compared year-on-year, went down by 27% to a total of 56.4 million CGT and \$ 181 billion. However, this development is based on an extraordinary 15 year high in 2024. Last year remained 34% above the ten-year-trend, making 2025 another historically busy — albeit volatile — year. The market tensed up in the first half due to US policies and weakening charter markets but recovered from July onwards.

The most dominant segment fell to containerships with orders totaling \$ 59 billion and 4.8 million TEU, making up 41% of all orders worldwide. All in all, the order book for container ships has reached a new record high. At the end of February 2026, orders totaled more than 1,350 vessels with a combined capacity of 11.8 million TEU, according to Bimco. Despite growing trade policy uncertainties and falling freight rates, the order book for container ships has continued to grow, the shipping organisation explained when announcing the numbers. In the first

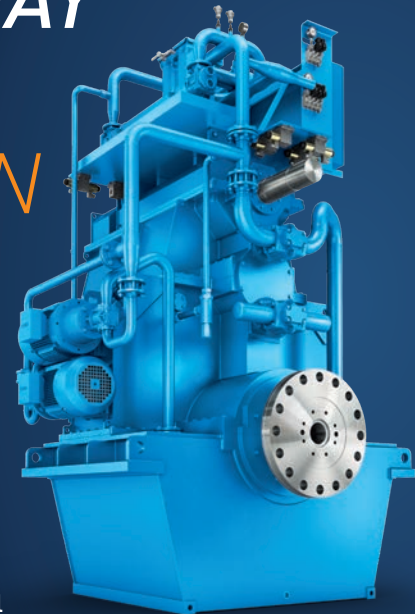
two months of this year alone, 102 newbuild orders totaling 665,000 TEU were added. Compared to the same period last year, this represents an increase of 28%.

The dominance of very large vessels in the order book is particularly striking: A total of 436 ships with 12,000 TEU or more are on order, representing 65% of the total ordered capacity. However, the

order book in the smaller segments has also grown particularly strongly. Orders in the size classes up to 3,000 TEU, 3,000 to 6,000 TEU, and 6,000 to 8,000 TEU have more than doubled. In contrast, growth in the rest of the order book was only 17%.

However, these three smaller segments together account for only 16% of the fleet capacity currently deployed.

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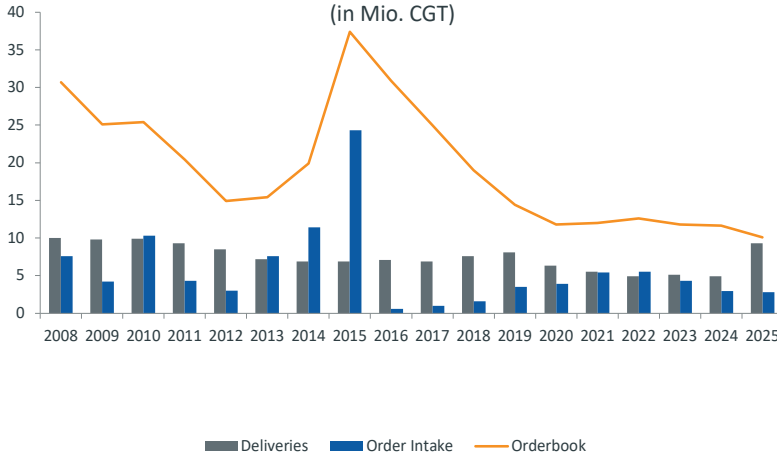
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Shipbuilding in Japan (in Mio. CGT)



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The delivery of ships with a combined capacity of 11.8 million TEU is planned for the period from 2025 to 2029. Even if all ships currently 22 years old or old-

er were scrapped by the end of 2030, the fleet would still grow by an average of 6.1 % per year – as it has so far this decade. This could create a challenging

supply and demand situation for liner shipping companies.

Having an eye on another segment which is much more important for Europe's shipbuilders, it is to be stated that cruise orders reached a record level of \$ 32 billion in 2025, further supporting the European shipbuilding industry.

Demand for alternative fuels

Green technology remained one of the industry's driving factors, although decarbonization consensus »stalled« according to Clarksons. Investments continued in 2025, with 47 % of the current orderbook tonnage being set for alternative fuels.

By the end of the year, there were more than 400 dual-fuel active container ships and car carriers out at sea, almost twice the number compared to 2024 with 218 vessels. The World Ship-

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ping Council (WSC) stated that there were a total of 726 dual-fuel ships in both sectors combined still on order, accounting for 74 % of all containership newbuildings and 87 % of all new car carriers.

Most containership owners choose Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), making up around 5.98 million TEU of newbuilding capacity, followed by methanol at 2.37 million TEU. Conventional fuels for the containership sector make up a total of 2.24 million TEU of globally ordered capacity.

Contesting dominance

Once again, Chinese shipyards have been dominating the sector. Almost two thirds (62 %) of all new orders from 2025 went to China—down from 71 % in 2024, but still the industry's undisputed champion. South Korea, still one of the strongest shipbuilding nations, took 21 % of newbuilding orders.

In order to expand its market share, Korea's HD Hyundai consolidated two of its subsidiaries: HD Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI) and HD Hyundai Mipo fused under the name HHI. The Korean government stated that it plans to invest \$ 150 billion in the United States, bolstering Donald Trump's plan to »Make American Shipbuilding Great Again«. One of the first movers has been Hanwha, following up on its 2024 purchase of Philly Shipyard for \$ 100 million. Last summer, the company disclosed plans of investing \$ 5 billion in order to up Hanwha Philly's capacity from two newbuildings to 20 ships per year.

Also, the South Korean government intends to further strengthen the country's shipbuilding industry to compete with other shipbuilding locations, focusing on the promotion of modern technologies. Accordingly, the government is injecting approximately \$221 million into the sector this year. This funding will be provided as grants for projects developing cutting-edge shipbuilding technologies. This year's budget represents a 23% increase compared to 2025. The focus is on environmentally friendly ships, ships and shipyards equipped with artificial intel-

ligence (AI), and strengthening the competitiveness of small and medium-sized shipbuilders. Korea's ship exports reached a record high of \$31.8 billion in 2025. According to the ministry, the largest share of orders for high-value vessels, such as LNG tankers, went to Korea.

»Although Korea's shipbuilding industry has achieved considerable success recently, challenges remain. These include structural labor shortages, the concentration of orders on specific ship types, and the comparatively low competitiveness of small and medium-sized shipyards,« a ministry official said recently, pledging to work toward ensuring the sector gains a technological edge over foreign competitors.

The Japanese market also saw the rise of another giant: With the end of 2025, Imbari Shipbuilding announced taking over the majority of shares (60 %) of competitor Japan Marine United (JMU), thus becoming the fourth largest shipbuilding company in the world. The consolidation aims to contribute not only to Japan's competitiveness in the market but also to its economic security and employment potential.

»Improved sense of reality«

Reinhard Lüken, VSM Managing Director with years of experience in the shipbuilding industry, has repeatedly warned German shipowners of increasingly depending on Asian shipyards, especially in China. Following up on Fassmer's call for a strong German industry, Lüken commented on recent developments. The government is showing an »improved sense of reality« concerning German shipyards, he said in an episode of the HANSA Podcast. While much remains to be done, Lüken believes that doubling the capacity of German shipyards to be »not overly ambitious«. He also spoke about NVL, Meyer Werft, naval shipbuilding and Trump's plans for the American industry. The HANSA Podcast (episode 123, German language) is available at hansa-online.de/hansa-podcast and on all major podcast platforms. ■




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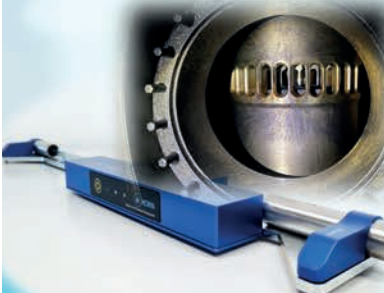


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ABEKING & RASMUSSEN

Construction of SWATH Pilot Tenders begins



© Abeking & Rasmussen

The SWATH@ A&R pilot transfer vessels are based on the proven SWATH hull

At Abeking & Rasmussen (A&R), the construction of SWATH pilot transfer vessels traditionally begins with the ceremonial steel-cutting. The shipyard is building two specialised units of this type for the Dutch pilotage service.

Prior to the start of production, all required calculations, technical concepts and detailed construction documentation are developed in close coordination between the yard, the client and the classification society. On this basis, the newbuilding project is systematically prepared and integrated into the production process.

The steel-cutting ceremony typically takes place in the presence of representatives of the client, the newbuilding organisation and the future operators. During this stage, the first components are cut from aluminium or steel plates, and the designated assembly area within the construction hall is defined.

With the signing of a milestone certificate, often attended by a local surveyor of DNV, the formal transition to the next construction phase is documented. Keel laying subsequently marks another key stage in the build process of such specialised vessels.

Twenty years ago, the Dutch pilots had already commissioned SWATH tenders from Abeking & Rasmussen. The current contract covers two 25 m

vessels of the latest generation. According to the yard, fuel consumption is expected to be around 20% lower compared to the previous units.

The SWATH@A&R pilot transfer vessels are based on the yard's established SWATH hull form, enabling transfer operations in demanding sea conditions. For the new vessels, safety systems, selected equipment and crew accommodation have been further developed.

In addition, in 2025 Abeking & Rasmussen secured a contract for the construction of two further SWATH pilot transfer vessels for the General Directorate for Waterways and Shipping (GDWS). The vessels are being built in Lemwerder and will replace the existing SWATH tenders »Duhnen« and »Döse«.

The two newbuildings build by Abeking & Rasmussen will have a length of 25.63 m, a beam of 14.27 m and a draught of 2.70 m. They will be equipped with a diesel-electric propulsion system in which two diesel engines generate electrical power for electric motors driving two propellers. The configuration is intended to ensure reliable operation and efficient manoeuvrability. The vessels will be able to transport twelve pilots in addition to the crew. Delivery is scheduled for the end of 2027. ■

MEYER WERFT

Letter of intent: MSC plans to order cruise ships built at Papenburg

Following the entry of the German federal government and the state of Lower Saxony into Meyer Werft, which had run into financial difficulties due to the coronavirus pandemic, the new multi-billion-euro order was announced at a press conference in Berlin. The announcement was made by Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Katherina Reiche, Lower Saxony's Minister-President Olaf Lies, MSC President Pierfrancesco Vago and Meyer Werft's chief restructuring officer Ralf Schmitz.

According to the announcement, four new cruise ships of the new »New Frontier« class will initially be built, each with a gross tonnage of 180,000 GT and a capacity of 5,400 passengers. MSC Cruises has signed a binding letter of intent with Meyer Werft for the vessels. Delivery is scheduled to take place annually from 2030 through to 2033. In addition, two further cruise ships with delivery dates up to 2035 have been optioned.

The names of the ships and further details of the newbuildings have not yet been disclosed. »The New Frontier class will enable us to design new and exclusive itineraries, offer our guests an exceptional experience and deploy next-generation environmental technologies that will drive forward our net-zero target for 2050,« said Pierfrancesco Vago, Chairman of the Board of MSC Cruises, in a statement issued by Meyer Werft. According to Vago, the track record, know-how and proud history of Meyer Werft make the company »a true beacon of European shipbuilding.« Together, he said, the partners will redefine the cruise experience. The order volume amounts to more than



MSC Cruises choosing Meyer Werft for building the »New Frontier« class marks a departure from the company's »traditional« partners

© ASSIES

€ 10 bn. Ship names and further details of the newbuildings are not yet known. In terms of size, the cruise ships are based on MSC's »Meraviglia« class, comprising »MSC Meraviglia« and »MSC Bellissima«, each measuring 315 m in length and 43 m in beam.

The German Shipbuilding and Ocean Industries Association (VSM) expressly welcomes the major order placed by MSC Cruises with Meyer Werft. »This agreement once again demonstrates the enormous growth potential of the maritime industry,« emphasized VSM Managing Director Reinhard Lükén. ■

FASSMER

New partner for Volkswerft Stralsund

The Fassmer shipyard, based in Berne (Lower Saxony), is expanding its capacities and will in future also operate at the Volkswerft Stralsund site. The new location will initially be used for the construction of the fisheries research vessel »Walther Herwig«.

For this purpose, Fassmer has leased suitable areas and halls from the City of Stralsund. With the move, the company is strengthening its presence on the Baltic Sea and pursuing a strategic expansion aimed at reducing dependence on foreign supply chains, retaining maritime expertise in Germany and contributing to industrial and security-related resilience. Stralsund is expected to benefit from additional employment opportunities and regional value creation.

The Volkswerft site offers extensive infrastructure for large-scale projects, including heavy-duty cranes and a 270 m long loading quay. Assembly Hall 290 provides space for multiple construction and repair projects simultaneously. The site is already used by companies such as Ostseestaal, Strela Shiprepair and the yacht shipyard Astra Nord.

»With our engagement in Stralsund, we aim to expand manufacturing capacities and make a sustainable contribution to the development of the maritime industry in Germany,« said Fass-

mer Managing Director Jan Oskar Henkel. The research vessel »Walther Herwig«, scheduled to be built from 2026 on behalf of the Federal Office for Agriculture and Food (BLE), will replace the existing »Walther Herwig III« and meet the latest scientific, technical and environmental standards. Fassmer also plans further newbuild, outfitting and repair projects at the Stralsund site in the long term. ■



Fabrication hall 290 at Volkswerft Stralsund

© Hanseatic City of Stralsund

PEENE WERFT

Keel laying well ahead of schedule in Wolgast

At NVL's Wolgast site, the second of a total of three Fleet Service Vessels of Class 424 was laid down at a keel-laying ceremony—several months earlier than originally planned.

The traditional ceremony was attended by high-ranking representatives from the armed forces, politics and industry. »I am extremely pleased that, together with the contractor, we have succeeded in reaching this important milestone even ahead of the original schedule,« said Flotilla Admiral Czerwinski, Head of the Naval Department at the Federal Office of Bundeswehr Equipment, Information Technology and In-Service Support (BAAINBw). This clearly demonstrated that time had the highest priority in the project. With the new technology, the way the vessels are employed will also be adapted, ensuring that the Fleet Service Vessels will continue to form an indispensable part of comprehensive national security. The three »Class 424« Fleet Service Vessels represent an essential building block for electro-



© NVL/Matthies

magnetic spectrum reconnaissance. According to Tim Wagner, CEO of NVL, construction of the highly modern reconnaissance vessel is several months ahead of the original schedule. ■

CONSOLIDATION

Rönner and Lürssen take over FSG and Nobiskrug

After a prolonged period of uncertainty following their insolvency, the German shipyards Flensburger Schiffbau-Gesellschaft (FSG) in Flensburg and Nobiskrug in Rendsburg have been given a renewed and more stable outlook. The Rönner Group from Bremerhaven has taken over FSG, while the Bremen-based Lürssen Group has acquired Nobiskrug, which will in future be operated as part of the nearby Lürssen-Kröger shipyard in Schacht-Audorf.

The takeovers ensure that shipbuilding activities can continue at both locations. The new owners have announced their intention to retain the vast majority of the workforce. More than 95 % of employees have agreed to transfer into a dedicated transition company, which has been set up to secure the interim phase and to offer opportunities for further qualification. The transfer company is planned to run for four months, during which em-

ployees will receive 80 % of their net wages, providing a degree of stability after months of financial uncertainty.

However, before regular operations can fully resume, both shipyards face considerable preparatory work due to a significant backlog of investment. Necessary measures include the refurbishment of buildings, technical upgrades to facilities and equipment, the procurement of materials, and the renewal of required approvals and certifications. These steps are intended to create the conditions for a sustainable restart of production.

At FSG, technical preparations are under way to resume shipbuilding under the new ownership, including the completion of a RoRo vessel already under construction. Nobiskrug, meanwhile, will benefit from its integration into the Lürssen-Kröger yard, creating operational and logistical synergies between the two sites and strengthening the overall shipyard network. ■

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MEYER WERFT

New »Meteor« leaves Papenburgs dock

Germany's new research vessel »Meteor IV« has left the building dock at Meyer Werft in Papenburg and has been floated out. The newbuild will now be transferred to partner yard Fassmer in Berne, where final outfitting and commissioning work will be carried out.

Almost two years after keel laying, the 125 m-long vessel marks the new flagship of German marine research. The project is being realised for the Federal Ministry of Education and Research by a consortium formed by Meyer Werft and Fassmer. With a gross tonnage of around 10,000 GT, »Meteor IV« is scheduled for delivery in 2026. The new vessel is designed to replace the nearly 40-year-old research ship »Meteor« as well as the already decommissioned »Poseidon«. It will accommodate up to 35 scientists and 36 nautical and technical crew members. Based in Kiel, the ship will primarily operate in the Atlantic and will be deployed for national and international marine research, with a focus on climate and environmental studies.

»Meteor IV« is equipped with state-of-the-art scientific systems, including research winches capable of deploying instruments to water depths of up to 12,000 m and transmitting high-resolution real-time data to the vessel. For precise station-keeping during re-



© Eckardt

»Meteor« being transferred from Papenburg to Fassmer in Berne

search operations, the ship features advanced dynamic positioning systems. Propulsion is provided by electrically driven eight-bladed Voith Schneider Propellers at the stern, complemented by additional thrusters at the bow, designed to reduce underwater radiated noise. Once completed, the vessel will be operated by Geomar, the Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research in Kiel. ■



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TKMS

Norway to expand submarine order to six units

Norway plans to order two additional submarines from TKMS, expanding its future submarine fleet from four to six units. The decision is driven by the increasingly tense security situation in the North Atlantic and the Barents Sea, where the Norwegian government observes heightened activity by Russian forces.

According to Defence Minister Tore O. Sandvik, submarines are a core element of Norway's national defence and play a key role in the country's responsibilities as NATO's »eyes and ears in the north«. The ability to maintain presence, conduct surveillance and provide credible deterrence in northern and neighbouring waters is becoming more important, making submarines indispensable.

Norway has already signed a contract with TKMS for four submarines. Two of these are currently under construction in Germany, and the first unit is scheduled for delivery to the Royal Norwegian Navy in 2029. With the proposed expansion, the government is implementing a unanimous parliamentary decision calling for the long-term procurement of six submarines.

To accommodate the two additional boats, the government proposes increasing the programme's cost framework by 46 billion Norwegian kroner (around € 3.96 billion). The higher costs are attributed to rising prices for critical raw materials and defence equipment, additional weapons systems and upgrades, exchange-rate effects, and Norway's contribution to fi-



© TKMS

Norway has already ordered four submarines from TKMS. The government now intends to order two additional units

financing a second production line in Germany to ensure timely delivery.

The proposal now requires approval by the Norwegian parliament. If endorsed, the Ministry of Defence intends to sign the contract for the two additional submarines before the offer deadline expires. ■

GERMAN NAVAL YARDS

GNV signs contract for 114-m superyacht »Elf«

German Naval Yards has signed a contract for the completion of the 114 m superyacht project »Elf«, marking a notable return to the large-yacht segment for the Kiel yard, which in recent years has focused primarily on naval construction. The vessel, with a gross tonnage of 4,950 and a beam of 15.8 m, is scheduled for delivery in 2028. According to owner's representative Junonia Yacht Consultants, the yard was selected for its technical expertise, attention to detail and experience in executing complex large-scale projects. Details of the contractual scope were not disclosed. A project under the same name had previously been associated with a newbuilding at Dörries Yachts in Bremerhaven, reportedly later renamed »Arwen«.

German Naval Yards, now part of the CMN Naval group, said the order supports its strategy to strengthen its position in the global market for large custom yachts alongside its naval activities. The yard has previously been involved in demanding yacht projects, including work on the 143 m »Sailing Yacht A«, and points to more than two decades of experience in high-end yacht construction. Project »Elf« is designed to accommodate 18 guests and 39 crew members and will combine advanced engineering with a distinctive exterior concept by Pindaros LLC in collaboration with Andy Waugh Yacht Design, while interiors are being developed by Pindaros LLC and Laurent Champeau. Planned features include a 20 m swimming pool, extensive deck



© German Naval Yards

The 114 m megayacht project »Elf« by German Naval Yards, is scheduled for delivery in 2028

spaces and a range of bespoke design elements to be revealed during construction.

CEO Rino Brugge said the project demonstrates the yard's ability to deliver vessels of exceptional scale and technical sophistication and reflects continued confidence in German shipbuilding expertise for complex one-off projects. ■

SINCE 1871

MEYER WERFT

»Class 707«: New naval tanker floated out

With the undocking of the second naval fuel supply vessel (Marinebetriebsstoffversorger, MBV), another important milestone has been reached on the path toward completion and subsequent entry into the fleet, NVL said in a social media post.

The 173 m long naval unit of the Class 707 was floated out at the Meyer Werft shipyard in Papenburg, described by NVL as its »production partner«. Final outfitting, commissioning and trials will take place – as with the sister ship – at the Neptun Werft in Rostock, which is part of the Meyer Group.

The project has for some time been the subject of debate regarding the structure and long-term viability of the German Navy. The contract awarded to NVL, a company of the Lürssen Group, with hull construction carried out by the Meyer shipyard group, raised questions in particular over the total cost of around € 870 million. As a result, the Federal Court of Auditors and the Ministry of Defence initiated a further review. Contrary to original plans, no Europe-wide tender had been conducted.

Each of the new tankers can carry around 12 million litres of fuel and is capable of supplying up to two warships simultaneously at sea. The vessels feature double hulls and, com-

pared with their predecessors, significantly larger superstructures to accommodate up to 42 crew members as well as 23 embarked soldiers or passengers. For cost reasons, the ships are not equipped with weapons or special military systems.

Delivery of the two new naval tankers, costing around € 900 million in total, is expected to be delayed compared with the original schedule. At the time the contract was awarded, delivery had been planned for 2025. Production complications, supply chain issues, and the ongoing effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine have weighed on the construction process. According to industry sources, the first newbuild could now be delivered next year, with the second following in 2027. However, no official confirmation has been issued by the parties involved.

The Bundestag's budget committee approved the procurement project in June 2021, as the existing Class 704 tankers are scheduled to reach the end of their service life in August 2026. The newbuilds are also intended for service over several decades. Their procurement enables the German armed forces to meet a Nato commitment to continuously provide two vessels with at-sea fuel supply capability through to at least 2040. ■



The second new naval tanker has been floated out at Meyer Werft in Papenburg

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LÜRSEN

Rheinmetall set to enter naval shipbuilding with acquisition of NVL

Rheinmetall and the Lürssen Group have agreed on the sale of the naval shipbuilding division Naval Vessels Lürssen (NVL), marking one of the most significant structural changes in the German defence and shipbuilding industry in recent years. With this step, the Düsseldorf-based defence contractor officially confirmed plans that had already been reported several weeks earlier. Subject to approval by the relevant antitrust authorities, the transaction is expected to be completed in early 2026; the purchase price has not been disclosed by either party.

Through the acquisition, Rheinmetall is entering the naval shipbuilding sector and further expanding its defence portfolio beyond its traditional focus on land systems. The group aims to strengthen its position as a comprehensive systems supplier for the armed forces by adding naval platforms to its existing capabilities in vehicles, electronics, sensors and weapon systems. In recent years, Rheinmetall has already been active in the maritime domain as a supplier of selected system components, simulations and protection technologies for naval applications.

NVL comprises several major shipyard locations in northern Germany, including Blohm+Voss and Norderwerft in Hamburg, the Neue Jadewerft in Wilhelmshaven and the Peene shipyard in Wolgast. The division employs around 2,100 people worldwide. All



© NVL Group

The shipyard in Hamburg is part of Lürssens military business

employees, together with the existing management team, are to be fully taken over and integrated into Rheinmetall as a dedicated naval division. According to the companies, the continuity of operations at all sites is to be maintained.

For the Lürssen Group, the sale represents a strategic realignment. The company intends to refocus more strongly on its core business of yacht building, while transferring its naval shipbuilding activities. ■

BLOHM+VOSS

Sietas-Dredger »Osteriff« successfully delivered

After years of delay, the GDWS has taken delivery of a new trailing suction hopper dredger. The vessel was originally ordered from the Sietas shipyard in 2016, completed by Blohm+Voss following two insolvencies, and delivered on schedule.

What takes a long time may ultimately turn out well: if the saying holds true, the GDWS has taken delivery today of a solid new vessel – a hopper dredger originally ordered in December 2016 from the Hamburg-based Sietas shipyard. Now, roughly nine years later, the vessel has been delivered — this time by Blohm+Voss. After Sietas entered insolvency in 2011 and was subsequently acquired by Russia's Pella group, the contract passed to the new owners. In 2021, Pella Sietas also filed for insolvency. As a result, the dredger construction contract was transferred to Blohm+Voss.

The client for the newly delivered vessel, named »Osteriff«, is the Northern Mechanical Engineering Department of the General Directorate for Waterways and Shipping (GDWS). Following this eventful history, the authority has now formally accepted the vessel from Blohm+Voss on schedule. The specialized ship, based in Wilhelmshaven, will be operated by the Waterways and Shipping Office Weser-Jade-North Sea.

The 133 m-long hopper dredger has a hopper capacity of 7,500 m³. According to the yard, this provides the vessel with »an exceptionally high transport capacity.« Thanks to its Z-drive propulsion system, the dredger is capable of rotating 360 degrees on the spot. Its five main engines are equipped with a dedicated DC power management system, allowing the crew to engage only the



© NVL

The new hopper dredger »Osteriff« was delivered in December 2025 by the Blohm+Voss shipyard to the GDWS

number of engines required for current demand. This ensures the vessel consistently operates at an optimal efficiency point, the shipyard stated. The future area of operation includes the Elbe, Jade, and Weser rivers.

As a team, we successfully mastered all the challenges associated with taking over such a technically demanding project. I am grateful and proud of the outstanding performance of all our employees,« said Nils Moser, Managing Director of Blohm+Voss. ■

TAMSEN

Shipbuilder celebrates 30 years in business

The German Shipbuilder Tamsen Maritim has marked the 30th anniversary of its founding with a ceremony at its shipyard in Rostock-Gehlsdorf, attended by around 140 current and former employees. Guests included Mecklenburg–Western Pomerania's Minister-President Manuela Schwesig and Vice Admiral Frank Lenski, Deputy Inspector of the German Navy. Managing director Christian Schmoll described the yard's establishment in 1995 as a milestone for the traditional shipbuilding location on the Warnow River. Founded by Abeking & Rasmussen together with Neptun Industrie Rostock on the site of the former Neptun naval shipyard, the company initially operated as A&R Neptun Boat Service GmbH. Early investments included new production halls, workshops, an administration building and a ship lift for vessels of up to 1,000 t. In 2009, the shipyard was taken over by Hamburg-based entrepreneur Heiner Tamsen and has since operated under the name Tamsen Maritim. Today, Tamsen Maritim employs around 130 people and carries out up to 50 dockings per year, mainly for naval, government and special-purpose vessels. In recent years, the company has also expanded its activities in the newbuilding segment



Shipyard site in Rostock-Gehlsdorf

© Tamsen Maritim

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HITZLER WERFT Newbuilding ordered for the Elbe

The two shipyard heads Marek and Kai Klimenko gathered the employees at the yard to share the good news: a new order. It is a buoy tender for the WSA Elbe/North Sea with a length of 27.5 m, a beam of 8 m and a draught of just 1.40 m. This newbuilding order, yard number 840, »fits us perfectly, it is exactly our size,« said Marek Klimenko, who has been involved in the construction of around 50 newbuildings at Hitzler shipyard over the course of his career.

Following the completion of the »Coriolis«, the upcoming newbuilding will also join the ranks of modern vessels. It will be powered by a diesel-electric propulsion system with two Schottel propellers. Batteries with a capacity of 600 kW are intended to increase range and absorb load peaks. This will enable the new buoy tender of the WSA Elbe/North Sea to operate with low emissions in the sensitive ecosystem of the North Sea.

»This order once again underlines the innovative strength of Hitzler shipyard. We are very pleased to be able to build this vessel for the WSA Elbe/North Sea,« said Marek Klimenko.

»At a time when manufacturing and engineering resilience are becoming increasingly important, we are pleased to set a posi-



© Wroblewski

Good news to end the workday: The two shipyard CEOs informed employees about the important newbuild order

tive example with a newbuilding from Schleswig-Holstein for Schleswig-Holstein and once again to be able to deliver bespoke craftsmanship to German shipbuilding standards in our slipway hall,« added Kai Klimenko. Model tests are scheduled for early 2026. Hitzler shipyard is currently still building the biogas-powered Elbe ferry »Amt Neuhaus – Bleckede«. In addition, the Lauenburg shipbuilders are well utilized with re-engining and hybridization projects for inland vessels. These projects are being carried out by a workforce of around 150 employees. ■

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LLOYD WERFT

New research vessel for DLR

The German Aerospace Center (DLR) has commissioned Lloyd Werft to build a new research vessel. The contract value amounts to € 36 million. With the ship, DLR will provide the maritime industry with an opportunity to jointly research novel, climate-compatible propulsion concepts. Completion is scheduled for summer 2027.

The Flensburger Schiffbau-Gesellschaft (FSG) is constructing the vessel as a subcontractor to Lloyd Werft Bremerhaven. Lloyd Werft therefore remains the contractual partner of DLR. »The new DLR research vessel will be a unique laboratory for real-world trials,« emphasizes Anke Kaysser-Pyzalla, Chair of the DLR Executive Board. With Lloyd Werft, DLR has found a competent partner for the construction of this one-of-a-kind vessel, combining tradition and innovation at the Bremerhaven site.

Friedrich Norden, Managing Director of Lloyd Werft Bremerhaven, says: »We are very pleased to support DLR's valuable research projects with this unique undertaking.« This lighthouse project underlines the importance of maritime research in Germany. He views the contract as proof that, in addition to repair and conversion, Lloyd Werft is also a strong partner in newbuild construction. The DLR Institute of Maritime En-

ergy Systems in Geesthacht and Kiel conducts research and develops new solutions for the use of renewable energy in the maritime sector.

Together with Hamburg-based engineering firm SDC Ship Design & Consult, DLR developed the overall design for the new research vessel, which will now be built by Lloyd Werft. In the specially designed experimental engine room, DLR researchers will test technologies based on hydrogen as well as batteries – also in cooperation with companies from the maritime industry. Non-certified components such as energy converters or reformers can likewise be tested under real operating conditions.

The focus of the trials will be on how the generated energy can be safely fed into the onboard power grid and used for propulsion. The vessel will be 48 m long and 11 m wide, with a draught of 3.2 m. The seagoing ship will primarily operate in the North Sea and Baltic Sea on one- to multi-day trial voyages and will accommodate up to 20 people. Once completed, the ship will have its home port in Kiel. The modern research vessel will also be equipped with a digital twin, enabling comprehensive simulations to be carried out on a computer to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the real ship. ■



© DLR

The new vessel for DLR will be equipped with two »Steerprop 14 CRP LM« azimuth propulsion units. Completion of the new building is scheduled for 2027

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Deliveries & orders

Yard-No	Type	Name	Owner	dwt / t / Pax	GT	Loa (m)	Beam (m)	Draft (m)	kW / HP	Engine Type	kn	Delivery
Abeking & Rasmussen Schiffs- und Yachtwerft, Lemwerder www.abeking.com												
6510	Multipurpose Vessel		Federal Waterways and Shipping Agency (WSV)			104.60						2026
6511	Multipurpose Vessel		Federal Waterways and Shipping Agency (WSV)			104.60						2026
6512	Multipurpose Vessel		Federal Waterways and Shipping Agency (WSV)			104.60						2027
6516	Yacht 6516					80.00						2027
6517	SWATH Pilot Tender		Nederlands Loodswezen			25.00						2026
6518	SWATH Pilot Tender		Nederlands Loodswezen			25.00						2026
6519	SWATH Pilot Tender		Generaldirektion Wasserstraßen und Schifffahrt (GDWS)			25.00	14.00	2.70				2027
6520	SWATH Pilot Tender		Generaldirektion Wasserstraßen und Schifffahrt (GDWS)			25.00	14.00	2.70				2027
Schiffswerft Hermann Bartel GmbH, Derben www.barthel-werft.de												
219	Work Boat	Seehund	Niedersächsischer Betrieb Wasserwirtschaft, Küsten- & Naturschutz (NLWKN)			16.35	4.85	1.10	2 x 154	Diesel		2025
220	Work Boat	Pram	WAS Ems-Nordsee			36.52	6.69	2.00	221	Diesel		2025
221	Sea Survey Vessel	Memmert	NLWKN			17.18	4.70	1.20	2 x 368	Diesel		2025
222-223	Work Boat	Alster E-Schiff	Flotte Hamburg			16.00	4.90	1.00	2 x 105	Electric		2026
Schiffswerft Bolle GmbH, Derben www.schiffswerft-bolle.de												
244	Work Boat	Gieselwerder	WSA Weser			25.90	8.90	0.95	2 x 195	Navigator / RP		2025
245	Work Boat	Celle	WSA Weser			25.90	8.90	0.95	2 x 195	Navigator / RP		2024
246	Work Boat	Neuss	WSA Rhein			33.30	7.40	1.20	2 x 200	Schottel SRP		2025
247	Work Boat	Xanten	WSA Rhein			33.30	7.40	1.20	2 x 200	Schottel SRP		2025-27
248	Work Boat	Proj. Rhein	WSA Rhein			33.30	7.40	1.20	2 x 200	Schottel SRP		2025-27
249	Work Boat	Proj. Rhein	WSA Rhein			33.30	7.40	1.20	2 x 200	Schottel SRP		2025-27
250	Work Boat	Proj. Rhein	WSA Rhein			33.30	7.40	1.20	2 x 200	Schottel SRP		2025-27
251	Work Boat	Bergeshövede	WSA Westdeutsche Kanäle			33.30	7.40	1.20	1 x 3	Conventional		2025
252	Work Boat	OP 4350	WSA Oberrhein			33.00	6.40	1.20				2025
253	Work Boat	DP 4361	WSA Westdeutsche Kanäle			22.00	6.30	0.65				2025
254	Work Boat	Schulau	WSA Elbe-Nordsee			31.52	7.32	1.25				2027
255	Work Boat	Kollmar	WSA Elbe-Nordsee			31.52	7.32	1.25				2027
256	Work Boat	Erfurt	WSA Main			20.60	5.60	1.12	2 x 260	Diesel		2027
257	Work Boat	TBA	WSA Mosel-Saar-Lahn			25.50	5.25	0.90	2 x 260			2027
258	Passenger Boat	Alessandro	TBA			33.20	9.60	1.00	2 x 260	Electric		2026
Schiffswerft Diedrich GmbH, Moormerland www.schiffswerft-diedrich.de												
no current orders known												
Erlenbacher Schiffswerft für OHF Hafen- & Flußbau www.die-schiffswerft.com												
	Work Vessel	OHF 440	OHF Hafen- & Flußbau	450		49.27	9.50		2 x 478 kW	2 x Scania Stage V (Main Engine)		01 / 2026
Fr. Fassmer GmbH & Co. KG, Berne / Motzen www.fassmer.de												
8050	Multi Purpose Vessel	Rügen	German Customs			67.20	12.40			LNG	23.2	2024
8090	Multi Purpose Vessel*	MPV70	Astinave E.P.		1.85	80.60	13.00	3.90				2026
8160	Research Vessel***	Meteor IV	German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)		10.00	125.00				Diesel-Electric		2026
1050	Hydrographic Vessel**	Canopus	Bantu Hidro Oseanografi (BHO) Indonesia			105.00						2025
1060	Fishery Research Vessel	Walther Herwig	German Federal Office for Agriculture and Food (BLE)			85.00	18.00	6.10	2 x 1300	Diesel-Electric		2027

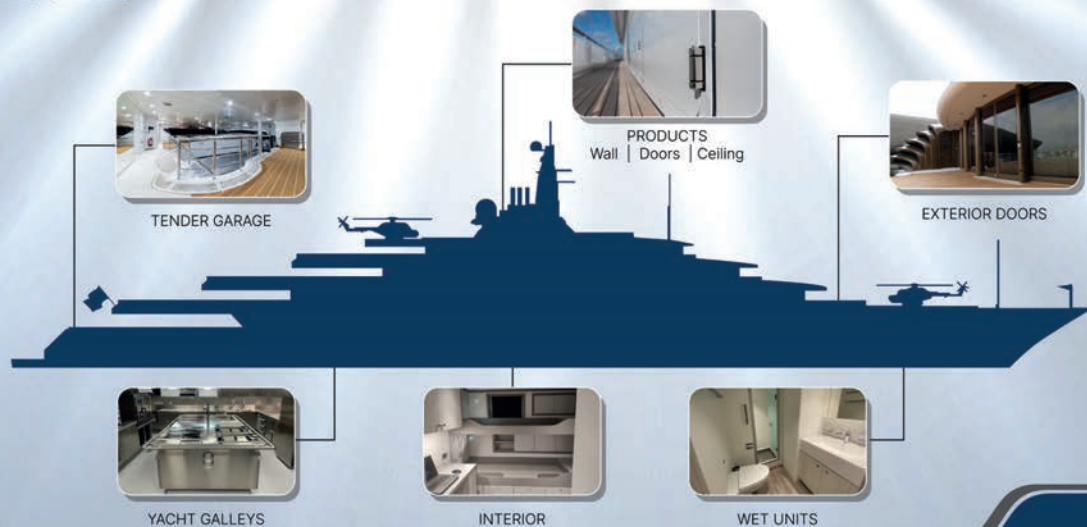
Deliveries & orders

Yard-No	Type	Name	Owner	dwt / t / Pax	GT	Loa (m)	Beam (m)	Draft (m)	kW / HP	Engine Type	kn	Delivery
9010	Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV)		Ministry of Defence Singapore (MDS)									2027
9020	OPV		MDS									2028
9030	OPV		MDS									2029
9040	OPV		MDS									2030
	Training Vessel (SAMSe)		German Navy (BAAINBw)									2028
* Material package ** in cooperation with Abeking & Rasmussen *** in cooperation with Meyer Werft Fassmer moves into Volkswerft												
Ferus Smit Leer GmbH, Leer www.ferus-smit.nl												
469	Chemical Tanker*	R-Class	Erik Thun	7,999		115.00	15.90	6.95	1,900			05 / 2025
472	Chemical Tanker*	R-Class	Erik Thun	7,999		115.00	15.90	6.95	1,900			19 / 2026
474	Chemical Tanker*	R-Class	Erik Thun	7,999		115.00	15.90	6.95	1,900			39 / 2026
475	Chemical Tanker*	R-Class	Erik Thun	7,999		115.00	15.90	6.95	1,900			02 / 2027
476	Chemical Tanker*	R-Class	Erik Thun	7,999		115.00	15.90	6.95	1,900			11 / 2027
485	Chemical Tanker*	R-Class	Erik Thun	7,999		115.00	15.90	6.95	1,900			25 / 2027
486	Multi-Purpose*	Naven	Erik Thun	5,100		89.00	13.35	6.24				04 / 2025
* in cooperation with Ferus Smit Westerbroek												
Schiffswerft Fischer, Könnern www.schiffswerft-fischer.de												
no current orders known												

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Deliveries & orders

Yard-No	Type	Name	Owner	dwt / t / Pax	GT	Loa (m)	Beam (m)	Draft (m)	kW / HP	Engine Type	kn	Delivery
German Naval Yards GmbH, Kiel www.germainaval.com												
	Yacht	Projekt KOA				93.00						n/a
	Yacht	Projekt ELF				114.00						2028
	Corvette	K130*	German Navy			89.00						2026
	6 x Frigate F126**		German Navy			166.00						2025-tbc
* in cooperation with NVL and TKMS **in cooperation with B+V / NVL												
Hitzler Werft GmbH, Lauenburg www.hitzler-werft.de												
838	Bunkering station	Johannis-bollwerk	Hoyer Marine			30.00	8.00	2.00				06 / 2025
839	Shallow water Ferry	Amt Neuhaus - Blekede	Mobilitätsinfrastruktur und -betrieb Lüneburg	100 Pax		45.00	11.45	0.80	2 x 175	Biomethane generator		2026
840	Buoy tender	WSA Elbe / Nordsee	Fachstelle Maschinenwesen Nord			27.5	8.10	1.40	2x 280		11	2027
Kötter Werft GmbH, Haren www.koetter-werft.de												
no current orders known												
Lübecker Yacht Trave Schiff GmbH www.luebeckyacht.de												
no current orders known												
Fr. Lürssen Group www.luerssen.com												
Fr. Lürssen Werft GmbH & Co. KG, Bremen-Vegesack												
	Yacht	Jassj		3,420		103.00						2026
	Yacht	Devy				146.00	23.00					2027
	Yacht	Deep Blue				134.20	19.80	5.00		11.760 kw Diesel-Electric	16	2025
	Yacht	Ace 21				78.00	13.30					2025
Lürssen-Kröger Werft GmbH & Co. KG, Schacht-Audorf												
no current orders known												
Nobiskrug GmbH, Rendsburg www.nobiskrug.com												
* Filed for insolvency in late 2024 – FSG taken over by Rönner Gruppe, Nobiskrug integrated into Lürssen Group (Kröger Werft)												
NVL Group												
	10 x Offshore Patrol vessel	Class 424	Egyptian Navy			43.00	8.00			2 x 2,525 kW Diesel	28	
	5 x Corvette K130*	Köln Emden Karlsruhe Augsburg Lübeck	German Navy	1,840		89.00	13.00	3.40	14.800	2 x Diesel MTU 1,163 20V	26.00	tbc
	2 x Marine Fuel Supply Vessel*		German Navy									
	6 x Frigate F126*		German Navy									2028
	Multipurpose vessel**		Bulgarian Navy									2026
	6 x Offshore patrol vessel		Australian Navy									2027
Blohm + Voss Shipyards, Hamburg www.blohmvooss.com (now part of the NVL Group under Lürssen)												
	Hopper dredger	Osteriff	Generaldirektion Wasserstraßen und Schifffahrt (GDWS)	3,420		133.00				5 main engines with DC power		12 / 2025
Peene-Werft, Wolgast												
	3 x Fleet service Vessel	Class 424	German Navy (Bundeswehr)	4,000 t		130.00						2029 - 2031
	3 x Customs patrol vessel	Friesland Emden Fehmarn	General Customs Directorate (Germany)	each 8 Pax		55.00				LNG		2025
* in cooperation with TKMS and German Naval Yards ** to be built at MTG Dolphin in Varna, Bulgaria Basically agreed on the takeover by Rheinmetall												

Deliveries & orders

Yard-No	Type	Name	Owner	dwt / t / Pax	GT	Loa (m)	Beam (m)	Draft (m)	kW / HP	Engine Type	kn	Delivery
Lux-Werft und Schifffahrt GmbH, Niederkassel www.lux-werft.de												
233	Passenger vessel	Gmund	Bayerische Seeschifffahrt	180 Pax		25.00	6.00			Electric		06/2026
234	Ferry	Altrip	Rheinfähre Altrip	250 Pax		54.00	14.00	0.95		Electric		10/2025
229	Passenger vessel	Hennesee	Lux-Werft und Schifffahrt	540 Pax		38.20	13.8	1.05		Electric		09/2025
Werftgruppe Meyer www.meyerwerft.de												
Meyer Werft, Papenburg												
721	Cruise vessel	Asuka III	NYK Cruises	744 Pax	52,200	230.20	29.80	7.00		LNG		2025
	Replenishment tanker**	Type 707	German Navy	42 crew +23		173	24	9.5		Diesel	18-20	2026
	Replenishment tanker**	Type 707	German Navy	42 crew+ 23		173	24	9.5		Diesel	18-20	2027
706	Cruise vessel	Disney Destiny	Disney Cruise Line	2,500 Pax	143,660	340.90	39.00	8.60		LNG		2025
	Apartment vessel	Njord	Ocean Residences Development	1,000 Pax	84,800	289.30	33.50			Methanol		2026
724	Cruise vessel		Carnival Cruise Line	6,400 Pax	180,000	344.00	42.00					2027
725	Cruise vessel		Carnival Cruise Line	6,400 Pax	180,000	344.00	42.00					2028
723	Cruise vessel		Disney Cruise Line		144,000					LNG		2027
722	Cruise vessel		Oriental Land Company							LNG		2028
731	Cruise vessel		Disney Cruise Line	3,000 Pax	100,000					Bio fuel		2029
732	Cruise Vessel		Disney Cruise Line	3,000 Pax	100,000					Bio fuel		2030
733	Cruise Vessel		Disney Cruise Line	3,000 Pax	100,000					Bio fuel		2031
734	Cruise Vessel*	New Frontier 1	MSC Cruises	5,400 Pax	180,000	315.00	43.00					2030
735	Cruise Vessel*	New Frontier 2	MSC Cruises	5,400 Pax	180,000	315.00	43.00					2031



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- Inherently safe LFP chemistry
- Cobalt- and Nickel-free
- Scalable and modular design
- BV, DNV, LR & RINA approved



Picture © Sigurd Helgesen



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Deliveries & orders

Yard-No	Type	Name	Owner	dwt / t / Pax	GT	Loa (m)	Beam (m)	Draft (m)	kW / HP	Engine Type	kn	Delivery
736	Cruise Vessel*	New Frontier 3	MSC Cruises	5,400 Pax	180,000	315.00	43.00					2032
737	Cruise Vessel*	New Frontier 4	MSC Cruises	5,400 Pax	180,000	315.00	43.00					2033
738	Cruise Vessel*	New Frontier 5	MSC Cruises	5,400 Pax	180,000	315.00	43.00					2034
739	Cruise Vessel*	New Frontier 6	MSC Cruises	5,400 Pax	180,000	315.00	43.00					2035
728	Steel construction for converter platform**	BorWin4	Dragados / Amprion									2025
729	Steel construction for converter platform**	BalWin4	Dragados / Amprion									2025
730	Steel construction for converter platform**	BalWin4	Dragados / Amprion									2026
*Preliminary contract with MSC – final contract expected later this year, **subcontract from Dragados (Spain) ** in cooperation with NVL												
Meyer Turku Shipyard Oy www.meyerturku.com												
1401	Cruise Vessel	Star of the Seas	Royal Caribbean	5,610 Pax	250,000	365.00	66.00	9.25		LNG		07 / 2025
1402	Cruise Vessel	Legend of the Seas	Royal Caribbean		250,000	365.00	66.00	9.25		LNG		06 / 2026
1403	Cruise Vessel	tbc	Royal Caribbean		250,000	365.00	66.00	9.25				2027
1404	Cruise Vessel	Icon 5	Royal Caribbean		250,000	365.00	66.00	9.25				2028
1405	Cruise Vessel	Icon 6	Royal Caribbean		250,000	365.00	66.00	9.25				tbc
1406	Offshore Patrol	Karhu	Finnish Government									2025
1407	Offshore Patrol		Finnish Government									2026 / 27
Neptun Werft GmbH & Co. KG, Rostock www.neptunwerft.de												
573	Fuel Supply Tanker		German Navy	20,000		170.00	24.00	9.50			18.00	2026
574	Fuel Supply Tanker		German Navy	20,000		170.00	24.00	9.50			18.00	2027
587-596	River Cruise Vessel		Viking River Cruises	190 Pax		135.00	11.45	1.60			21.00	2025-26
587-596	River Cruise Vessel		Viking River Cruises	190 Pax		135.00	11.45	1.60			21.00	2025-26
587-596	River Cruise Vessel		Viking River Cruises	190 Pax		135.00	11.45	1.60			21.00	2025-26
587-596	River Cruise Vessel		Viking River Cruises	190 Pax		135.00	11.45	1.60			21.00	2025-26
587-596	River Cruise Vessel		Viking River Cruises	190 Pax		135.00	11.45	1.60			21.00	2025-26
587-596	River Cruise Vessel		Viking River Cruises	190 Pax		135.00	11.45	1.60			21.00	2025-26
587-596	River Cruise Vessel		Viking River Cruises	190 Pax		135.00	11.45	1.60			21.00	2025-26
587-596	River Cruise Vessel		Viking River Cruises	190 Pax		135.00	11.45	1.60			21.00	2025-26
587-596	River Cruise Vessel		Viking River Cruises	168 Pax		125.00	11.45	1.60		Hybrid		2025-26
587-596	River Cruise Vessel		Viking River Cruises	168 Pax		125.00	11.45	1.60		Hybrid		03 / 2025
597-604	River Cruise Vessel		Viking River Cruises	190 Pax		135.00	11.45	1.60				2027-28
597-604	River Cruise Vessel		Viking River Cruises	190 Pax		135.00	11.45	1.60				2027-28
597-604	River Cruise Vessel		Viking River Cruises	190 Pax		135.00	11.45	1.60				2027-28
597-604	River Cruise Vessel		Viking River Cruises	190 Pax		135.00	11.45	1.60				2027-28
597-604	River Cruise Vessel		Viking River Cruises	190 Pax		135.00	11.45	1.60				2027-28
597-604	River Cruise Vessel		Viking River Cruises	190 Pax		135.00	11.45	1.60				2027-28
597-604	River Cruise Vessel		Viking River Cruises	190 Pax		135.00	11.45	1.60				2027-28
597-604	River Cruise Vessel		Viking River Cruises	190 Pax		135.00	11.45	1.60				2027-28
597-604	River Cruise Vessel		Viking River Cruises	190 Pax		135.00	11.45	1.60				2027-28
* in cooperation with Fassmer Werft												

Deliveries & orders

Yard-No	Type	Name	Owner	dwt / t / Pax	GT	Loa (m)	Beam (m)	Draft (m)	kW / HP	Engine Type	kn	Delivery
Meyer Wismar www.meyerwismar.de												
125	Cruise Vessel	Disney Adventure	Disney Cruise Line		208,000	342.00	46.00					2025
Neckar Bootsbau Ebert GmbH, Neckarsteinach www.nebo.de												
No current orders known												
Neue Oderwerft GmbH, Eisenhüttenstadt www.neue-oderwerft.de												
No current orders known												
Neue Ruhrorter Schiffswerft GmbH, Duisburg www.nrs.w.de												
870	Push Lighter Europe Type II d	Veerhaven 116	ThyssenKrupp Veerhaven			70.50	11.48	3.20				2025
871	Push Lighter Europe Type II d	Veerhaven 117	ThyssenKrupp Veerhaven			70.50	11.48	3.20				2025
872	Push Lighter Europe Type II d	Veerhaven 118	ThyssenKrupp Veerhaven			70.50	11.48	3.20				2025
Ostseestaal GmbH & Co. KG, Stralsund www.ostseestaal.com												
	Electric Ferry	Sarnico	Autorità di Bacino Lacuale dei Laghi d'Iseo	140 Pax		26.32	6.00	1.15	2 x 100	Electric	10,3	2025
	Electric Ferry	Sale Marasino II	Autorità di Bacino Lacuale dei Laghi d'Iseo	140 Pax		26.32	6.00	1.15	2 x 100	Electric	10,3	2025
	Electric Ferry		Harbour Project Helgoland	95 Pax		15.20	5.60		2 x 125	Solar-Electric		2026
	Electric Ferry	MF Wittow	Weißer Flotte Stralsund	150 Pax		42.50	11.60	1.30	2 x 245	Electric		2026
	Electric Ferry	EMS Albis	Zürcher Schifffahrts AG	300 Pax		43.40	7.30	1.33	2 x 160	Electric	12	2027
Rönner Gruppe, Bremerhaven www.hr-gruppe.de												
FSG Nobiskrug Holding GmbH*												
784	RoRo Vessel	SeaRoad		12,183	43,1	210.00	29,3	6,35	2x 10,300	2 x 9L46DF	22.50	2025
Lloyd Werft Bremerhaven GmbH www.lloydwerft.com												
	Research Vessel*		German Aerospace Centre			113.00	11.00	3.20				2027
* DLR ship is being built at FSG Shipyard in Flensburg.												
SET Schiffbau und Entwicklungsgesellschaft Tangermünde mbH www.set-schiffbau.de												
209	Work Boat Aluminium		Regierungspräsidium Freiburg			15.00	5.62	0.70	2 x 50	Hydraulic paddle wheel drive	4.30	09 / 2025
210	Work Boat Aluminium		Regierungspräsidium Tübingen			15.00	5.62	0.70	2 x 50	Hydraulic paddle wheel drive	4.30	09 / 2025
211	Work Boat Aluminium		Wasserwirtschaftsamt Kempten			15.00	5.62	0.70	2 x 50	Hydraulic paddle wheel drive	4.30	09 / 2025
214	Passenger Ferry	Grasbrook	HADAG Seetouristik			33.40	8.00	1.87	1 x 478	Diesel-Electric; Voith Schneider	11.30	02 / 2025
215	Water monitoring and oil recovery vessel		Landesbetrieb für Küstenschutz, Nationalpark und Meeresschutz			40.65	9.50	2.00	2 x 375	Diesel-Electric, Rudder propeller	6.50	06 / 2025
218	Passenger Ferry		HADAG Seetouristik			30.00	8.00	2.00	2 x 200	Diesel-Electric	12.00	2028
219	Passenger Ferry		HADAG Seetouristik			30.00	8.00	2.00	2 x 200	Diesel-Electric	12.00	2028
220	Passenger Ferry		HADAG Seetouristik			30.00	8.00	2.00	2 x 200	Diesel-Electric	12.00	2028
Stahlbau Nord, Bremerhaven sbn-bhv.de												
no current orders known												
Siemer Jachtservice Hunte-Ems GmbH, Barßel-Reekenfeld www.siemer-jachtservice.de												
	Patrol Vessel	WSP 25	Police Sachsen-Anhalt			14.70	4.00	1.10	2 x 257	2 x FPT Marinem. N67ENTM	45.00	06 / 2025
	Patrol Vessel	WSP 26	Police Sachsen-Anhalt			14.70	4.00	1.10	2 x 257	2 x FPT Marinem. N67ENTM	45.00	12 / 2025
	Patrol Vessel	WSP 27	Police Sachsen-Anhalt			14.70	4.00	1.10	2 x 257	2 x FPT Marinem. N67ENTM	45.00	2026

Deliveries & orders

Yard-No	Type	Name	Owner	dwt / t / Pax	GT	Loa (m)	Beam (m)	Draft (m)	kW / HP	Engine Type	kn	Delivery
Tamsen Maritim GmbH, Rostock www.tamsen-maritim.de												
TM 2201	Fishery Inspection Boat	Goldbutt	LALLF-MV			17.60	5.00	1.00	2 x 588	Volvo D13-800	30.00	08 / 2025
TKMS www.tkmsgroup.com (Formerly known as ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems, the company now operates under the name TKMS)												
TKMS Kiel and Hamburg												
	Submarine	Illustrious	Singapore Navy		2,000	72.00				Diesel-Electric + AIP		2026
	Submarine	Inimitable	Singapore Navy		2,000	72.00				Diesel-Electric + AIP		2026
	5 x Korvette K130***		German Navy	1,840		89.00	13.00	3.40	14.800	2 x Diesel MTU 1163 20V	26.00	2025-tbc
	MEKO A-200 Frigate *****	Al-Jabbar	Egyptian Navy									2025
	MEKO A-100 MB Corvette*****	Tamandaré	Brasilian Navy									2026
	MEKO A-100 MB Corvette*****	Jerónimo de Albuquerque	Brasilian Navy									2026
	MEKO A-100 MB Corvette*****		Brasilian Navy									2027
	MEKO A-100 MB Corvette*****		Brasilian Navy									2028
	MEKO A-200 DEU*****		German Navy	3,700		121.00	16.30	4.50		Diesel + Gas	28.00	2029
	Submarine HDW Class 212A NFS*****		Italian Navy									2029
	Submarine HDW Class 212A FS*****		Italian Navy									2030
	Polar Research	Polarstern	Alfred-Wegener-Insitut									2030
	Submarine HDW Class 212CD		German Navy									2032
	Submarine HDW Class 212CD		German Navy									2034
	Submarine HDW Class 212CD		Norwegian Navy									2029
	Submarine HDW Class 212CD		Norwegian Navy									2031
	Submarine HDW Class 212CD		Norwegian Navy									2033
	Submarine HDW Class 212CD		Norwegian Navy									2035
	Submarine HDW Class 212CD		Norwegian Navy									2029
	Submarine HDW Class 212CD		Norwegian Navy									2029 ff.
	4 x Submarine HDW Class 212CD		German Navy									2036 ff.

* Subcontract to B + V Shipyards; bow sections to be built by NVL ** subcontract to German Naval Yards *** in cooperation with Lürssen Group and German Naval Yards

**** Steel sections will be built at Bremerhavener Stahlbau Nord. ***** Tamandaré class being built in Itajai, Brazil, in cooperation with Embraer

***** main contract to Fincantieri ***** built by GNSY in Gölçük ***** Material packages, ship to be built at Alexandria Shipyard ***** preliminary contract

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»SHIP OF THE YEAR« 1982 – 2025

Year	Ship type	Name	Yard
1982	Polar research vessel	»Polarstern«	HDW / WN
1983	Reefer vessel	»Helene Jacob«	Flender Werft
1984	Train ferry	»Railship I«	SSW
1985	Container vessel	»Norasia Susan«	HDW
1986	Cruise ship	»Homerik«	Meyer Werft
1987	Conversion cruise ship	»Queen Elizabeth II«	Lloyd Werft
1988	Container vessel	»President Truman«	HDW
1989	Yacht cruiser	»Seabourn Spirit«	SSW
1990	Mega yacht	»Lady Moura«	Blohm + Voss
1991	Mega yacht	»Eco«	Blohm + Voss
1992	Container vessel	»DSR Baltic«	Bremer Vulkan
1993	Baltic Sea ferry	»Silja Europa«	Meyer Werft
1994	Container vessel	»Norasia Fribourg«	HDW
1995	Cruise ship	»Century«	Meyer Werft
1996	Cruise ship	»Costa Victoria«	BV / Lloyd Werft
1997	General cargo ship	»Cathrin Oldendorff«	FSG
1998	Cruise ship	»Superstar Leo«	Meyer Werft
1999	Reefer container ship	»Dole Chile«	HDW
2000	Fast cruise ship	»Olympic Voyager«	Blohm + Voss
2001	Cruise ship	»Radiance of the Seas«	Meyer Werft
2002	Frigate	»Sachsen«	Blohm + Voss
2003	Freight ferry	»Tor Magnolia«	FSG
2004	Navy research ship	»Planet«	Nordseewerke
2005	Cruise ship	»Pride of America«	Lloyd Werft
2006	ConRo ferry	»Pauline«	FSG
2007	Cruise ship	»Aida Diva«	Meyer Werft
2008	Cruise ship	»Celebrity Solstice«	Meyer Werft
2009	SWATH pilot vessel	»Elbe«	A & R
2010	Mega yacht	»Eclipse«	Blohm + Voss
2011	Freight ferry	»Seatruck Progress«	FSG
2012	LNG tanker	»Coral Energy«	Meyer Werft
2013	Mega yacht	»Azzam«	Lürssen
2014	Research vessel	»Sonne«	Meyer Werft
2015	Multipurpose vessel	»Murman«	Nordic Yards
2016	RoRo vessel	»Searoad Mersey II«	FSG
2017	Mega yacht	»Aviva«	A & R
2018	Cruise ship	»AIDAnova«	Meyer Werft
2019	Research vessel	»Atair«	Fr. Fassmer
2020	SAR vessel	»Hamburg«	Fr. Fassmer
2021	Mega yacht	»Nord«	Lürssen
2022	Research vessel	»Uthörn«	Fr. Fassmer
2023	Cruise ship	»Silver Nova«	Meyer Werft
2024	Mega yacht	»Kismet«	Lürssen
2025	Cruise Ship	»Asuka III«	Meyer Werft

2025 award goes to Meyer Werft

The shipbuilding group from Papenburg in the far north-west of Germany wins the 41st edition of HANSA's prestigious »Ship of the Year« award

Meyer Werft succeeds the Lürssen Group as award recipient, who has won the prize last year for the mega yacht »Kismet«. This year, the award goes to a cruise ship that stands out not only for its high energy efficiency but also for its exceptional overall process management, making it a truly remarkable project in German shipbuilding.

With a length of 229 m and a beam of 29.80 m, the »Asuka III« accommodates 744 passengers and 385 crew members. It may not be one of the »very large« cruise giants, but that is not the decisive point. Instead, it is a vessel specifically designed and meticulously tailored to a particular market. The client, NYK from Japan, placed great emphasis on detail and reliability.

Its primary operating area is Japanese waters. The hull and hydrodynamics are specifically designed for this purpose, as are the entire interior and outfitting. Furthermore, the collaboration between the shipping company and the shipyard was not really conventional.

Actually, »not really conventional« in this case means »particularly close-knit« and characterized by a strong team spirit to ensure the project's success, not to mention various other special features and premieres.

So much for the ship itself. You can learn more about all of this on the following pages.

With the »Asuka III«, the Meyer Werft has proven that, despite some structural and economic challenges – as is well known, the German government and the state of Lower Saxony stepped in to support the financially troubled shipyard – it is undoubtedly capable of delivering a truly high-quality product »made in Germany«.

This is not the first time the shipyard has won the »Ship of the Year« award. HANSA has been awarding this prize since 1982, and the Papenburg-based shipbuilders are now twelve-time winners. However, these awards haven't always been for cruise ships. The jury has previously also selected a ferry (»Silja Europa« / 1993), an LNG tanker (»Coral Energy« / 2012), and a research vessel (»Sonne« / 2014) as remarkable projects.

Now, the »Asuka III« has been awarded, potentially opening up a new market for the Meyer Werft. Congratulations on this and the entire project! ■



© Meyer Werft

Ship of
the Year

»Asuka III«: A unique German-Japanese shipbuilding project

With »Asuka III«, the Meyer Werft has completed a special project. The new cruise ship is considered unique and energy-efficient. Particularly remarkable, however, was the entire construction process, carried out in close coordination with the shipping company NYK Cruises, transcending corporate culture boundaries. For the Papenburg-based shipyard, this project might open up an all-new market

The »Asuka III« is the first passenger ship in 34 years to be built under the supervision of the Japanese flag state – with corresponding implications for the entire shipbuilding process. And for the shipyard, it's the first ship built for the Japanese market. »It's definitely not an off-the-shelf project. The shipowner carefully considered what they ultimately wanted,« says Marc Ewald, who was involved as technical project manager.

One important point upfront: »Asuka III« is a successful project. Delivery was on schedule – despite some logistical challenges. Satisfied customer, satisfied shipyard. It was an unusual project for many involved, mastered through close German-Japanese cooperation.

But to start at the beginning: It was early 2021, in the midst of the »Covid era«, when the stock-listed NYK Group, one of the world's largest shipping companies, placed its first order for a new cruise ship in Papenburg, with delivery planned for 2025.

The shipyard emphasized the significance of the order as an important signal, because »since the beginning of the pandemic, no shipping company has placed a newbuild order for a cruise ship«.

Pandemic experiences lead to innovations

At the time, it was stated that, in addition to LNG propulsion, numerous tailor-made solutions would be implemented. These included hydrodynamics optimized for routes in Japanese waters and onboard facilities specifically adapted to the needs of Japanese passengers. The new ship was scheduled to call at over 30 destinations throughout Japan in its first season alone. As a result of the pandemic experiences, attention was also paid to innovations in climate control systems and contactless controls.

However, the assessment »special« for the project is not solely based on traditional shipbuilding and energy efficiency matters. It's not just about the »what« but also the »how« what makes »Asuka III« worth noting. Because paths were taken that were previously rather unusual – at least to this extent.

From the outset, it was agreed that the teams at Meyer Werft and NYK Cruises would work closely together. The Papenburg team described it as an exciting challenge to learn about Japanese culture and optimize a cruise ship for this market.

»Courtesy and reliability«

»Even before construction began, there were many meetings to understand expectations and cultural specifics. We are very proud that NYK chose us,« says Marc Ewald. He describes the collaboration as »characterized by courtesy and reliability«, with strict adherence to the contractually agreed-upon aspects, without grey areas. A high standard of cleanliness, order, punctuality, and structured work was met jointly. The shipyard and the shipping company continually took steps to learn from each other, consider different cultural backgrounds, and thereby enable an efficient shipbuilding process. The Papenburg employees received special training beforehand.

The ship's design comes from the London-based architectural office SMC, while the crew areas were developed by

Technical specifications of the new cruise vessel »Asuka III« for NYK

- Length: 230 m
- Beam: 29.80 m
- Tonnage: 52,265 GT
- Fuel: Triple-Fuel (LNG, MGO, HFO)
- Capacity: 740 passengers
- Cabins: 381
- Crew: 470

Meyer Werft. A great deal of time and effort was invested, and close cooperation with NYK Cruises was maintained in this area as well. The interior design, in particular, showcases a combination of German engineering and Japanese design and emphasizes creating a comfortable space. »For example, the natural light streaming through the windows, combined with the furnishings, creates a relaxed, home-like atmosphere. All rooms are equipped with a kitchen sink, and the indirect lighting provides a modern ambiance«, the shipowner states.

When selecting suppliers and component manufacturers, the shipping company and shipyard opted for a mix of many Japanese and some German and European companies, respectively.



© NYK / Meyer Werft

The atrium of »Asuka III« in the passenger area – including Japanese artwork, specifically designed for the new cruise vessel of the Japanese NYK Group



© Meyer Werft

The crew areas of »Asuka III« have been certified with the Allergy Friendly Building Alliance seal. The AFBA seal is awarded to rooms that fulfil the scientific requirement of being allergy-friendly



© Meyer Werft

The Meyer Werft in Papenburg is known for a highly-efficient shipbuilding process ...



© NYK / Meyer Werft

Japanese-style restaurants for Japanese passengers

»Disruptions in global supply chains caused delays for some suppliers, but did not jeopardize the 2025 delivery date.«

Ultimately, around 150 contracts were concluded with suppliers and service providers. During the construction phase, several logistical challenges had to be addressed. Disruptions in global supply chains caused delays for some suppliers. One reason was the near-complete avoidance of transport through the Suez Canal due to the Gaza War and attacks by Yemeni Houthi rebels. Replanning was frequently necessary. However, this did not jeopardize the 2025 delivery date, reports Dirk Lake.

»Zone Logic« for concept with redundant areas

A 3D model was used during the development process. In the detailed design phase, the safe return-to-port concept for the essential systems was further refined. To ensure the ship met the required redundancy standards, the shipyard's engineers worked closely with the suppliers of the classification society's key systems and the Japanese flag state. Using a system called zone logic, the ship is divided into redundant areas.

Two independent engine rooms ensure that in the event of a leak or fire, the ship can reach the nearest safe port at reduced speed. The heart of the vessel consists of six main engines. This is designed to compensate for potential failures of individual engines. A breakdown of the ship, and consequently a voyage disruption for customers, is to be avoided at all costs. Accordingly,

... as well as for spectacular transits: »Asuka III« passing the Jann-Berg-haus-Brücke on her way from Papenburg to the North Sea



© NYK / Meyer Werft

NYK Cruises extensively tested the ship's operations for several weeks prior to delivery, reports Marc Ewald. Considerable time and effort were invested in determining the ship's requirements. To avoid development loops, the needs of the Japanese market were continuously integrated into the design process.

Consultation with Japanese authorities

There were also numerous consultations with Japanese regulatory authorities, as the ship sails under the Japanese flag. Japanese regulations, for example, do not permit the delega-

tion of sovereign functions to other organizations. This means that the flag state conducts a full review of all relevant drawings and oversees the entire construction process in addition to the classification society.

Throughout the entire construction process, NYK Cruises employees were present in Papenburg, despite the travel restrictions resulting from the pandemic. Frank Backhaus, shipyard project manager for the »Hotel« division, recalls: »NYK Cruises sent its own people, not external representatives. It was very pleasant for us to work directly with the client.« For example, the hotel manager, captain, and chief engineer as well as crew mem-



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The »Albatross« pool



One part of the »Grand Spa« on board



The »Royal Penthouse«

bers came to Germany and took ample time to explain their requirements. This is considered rather unusual in the shipbuilding industry.

Previously, shipyard representatives had traveled to Japan to learn about the specific requirements and features, and to visit the »Asuka II« as well as other reference vessels. It was important to the shipping company that the shipbuilders understood the philosophy and wishes for the newbuild. This clarity of requirements ultimately proved helpful for the realization of the new vessel.

»It was truly remarkable, this team spirit, this collaborative search for solutions.«

»Floating art exhibition«

The ship is designed for a clientele with discerning tastes, both in terms of the interior design and the amenities. Classic design meets craftsmanship. A strong emphasis was placed on Japanese art; the ship is considered something of a »floating art exhibition«. There are works of art in the ship's atrium that a Japanese master created specifically for this vessel over a period of two and a half years, reports Frank Backhaus. »This also reflects the desire for sustainability. The plan is to donate these artworks to a museum after the »Asuka III«'s service life or a potential sale of the vessel. Such considerations are a unique feature of the project.« On board, there is also a Japanese restaurant based on the Umihiko dining concept and a Japanese spa area.

But the focus on attractive furnishings and technology wasn't limited to the guests; the crew's needs were also taken into account. For example, the crew areas have been certified with the Allergy Friendly Building Alliance (AFBA) seal. The AFBA seal is awarded to rooms that meet the scientific requirements for allergy-friendly environments. According to the AFBA, indoor climate is one of the top five biggest health risks, and this risk

needs to be addressed. All criteria for the seal are aimed at avoiding or reducing allergenic factors in a room. As part of the certification process, all materials, air conditioning, and ventilation systems used were tested for harmful vapors. In addition, the shipping company's planned cleaning agents were tested for their allergy-friendliness.

The coordination effort was relatively extensive. Nevertheless, the construction schedule was met, and the collaboration was characterized by great respect, solution-oriented, and constructive, according to the Papenburg team. »This also has a lot to do with the discipline and the good, structured feedback from the client, as well as our processes,« emphasizes Frank Backhaus. »It was truly remarkable, this team spirit, this collaborative search for solutions,« adds Marc Ewald.

Even though there is no follow-up order from NYKC yet, the »Asuka III« could have opened up a new market for the shipyard. Hiroyuki Endo, the former President of NYK Cruises, had said at the time of the contract award: »We hope to continue this excellent relationship until the successful delivery of the »Asuka III« and beyond.«

The successful intercultural collaboration, with its specific requirements and expertise of all involved, which met with fertile ground, respect, and a willingness to cooperate on both sides, makes the »Asuka III« a truly special shipbuilding project. Meyer Werft has proven its capabilities in this area. The cruise ship is a symbol of this success and a potential gateway for the shipbuilding company. This is reason enough to award the »Asuka III« the title of »Ship of the Year«. ■



»Asuka III« during the construction process in Papenburg



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Requirements for naval shipyards are becoming more complex

Germany's naval fleet is too small – at least according to the Chief of the German Navy. He is not only calling for a faster induction of new units, but also for investments in innovative capabilities. In future, for example, every naval vessel is intended to function as a drone carrier. This requires a rethink on the part of shipyards, which are expected to engage more closely with future users during design and construction. *By Holger Schlüter*





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Frigate »Mecklenburg-Vorpommern«
protecting critical infrastructure in the
North Sea



Chief of the German Navy, Vice Admiral Christian Kaack

»We have no time to lose«

Christian Kaack

As the smallest service branch of the Bundeswehr, the primary mission of the German Navy is national and alliance defence. Its main area of operations is the northern flank region, encompassing the North Sea, the Baltic Sea and the North Atlantic. In addition, »homeland security including national crisis and risk management« is defined as a task, covering surveillance, situational awareness and the protection of critical infrastructure. Conceptually envisaged international crisis management and humanitarian assistance missions have, been assigned a lower priority for geopolitical reasons.

The German Navy has assumed a leading role in the Baltic region and participates in international exercises, which in 2025 took place in the North Sea, the Baltic Sea and the Norwegian Sea. Freedom of navigation operation (FONOPS) operations mandated by the federal government, such as the Indo-Pacific deployment, are conducted as complementary activities; in the following year, however, no surface combatants are foreseen for this purpose, but rather maritime patrol aircraft. Crisis response operations are being reduced; the UN mission UNIFIL off the coast of Lebanon is to be terminated by the end of the year 2026.

The Chief of Navy intent

As early as January 2025, the Chief of the German Navy articulated the objective of achieving maximum operational readiness by 2029. In January 2026, he pointed to increasing Russian aggressive activities in the Baltic Sea, which appear to be aimed at identifying vulnerabilities. The focus on naval modernisation underpins his demand for faster induction of units and new weapon systems, accelerated maintenance cycles and the speeding up of innovative projects under Operational Experimentation (OPEX). His statement »we have no time to lose« was explicit.

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Unlike in the past, he favours a »no change policy«, referring to the freezing of designs at a defined point in order to ensure availability and gain time. In his 2026 intent paper, he defines priorities, including passages of relevance to German naval shipbuilders: he considers the fleet to be too small, identifies significant financial scope, seeks investment in innovative capabilities and aims to deploy the fleet at sea. His target is to have two thirds of the fleet operational, stating explicitly that a docked ship is no deterrence.

What must the Navy be able to do – and which units are required?

The »Course Navy« outlined by the Chief of the Navy, a further development of the »Zielbild 2035+«, describes the future

structure of the fleet, its tasks, capabilities and resources for national and alliance defence and for meeting NATO requirements under the NATO Force Model (NFM). It defines surface combatants, submarines, airborne systems and support platforms for mine warfare, reconnaissance and logistics. The force structure is complemented by unmanned systems in all domains.

A further requirement is that every warship must be a drone carrier. In naval shipbuilding, these capabilities must be considered from the very first design drawing. At the same time, ship construction requires redundancies in terms of space, displacement and size in order to adapt to changing threat scenarios, technological obsolescence and new parameters of naval warfare. Lessons from current conflicts – including the use of hybrid means, artificial intelligence, drones and other



The »Bayern« – a frigate of the Baden-Württemberg class (F125).

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The project comprising six F126 frigates is being continued






unmanned systems across all domains – must be incorporated into naval shipbuilding to enable the completion of mission- and threat-oriented units. For German naval shipbuilding, this means adopting a holistic approach prior to construction, cover-

ing planned systems, maintenance and modernisation throughout the service life, as well as adaptability to emerging threats and new technologies. Modern units must be capable for multi-domain operations, for manned, unmanned and potentially

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autonomous systems alike. Operating systems must be standardised across platforms, from simple weapon systems to complex combat management systems.

The challenges for shipyards are therefore becoming even more complex. Cooperation with the future user is indispensable; the customary separation based on institutional responsibilities is no longer appropriate. »Operational literacy« is required, including on the shipyard side. Knowledge of warfare areas, multi-domain operations, and logistical and operational interdependencies should ideally also be present within design offices. This includes cooperation with weapon and system suppliers. Only then does German naval shipbuilding become a systemic player, justifying the politically coined term »key technology«.

The task thus extends beyond producing a perfect and high-quality hull; it requires the capability to design a specialised vessel – and a warship is nothing else – thinking it from the mission backwards. Shipyards that build and maintain vessels for the German Navy are therefore internationally competitive and in demand. The principle that only successful national projects can be marketed internationally is reflected in the extensive export portfolio, both in surface combatants and submarines. Warships »Made in Germany« or under German

lead licence production can be found in East Asia, the Middle East and South America. German cooperation with shipyards within and outside Europe underlines the international standing of German naval shipbuilding.

Modernisation and newbuild programmes

The extensive renewal programme of the German Navy currently encompasses both newbuilds and modernisation projects. The Brandenburg-class frigates (F 123) are being equipped with new radar systems, command and weapon control systems, enhanced anti-submarine warfare capabilities and new guided missiles. However, the approximately € 1.2 billion project significantly restricts availability; none of the units will rejoin the fleet before 2027.

For this reason, the Sachsen-class (F 124) frigates will no longer undergo a previously planned obsolescence removal programme. According to the decision of the Chief of the Navy, the successful Sachsen-class frigates will continue to be operated in their current configuration with minor but relevant modifications.

The Baden-Württemberg-class (F 125) frigates, originally designed for crisis response operations, have largely proven

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In addition to the F126 frigates, the German Navy is also to receive MEKO frigates

themselves in terms of utilisation, logistics and personnel concepts, although adaptations are required. The enhancement of air defence capabilities has been initiated; successful trials with IRIS-T were conducted in 2025. In future, the Navy plans to operate only three of the four units of this class. The multi-crew concept, initially promoted as a success model, was

first suspended due to personnel shortages and has since been discontinued entirely.

The replacement of the Brandenburg class was intended to be the Niedersachsen – class (F 126). The € 8 billion Dutch-German project for a total of six ships was halted in 2025. The project had to be stopped due to incompatible design soft-

N·V·L



ware. Funding was frozen, a significant defence scandal was predicted, the former »lighthouse project« seemed to be in shreds. However, in January, NVL was able to manage the problem, and work is now in progress. On January 28, the Defence Committee of the German Bundestag decided that the project for six frigates would continue. On the same day, a preliminary contract was also approved with TKMS for the procurement of an expected four MEKO A-200 class frigates.

The goal is to have the first ship launched by the end of 2029. Now the German Navy is introducing two classes of warships at a time, while the third program F 127 is already in its starting blocks. This is going to be a challenging era, for the navy, the procurement office and throughout the warship building industry.

The successor to the F 124 class is now projected to comprise eight F 127 NGF (»Next Generation Frigate – Air Defence«) units. A project company between TKMS and Naval vessels Lürssen (NVL) exists since 2024. The air defence frigate will feature 96 VLS cells, providing significantly increased firepower for the defence against ballistic missiles and hypersonic weapons too. Design and IT architecture will be enhanced, and the frigates will be larger. The budget is estimated at approximately € 26 billion.

The five Braunschweig-class corvettes (K 130) are currently being supplemented by five additional corvettes (K 130 Batch II), which are in the process of joining the German Navy. The Frankenthal-class mine countermeasures vessels (MJ 332) are undergoing continuous modernisation. While no new mine countermeasures units are currently planned under the Course Navy, unmanned MCM systems are envisaged.

The aged Rhön-class fleet oilers are being replaced by the new Class 707 (MBV 707). The double-hull fuel suppliers are currently under construction with delays and are a joint production of Meyer Werft Papenburg and NVL. In contrast, the replacement

of the Oste-class Intelligence Collection vessels (AGI Class 423) is progressing rapidly. The three new Class 424 units are being built at NVL's Peene shipyard in Wolgast significantly ahead of schedule, due to capacity freed up by the meanwhile halted F 126 programme.

The German-Norwegian cooperation in the operation, training, maintenance and construction of Type 212 CD submarines is regarded as a European flagship project. Each partner will operate six submarines. Naval shipbuilding also includes the SVK boats (Sea Trials Coast) delivered by Fassmer and the two STS boats (Security, Transport, Towing) delivered by Tamsen Maritime for Military technical service center (WTD) 71 of the Federal Office of Bundeswehr Equipment, Information Technology and In-Service Support (BAAINBw). Current plans



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In December last year, the German Naval Aviation Command received its first Sea Tiger, further strengthening the German Navy's anti-submarine warfare capabilities.

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Against the backdrop of the changed security environment, the German Navy has taken an unconventional approach: in 2023 it acquired the tug »Rota Endurance«, which had previously been operated commercially, and subsequently converted it for naval use

also include the procurement of harbour and multi-purpose tugs and the acquisition of accommodation barges.

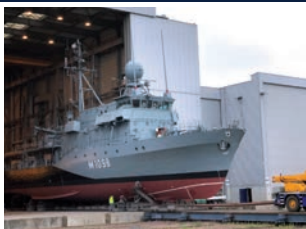
Outlook under the »Course Navy«

The German Navy will grow significantly and become more modern. This will involve a substantially larger personnel strength, new bases and facilities. New barracks planned include bases and airfields, alongside the reactivation of former sites. A key aspect is the expansion of unmanned capabilities. Planned requirements include Future Combat Surface Systems (FCSS), Large Remote Multi-purpose Vessels (LRMV), Large Uncrewed Underwater Vehicles (LUUV) and VTOL-UAVs.

Under the target picture, ships across all naval warfare dimensions are planned: corvettes, submarines, tankers and fleet service vessels are under construction or in final outfitting. Decisions remain open regarding the replacement of the Elbe-class tenders (Class 404); NVL has developed the NTV 130 concept, while Fassmer and A&R have formed a cooperation for an MPV 130.

Compared with the way-ahead paper called »Zielbild 2035+«, the »Course 2025« confirms the numbers: 16 frigates, six to nine corvettes, nine to twelve submarines, eight maritime patrol aircraft and 48 naval helicopters. Newly added are over 40 multi-purpose combat boats to support naval infantry, as well as more than 60 unmanned sea and air systems.

Finally, consideration of the German Navy's operational requirements does not imply that the Inspector of the Navy is the direct contracting authority for German shipyards. The contracting authority, financier and planner is the BAANBw in Koblenz. The Chief of the Navy is the operator and force provider, playing a key role in the procurement process by defining requirements and setting priorities, but not acting as the procurement authority himself. ■



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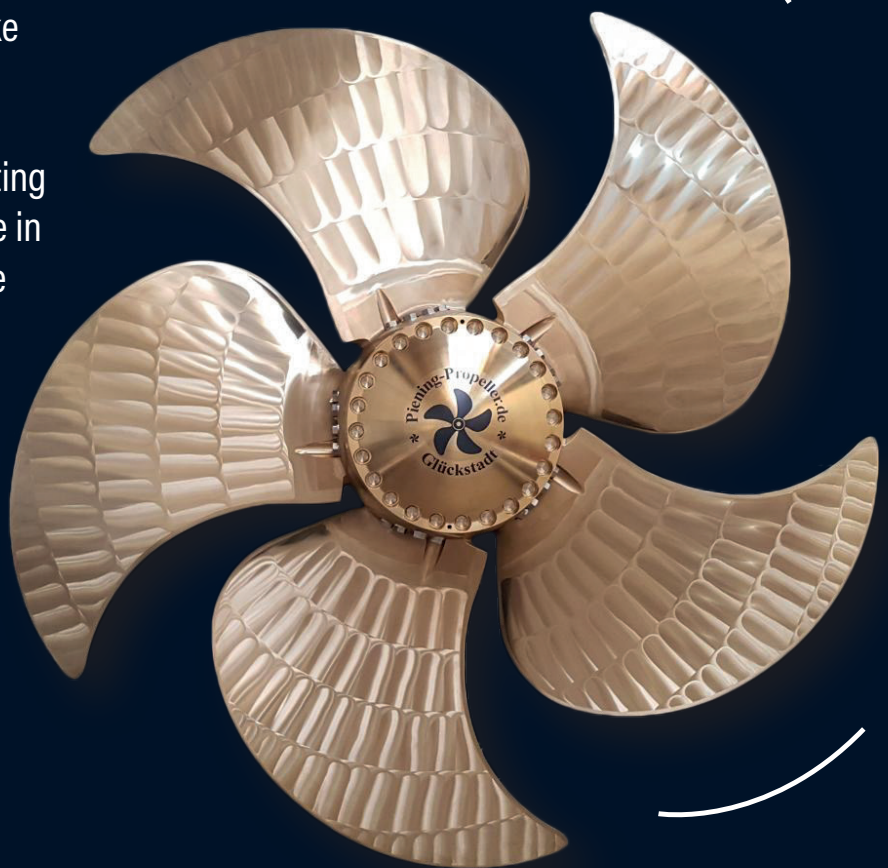
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Green transition drives growth for german inland shipyards

Shipbuilders inland shipyards are looking ahead with confidence. A strong order book and a clear focus on climate-neutral propulsion systems underscore the industry's role as a technological pioneer. *By Peter Kleinort*

The German inland shipbuilding industry entered 2026 with a dual identity. On one hand, the maritime »Mittelstand« has never been more innovative, delivering world-class zero-emission vessels. On the other, as the latest VSM (Association for Shipbuilding and Marine Technology) annual report highlights, the sector is facing a severe investment bottleneck. While the order books for naval vessels and specialized ocean-going ships are reaching record levels, the inland waterway segment is struggling with a »wait-and-see« attitude among private ship owners. The transition to a climate-neutral fleet is technically feasible, yet the economic framework remains fragile. For the yards along the Rhine, Elbe, and Danube, this means navigating a market where the gap between political ambition and financial reality is widening. This tension defines the current strategic outlook for the sector as it grapples with high energy costs and global competition.

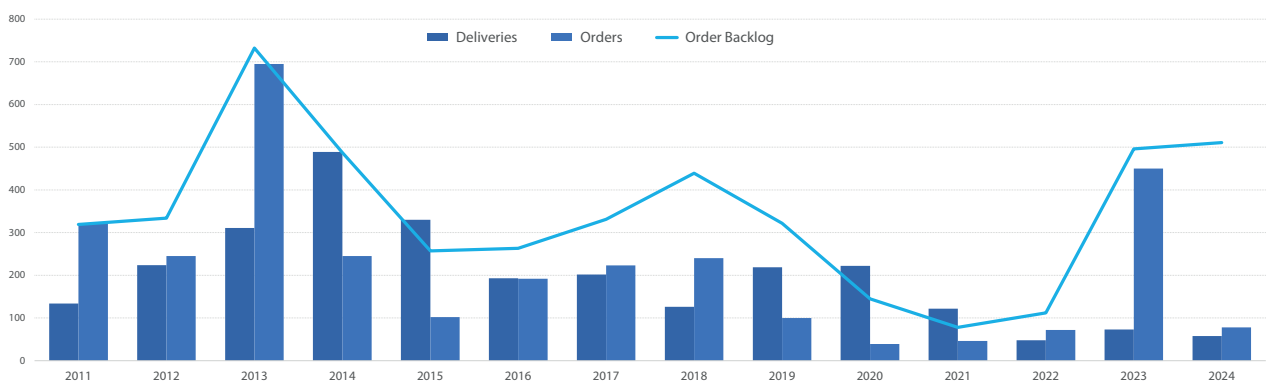
For the approximately 50 specialized inland waterway shipyards in Germany, this means a continued shift towards high-end segments. While the volume of standard cargo hulls remains low, the demand for complex, technologically advanced vessels »Made in Germany« is rising steadily. The year 2025 served as a prime example of this development. The completion of the hybrid-electric ferry series for Hamburg's Hadag by the SET shipyard marked a significant milestone. These vessels are

more than just local transport; they serve as floating proof of German engineering's lead in zero-emission shipping. With further orders for fully electric ferries, the industry is setting the pace for Europe's »Green Deal« on its waterways. The ability to integrate complex energy storage systems into compact vessel designs has become a unique selling point for German maritime clusters.

Innovation drivers and the rule of public-service partnerships

A cornerstone of this success is the strategic partnership with public-sector clients. The modernization of the federal fleet is acting as a crucial driver of innovation. Specialized shipyards like Bolle and Habicht delivered state-of-the-art service and survey vessels, such as the VSS »Xanten«, over the past year. Such projects benefit significantly from the return to more reliable supply chains, enabling precise production cycles and better long-term planning. The diversity of the yard landscape is also reflected in projects that go far beyond classic transport. From autonomous research platforms like the »Nova« to heavy-duty infrastructure ferries, the sector is demonstrating its enormous flexibility. Despite challenges such as the shortage of skilled labor, the VSM em-

German Inland Shipbuilding
€ Million



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phasizes that technological leadership remains a key competitive advantage. The coming years will be defined by the industrial scaling of alternative fuels and the digital integration of vessel data.

The transformation trap for private operators

Decarbonization has finally evolved from a niche topic to the primary market driver. For many small and medium-sized private operators, however, this transition feels like a »transformation trap«. The capital expenditure (CAPEX) for a new, green inland vessel is often double that of a conventional diesel drive. Given fluctuating energy prices – ranging from green electricity to hydrogen and HVO – operating expenses (OPEX) remain difficult to calculate. This uncertainty is toxic to the long investment cycles of the industry, where vessels are often in service for 40 years or more. As a result, many owners are hesitant to place new orders and instead invest in maintaining aging legacy fleets, leading to a dangerous over-aging of the European fleet. This stagnation threatens the long-term competitiveness of the entire waterway logistics chain if not addressed urgently by policymakers. Without clear market incentives, the fleet renewal rate will continue to lag behind climate targets.

A central criticism from the VSM remains the inconsistent and often bureaucratic funding landscape. While the federal government has stabilized the program for the sustainable modernization of inland vessels at around 35 mio. € for 2026, the industry warns that this is a drop in the ocean compared to the actual need. The »funding gap« is particularly visible in the field of alternative fuels. While lighthouse projects like the »Warnowstromer« find support, there is no reliable mechanism for the broad roll-out in cargo shipping. Ship owners often find themselves in a labyrinth of eligibility criteria, with processing times exceeding twelve months, which does not match the rapid pace of technological change. Strategic invest-

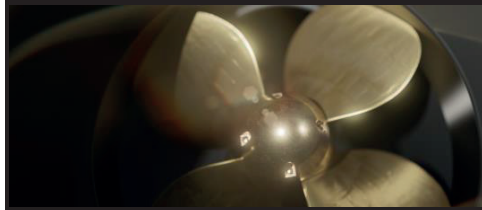
ment requires faster cycles and higher financial leverage to encourage the private sector to commit to new, sustainable builds. The industry needs a streamlined, one-stop-shop approach to subsidies to reduce the administrative burden on small shipyards.

Refitting and modernization as a key pillar

Given the subdued newbuild activity, refitting and modernization have become the primary backbone for many yards. Today, modernization means much more than just swapping an engine. It includes the integration of complex exhaust aftertreatment systems, optimizing hulls for low-water conditions, and installing digital sensors for »Smart Shipping«. Shipyards like Hitzler, Bolle, and SET have specialized in these high-value conversions. However, the pressure is mounting here as well: the shortage of specialized labor – from expert welders to systems integrators – limits capacity and leads to longer lead times. Yards must balance these technical upgrades with strict regulatory requirements, often acting as consultants for ship owners who are overwhelmed by the sheer pace of technical innovation and the complex certification processes involved. This consulting role has become an essential but often uncompensated part of the shipyard's service portfolio.

Modern engineering for climate resilience

Climate change is no longer a future vision but an immediate design requirement. Extreme low-water periods on the Rhine and Elbe have fundamentally changed operational requirements. The VSM emphasizes that »low-water resilience« has become a core selling point for German yards. New hull designs with extremely shallow drafts, as implemented in the latest tankers for the chemical industry, are setting global benchmarks. This technological lead allows German yards to maintain their position against cheaper competitors



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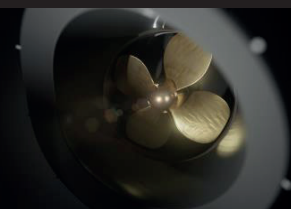
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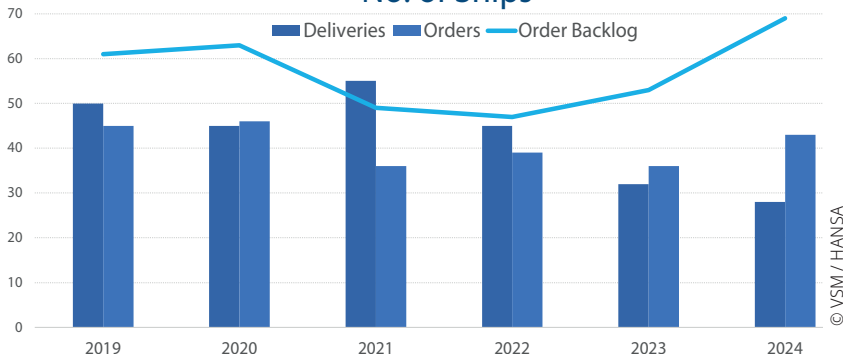
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from Eastern Europe or Asia, as these designs require engineering precision that only highly specialized maritime clusters can provide. These vessels ensure that industrial supply chains remain functional even during dry summers, providing a critical economic insurance policy for inland industries. The focus is shifting toward innovative propulsion solutions, such as extremely large-diameter, slow-turning propellers housed in optimized tunnels.

The weakest link: financial architecture

However, maritime infrastructure remains the »problem child«. The massive maintenance backlog for locks, bridges, and canals represents a significant barrier to growth. VSM and BDB are vehemently calling for a prioritization of waterway investments. Without a reliable network, even the most innovative ship cannot reach its full potential. Furthermore, the topic of »Military Mobility« – the transport of heavy equipment across Europe – is giving the sector a new strategic dimension.

This might open new funding pathways under the aspect of national security. Reliable waterways are not just an environmental necessity but a backbone for European resilience. The current state of the infrastructure often forces yards to design vessels that must compensate for these failures, increas-

ing the complexity and cost of every single newbuild project. Modernizing a lock can take a decade, while a shipyard can build a green vessel in eighteen months – this discrepancy is paralyzing.

The financial architecture of the transition is currently the weakest link in the chain. While national action plans set ambitious goals, the disbursement of funds is often hampered by the criterion of »additionality«. Owners often only receive funding if their project is significantly more innovative than the market standard – a hurdle that frequently excludes proven green technologies. Many companies also struggle with the pre-financing trap. Since subsidies are usually paid out only after delivery, liquidity bottlenecks arise, which are hard to bridge without massive bank guarantees for projects in the double-digit million range. Financial institutions are increasingly cautious, and the lack of standardized green financing products for the inland sector slows down the renewal rate of the fleet significantly. Banks need a clearer understanding of the maritime energy transition to provide the necessary credit lines.

Adding to this is a regulatory vacuum. Investors must choose between methanol, hydrogen, or battery-electrics while safety standards and tax incentives remain unclear. Those who order today risk a »stranded asset« if the regulatory course changes tomorrow. Without a technology-neutral guarantee from pol-

iticians, the private sector will remain reluctant. This especially hurts medium-sized yards that cannot offer state-backed financing models like large international competitors. The statistics are sobering: the average age of the European cargo fleet is over 45 years. While this speaks for construction quality, it complicates the energy transition as old hulls are often not suitable for heavy battery systems without a massive loss in cargo capacity. This technical obsolescence is a hurdle that requires innovative engineering solutions and a complete rethinking of ship architecture to accommodate larger fuel storage systems.

Banking challenges and residual value

A frequently overlooked obstacle is the changing behavior of financial institutions. Under strict regulations like Basel III and IV, banks must back loans for maritime assets with significantly more equity. This leads to a credit squeeze in the sector. Vessels with diesel propulsion are increasingly classified as high-risk assets, while green ships are seen as unproven due to uncertain resale values. A paradox emerges: the industry is expected to innovate, yet the financial pathways are drying up. The VSM is calling for a state-backed »Green Guarantee Fund« to lower the risk for private banks. Without such a mechanism, the transition will remain limited to large corporations, while the owner-operated market loses touch. The financial industry needs to recognize the inland vessel as a stable, long-term asset with high strategic value. Standardized assessment models for green ships could help to bridge this gap between technology and finance.

A key point of contention remains the calculation of residual value. In the past, banks could rely on a robust second-hand market for diesel ships. With new propulsion systems, this certainty is vanishing as no one can predict the market value of a battery or hydrogen unit in 2035. This uncertainty leads to higher risk premiums and shorter amortization periods. As a result, the

monthly debt service becomes so high that the business case for a green ship often fails despite fuel savings. The industry requires a standardized framework for evaluating green maritime assets to provide banks and owners with the security they need for 20-year investment horizons. Only then can the small-scale structure of the German inland shipping industry survive the massive shift towards zero-emission operations. Long-term off-take agreements with industrial clients could also help to secure financing for these innovative vessels.

Infrastructure: the physical bottleneck

Even if financing is resolved, the physical barrier of crumbling infrastructure remains. High-tech vessels like the »Nova« require a digitized environment to reach their full potential. Broken locks and restricted bridge clearances lead to massive planning uncertainty. Yards must often compensate for these deficiencies with even more complex ship designs.

The VSM warns that the promised »Modal Shift« can only succeed if investment in the infrastructure keeps pace with investment in the vehicles. A modern fleet requires a modern fairway, including a nationwide network of shore-power stations and bunkering facilities for alternative fuels, which are currently only available in a few lighthouse locations. This missing link in the infrastructure chain is currently the biggest bottleneck for the wide adoption of green technology. Furthermore, the digitization of locks and the implementation of RIS (River Information Services) are essential for efficient operations.

A call for a strategic master plan

The findings of the 2025/2026 report lead to a clear conclusion: the German inland shipbuilding cluster is a technological leader on shaky economic ground. To secure the future of the yards in Lauenburg, Tangermünde, or Regensburg, a holistic »Master Plan« is required. This plan must harmonize R&D funding, investment subsidies,

and infrastructure expansion. The resilience of the sector is remarkable, but innovation alone cannot carry the weight of an entire energy transition. As we look toward the remainder of 2026, the industry stands ready to deliver, provided the political and financial »wind« finally turns in its favor. The potential for the inland vessel to act as a primary enabler for a carbon-neutral

Europe is vast, but it requires a synchronized effort from shipbuilders, operators, and the state.

Stronger cooperation between European yards could also help to create the necessary scale for these new green technologies. How the market, which is characterized by these uncertainties, will continue to develop remains to be seen. ■

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Award-winning innovation: The »Grasbrook«, named »Inland Vessel of the Year«, sets new standards for sustainable urban logistics with its advanced diesel-electric propulsion system

A milestone for green urban mobility

As the final unit of the innovative Type 2030 series, the hybrid ferry »Grasbrook« represents a new era of sustainable public transport in the Port of Hamburg. Built by SET Schiffbau- u. Entwicklungsgesellschaft Tangermünde, this vessel combines advanced propulsion technology with optimized efficiency to meet the demanding requirements of a modern metropolitan ferry service. *By Peter Kleinort*

Winning the prestigious »Inland Vessel of the Year« award was not just a significant success for the Hadag, but a triumph for German specialized shipbuilding. The »Grasbrook«, delivered by the SET shipyard in Tangermünde, represents the pinnacle of a strategic fleet renewal program that began years ago and has now set a new European benchmark for municipal service vessels.

As the third unit in the innovative »Type 2030« series, following its sister ships »Neuland« and »Finkenwerder« delivered in 2024, the »Grasbrook« has quickly become a true »workhorse« in the port of Hamburg. These passenger ferries are specifically designed to withstand the relentless demands of a 24/7 scheduled service, moving thousands of commuters daily across the Elbe River. For the operator Hadag, the transition to this new generation of ferries is a crucial step in fulfilling the city's ambitious climate targets while maintaining the highest standards of mod-

ern urban and metropolitan mobility in the metropolitan area of Hamburg.

Mastering the flow: high-tech in a modern compact design

In recent interviews, Olaf Deter, Managing Director of SET (Schiffbau- u. Entwicklungsgesellschaft Tangermünde), highlighted the specific engineering challenges of this series. The design had to prioritize rapid passenger embarkation and disembarkation to maintain tight schedules, while housing complex battery and diesel-electric systems within a very compact hull.

Measuring 33.40 m in length and 8.30 m in width, the »Grasbrook« offers a generous capacity for up to 250 passengers. »With the Grasbrook, we have further refined the layout based on the operational experiences of the »Neuland« and »Finkenw-

erder,« Deter noted. The result is a vessel that offers maximum reliability in the harsh environment of the tidal Elbe while providing a silent and comfortable ride for commuters. Every centimeter of the interior was planned with 3D precision to accommodate the diesel-electric propulsion systems alongside complex hydraulic units, ensuring that the »Grasbrook« remains highly efficient even under peak loads and varying water levels.

A sustainable vision for the Type 2030 fleet of local urban transport

The »Grasbrook« stands as a symbol of the successful partnership between Hadag and German medium-sized shipyards. Unlike traditional harbor ferries, this series utilizes a sophisticated plug-in hybrid propulsion system. It combines high-capacity battery storage with efficient Stage V diesel generators, allowing for emission-free maneuvering and berthing at the piers. While following the long-standing tradition of Hamburg's iconic harbor ferries, the Type 2030 is a completely new development designed for one-man operation and maximum environmental compatibility. Through extensive CFD (Computational Fluid Dynamics) analyses and model tests, SET developed a highly optimized hull design that ensures excellent maneuverability in the confined and busy waters of the port. This engineering excellence, combined with a significant reduction in fuel consumption, is what eventually convinced the award jury to name the »Grasbrook« the standout vessel of the year.

Strategic expansion: setting the standard for urban mobility

The success of the »Grasbrook« is part of a much larger vision for Hamburg's maritime public transport. The Type 2030 series is specifically engineered to be future-proof; its modular platform allows for future technological upgrades, such as the potential integration of hydrogen fuel cells as they become commercially viable. The series currently consists of several units, with the »Grasbrook« serving as a key pillar in the Hadag-Route 62 and other high-frequency lines. By investing in this series, the city is not only modernizing its fleet but also creating a scalable blueprint for other European cities looking to decarbonize their urban ferry operations. The award honors the fact that the »Grasbrook« is more than just a boat – it is a highly efficient, sustainable, and reliable passenger workhorse that has set a new worldwide benchmark for the »transport transition« (Verkehrswende) on the water. This project proves that German shipyards remain the global leaders in specialized, sustainable maritime solutions.

Emission-free in the heart of the port


For extended operations or peak power demands, a modern diesel-powered range extender ensures continuous service. This generator operates within a variable and optimized load range, ensuring that even when the combustion engine is active, fuel consumption and carbon dioxide emissions remain at the lowest possible level. Furthermore, the »Grasbrook« is de-

signed as a modular platform; its layout allows for future technological upgrades, such as the integration of hydrogen fuel cells, making it a future-proof cornerstone of the city's »transport transition«.

Building on the successful delivery of the current hybrid series, Hadag and the SET shipyard have already solidified their future cooperation by signing a contract for the next generation of vessels. The newly ordered ferries (construction numbers 218-220) will carry the designation »Type 2030e« and are scheduled to enter service in the Port of Hamburg as early as 2028. The upcoming 2030e series will set yet another global standard for efficient and sustainable urban waterborne transport. ■

»INLAND VESSEL OF THE YEAR« 2022 – 2025



Year	Ship type	Name	Yard
2022	Push Boat	»Elektra«	Barthel
2023	Work Vessel	»E-Spatz«	Bolle
2024	Research Vessel	»Coriolis«	Hitzler Werft
2025	Ferry	»Grasbrook«	SET



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»Mastering the inconceivable«

The hybrid ferry »Grasbrook« marks the successful conclusion of Hadag's three-vessel series built by SET, explains Olaf Deter, Managing Director of SET in Tangermünde. Combining cutting-edge technology with sustainable propulsion, this innovative ship sets new standards for carbon-neutral local transport in the Port of Hamburg

The »Grasbrook« has been honored as the final unit of a three-part series of hybrid ferries for Hadag. What, in your view, makes this ship particularly special – and why is it a worthy recipient of the »Inland Vessel of the Year« title?

Olaf Deter: As mentioned in your question, the »Grasbrook« is the final unit in a series of three identical vessels for Hadag. It represents a visually modern and, especially regarding its highly advanced integrated technology, a forward-looking ship. Its appearance enriches the Port of Hamburg, while providing comfortable, reliable, efficient, and climate-friendly scheduled services. It has already become an indispensable part of the harbor landscape.

The Hadag Type 2030 ferries are designed for daily scheduled operations in the Port of Hamburg. What special requirements did this entail for design, equipment, and propulsion?

Deter: The challenges of this project were rooted in Hadag's ambitious tender specifications. These included explicit demands regarding target speed while simultaneously specifying extremely low propulsion power. Meeting these parameters initially seemed almost inconceivable. However, through countless CFD analyses combined with corresponding model tests and technically flawless project execution, we achieved success. The hull design is based on lines that were optimized down to the last detail with extreme effort. Further challenges included requirements for hull robustness for heavy-duty operations in the Port of Hamburg, as well as excellent maneuverability. To meet these demands, all propulsion and equipment components had to be carefully selected and combined.

A central feature of the »Grasbrook« is its hybrid propulsion. Can you explain the propulsion concept and how the individual components interact during operation?

Deter: As the name of the propulsion concept suggests, the system utilizes different energy sources. In this case, these are electric batteries as energy storage on one hand and diesel fuel on the other. Both energy carriers ultimately power electric cycloidal propellers that provide the ship's thrust. Due to a very high battery capacity, a large portion of the daily operation can be covered fully electrically and thus completely emission-free. The batteries are pre-charged to 100 % on shore. Scheduled operations that cannot be covered by battery capacity are handled by a modern diesel generator with corresponding exhaust after-treatment systems. This operates in a variable and optimized speed and load range, ensuring minimal fuel consumption and the lowest possible exhaust emissions. Excess energy from the generator is fed directly into charging the accumulators. All sys-



Olaf Deter – Managing Director – SET

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tems and components communicate with each other via a data bus, ensuring a highly efficient system at the heart of the »Grasbrook«.

Compared to conventionally powered harbor ferries: What concrete advantages does the hybrid concept offer in terms of emissions, energy efficiency, and operating costs?

Deter: Compared to conventional harbor ferries, the hybrid concept offers significantly increased energy efficiency and, consequently, reduced operating costs for the operator. Notably, emissions have been significantly reduced, and in the case of fully electric operation, even brought down to zero.

Which technical or planning challenges were particularly demanding during the construction of the »Grasbrook« and the entire series? Were there points where you broke new ground?

Deter: As a shipyard, we have been successfully implementing modern diesel-electric systems on ships for several years. In the case of the Type 2030 series, we did not just break new ground (»Neuland«) with the name of the first vessel in the series, but also through the implementation of our client's ambitious requirements, which we were ultimately able to fulfill in their entirety.

The »Grasbrook« is the third and final ship of the series. To what extent could experience from the previous two newbuilds be incorporated into this ship? Were there optimizations compared to the first units?

Deter: No matter how well you plan projects in advance, building a series inevitably leads to improvements that only become apparent during the construction phase. This was also the case with this project, albeit only to a small extent. Nevertheless, our client placed great emphasis on implementing any optimizations equally across all three ships. Whether during the construction phase or through retrofitting on already delivered vessels, all optimizations were incorporated equally, so that one can truly speak of these three ships as being identical in construction.

Building modern hybrid ferries requires close coordination between the shipyard, shipping company, suppliers, and classification society. How was the cooperation with Hadag and the other project participants?

Deter: The foundation of every successful newbuilding project is always good cooperation between the client, the shipyard, and all suppliers and project partners. This was certainly the case for this series, and I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all those involved. From the shipyard's side, I would like to

particularly mention the excellent and trustful teamwork with our client, Hadag Seetouristik und Fährdienst, and their construction supervision, the engineering firm Navalue GmbH from Flensburg. This collaboration was essential in bringing the entire series and the »Grasbrook« to a successful conclusion.

SET Schiffbau is primarily known for technically demanding specialized and workboats. What significance does the construction of these urban hybrid ferries have for the profile and strategic direction of your shipyard?

Deter: This newbuild project has once again confirmed that specialized shipbuilding – which includes hybrid ferries – is exactly the niche we can best serve as a shipyard. We have developed immensely in this area over the past two decades. Our strategic focus remains on offering our customers complete packages – from planning, manufacturing, and outfitting in-house to turn-key delivery including competent project management from a single source. This provides them with security and a relaxed project implementation.

With a view to the transport transition and the decarbonization of shipping: What role can hybrid and battery-supported ferries play in urban passenger transport in the future?

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The hull of the »Grasbrook« during construction in the shipyard hall in Tangermünde

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Deter: As a shipyard, we see hybrid and, in a further step, full-battery powered vessels as the future of urban passenger transport and beyond, especially regarding the decarbonization of shipping. The foundation for this is the rapid development in the field of battery storage systems. Storage capacity has in-

creased significantly while weights and prices have decreased, making both economic efficiency and potential operational concepts very attractive.

Finally, looking back at the »Grasbrook« project – what do you take away for future newbuilds, and what kind of ships would you like to realize at SET in the future?

Deter: Almost every new ship is unique and always presents new considerations and challenges for the shipyard. Simultaneously, with every project, one gathers experience that flows into future ones. This was also the case with the »Grasbrook«. For the future, we want to implement full-battery propulsion systems in specialized shipbuilding, both for passenger transport and workboats. The order for the next series of three ships of the type 2030e has already given the starting signal for this. The SET team would like to thank Hadag once again. We look forward to another joint and interesting project!

Thank you for the interview.

Interview: Peter Kleinort

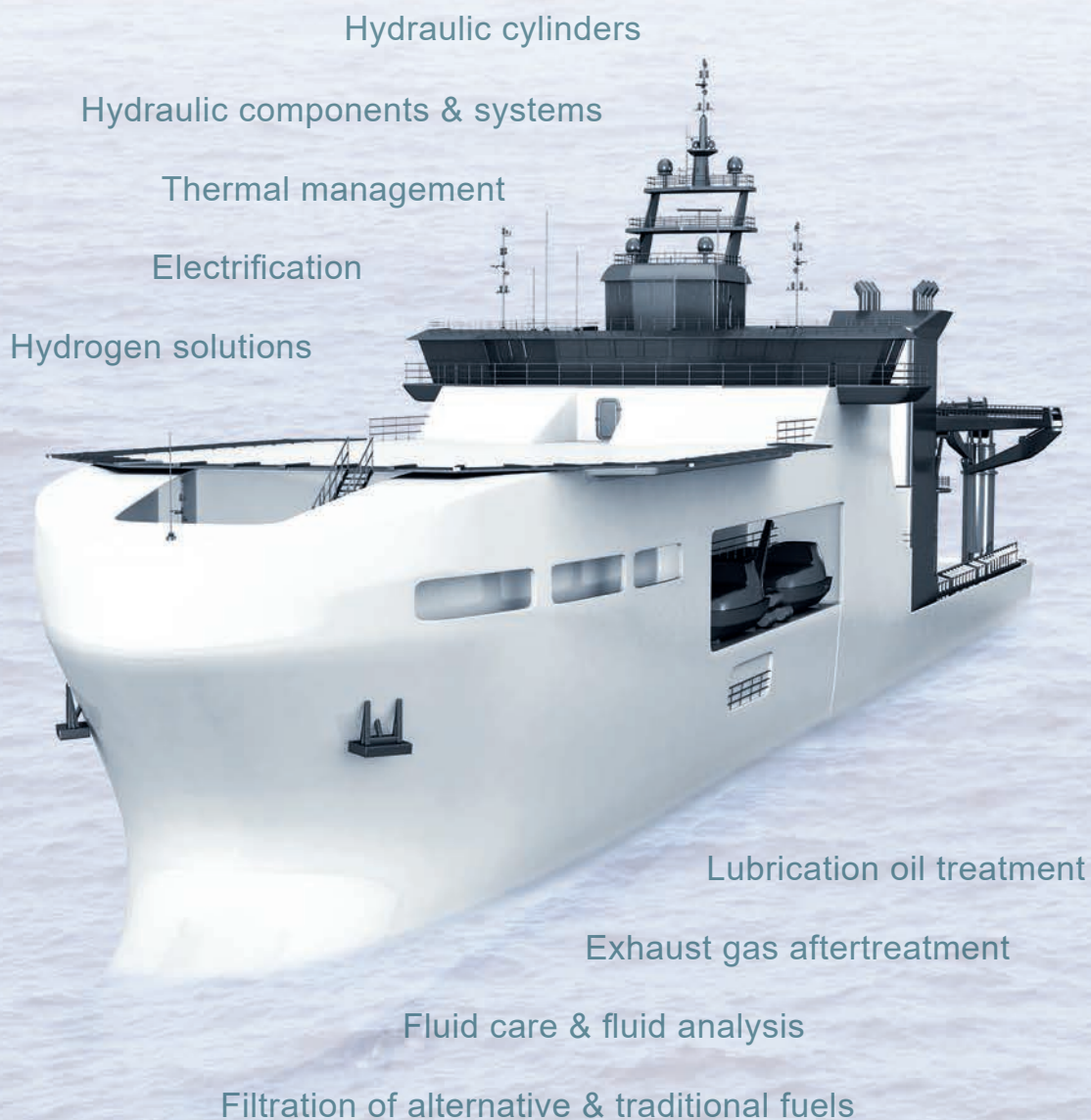


»Grasbrook« is being prepared for the overpass on the Elbe

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SCHIFFSWERFT BOLLE

Setting new standards for traffic safety on the Rhine

With the »Xanten«, the Bolle shipyard has delivered a state-of-the-art survey and traffic safety vessel (VSS) for the Rhine. Equipped with a serial hybrid-electric propulsion system, the vessel represents the next generation of environmentally friendly specialized craft for the German Waterways and Shipping Administration (WSV).

Commissioned by the WSA Rhine and based in Wesel, the »Xanten« is part of a strategic fleet modernization program that includes five identical vessels following the successful prototype »Emmerich«. Its primary mission is to ensure traffic safety and perform hydrological measurements on one of Europe's busiest and most demanding waterways. To meet these challenges, the ship features a sophisticated energy management system: two diesel generators with variable speed control provide power, while a 100 kWh lithium-ion battery pack allows for temporary emission-free operation and peak shaving.

A standout feature is the vessel's multi-functional design. In addition to its high-precision surveying equipment – including a specialized acoustic workplace for obstacle detection – the »Xanten« is equipped with a powerful MKG deck crane (4 t) and two 40 kN capstans. A reinforced bow ramp, capable of supporting up to 12 t, allows for the direct transport of construction materials, maintenance vehicles, or even large radar beacons to remote riverside locations.

Crucial for Reliable Waterway Infrastructure The daily routine of the »Xanten« involves the regular inspection and maintenance of vital navigation aids such as radar beacons, buoys, and shore lights. In an era where inland shipping is becoming increasingly



First out of five: The VSS »Xanten«, built for the German Waterways and Shipping Administration

© WSA Rhein

digitalized, the reliability of these physical markers remains essential for safe passage. Furthermore, the vessel is a critical asset during emergencies: its powerful propulsion and deck equipment enable the crew to remove flotsam, respond to ship accidents, and provide guidance during temporary waterway closures or high-water events.

Beyond its technical utility, the new »Xanten« serves as a pioneer for the »Green WSV« initiative. By utilizing its electric drive for maneuvers and idling, the ship significantly reduces local noise and air pollution in sensitive river ecosystems. The direct-drive electric motors also offer superior maneuverability compared to conventional systems, allowing the crew to position the vessel with centimeter-precision during delicate lifting operations or buoy placements. ■

LUX-WERFT

Heavy-duty mobility with a green footprint

The new Rhine ferry »Alma« (Rheinfähre Altrip-Mannheim) represents a significant upgrade for regional infrastructure. Built by Lux-Werft, the vessel combines a high transport capacity for heavy-duty vehicles with an innovative hybrid propulsion system designed for extreme shallow-water operations.

Replacing its predecessor after over three decades of service, the »Alma« is designed to handle the growing traffic volume between Altrip and Mannheim. The primary challenge for the shipyard was to increase the deck area and load capacity while maintaining a very shallow draft to ensure 24/7 operation even during dry summer months.

To achieve this, Lux-Werft utilized advanced lightweight construction techniques for the hull without compromising the stability required for heavy-duty vehicle transport.

The vessel is propelled by four Schottel Pump-Jets (SPJ), which are integrated into a diesel-electric hybrid system. This setup provides the ferry with the necessary thrust to cross the strong Rhine currents safely, even when fully loaded with up to 35 cars and multiple 40-t-trucks. The move to a hybrid-electric drive has significantly reduced the vessel's fuel consumption and noise

emissions, a crucial factor for a ship operating in close proximity to residential areas and sensitive river ecosystems.

A Pillar of Regional Connectivity Beyond its technical specifications, the »Alma« serves as a vital artery for the regional economy. Every day, thousands of commuters and logistics providers rely on the ferry to bypass the often-congested Rhine bridges. By modernizing this crossing, the Rheinfähre Altrip not only ensures reliable transit but also contributes to the decarbonization of local transport chains.

The ship's layout was also optimized for rapid loading and unloading cycles, featuring wide ramps and an open deck design that minimizes waiting times during peak hours.

As the »Alma« settles into its daily routine on the river Rhine, it stands as a testament to the specialized expertise of German inland shipyards. It demonstrates that even for traditional heavy-duty ferry services, the transition to modern, semi-electric propulsion is both technically feasible and economically sound. With its delivery in mid-2025, the vessel has already proven its worth during its first high-traffic season, securing the future of Rhine crossing. ■

FELLER YACHTING

The floating laboratory for the future of shipping

The »Nova« is more than just a boat; it is a high-tech research platform for autonomous and emission-free inland navigation. Developed for the University of Duisburg-Essen, this 15-m-catamaran is paving the way for the next level of digitalization on European waterways..

Built by Feller Yachting in Witten, the »Nova« serves as a real-world testing environment for automated processes such as docking, locking, and collision avoidance. Unlike laboratory simulations, the vessel operates in the dense traffic of the Duisburg harbor and the Rhine, using a vast array of sensors including »LIDAR«, radar, and multiple camera systems. The data collected is processed in real-time by high-performance onboard computers to create a »digital twin« of the surroundings.

The integration of artificial intelligence into the vessel's control systems allows researchers to develop algorithms that can eventually assist human captains or even lead to fully autonomous operation. A particular focus of the current research is the »Smart Lock« project, where the »Nova« tests how ships can communicate with shore-based infrastructure to optimize locking procedures. This digital interaction is expected to very signif-

icantly increase the throughput of canals and reduce energy consumption by avoiding unnecessary acceleration and braking maneuvers. The propulsion system is purely electric, powered by four high-performance batteries and supported by a large-scale solar array on the roof.



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The research vessel »Nova« is powered by four »Deep Blue« batteries by Torqeedo

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OSTSEESTAAL / AMPERESHIP

Solar-powered innovation for Rostock's city harbor

The »Warnowstromer« is a prime example of sustainable urban mobility and a flagship for the maritime energy transition. Developed and built by the Stralsund-based experts at Ostseestaal and its affiliate Ampereship, the fully electric solar-powered ferry has become a central element of Rostock's public transport system, significantly reducing the carbon footprint of the local municipal fleet.

The operational success of the »Warnowstromer« has far-reaching implications beyond the borders of Rostock. It serves as a real-world demonstration for municipal transport authorities across Europe, proving that the electrification of short-distance ferry routes is one of the most effective ways to reduce urban carbon dioxide emissions.

Operating on a vital 500-m-route between Kautzenhof and Gehlsdorf, the catamaran-style vessel replaces a conventional diesel ferry, saving up to 36,000 l of fuel annually. The lightweight steel hull was specifically optimized by Ostseestaal's engineers for high efficiency at typical harbor service speeds. A distinctive technical feature is the expansive solar array on the roof: 36 high-performance photovoltaic modules supply green energy directly to the high-performance battery banks. Under ideal weather conditions, the »Warnowstromer« can operate almost entirely on solar power, making it one of the most eco-efficient ferry services in northern Germany. Beyond



Solar-powered mobility: The Warnowstromer in Rostock, a prime example of sustainable and silent ferry operations on German inland waters

its daily service as a passenger carrier, the vessel has gained international attention as a floating laboratory. In 2025, it became the centerpiece of the »Warnowstromer AI« research initiative. Equipped with a suite of advanced sensors – including »LIDAR«, high-resolution 360-degree cameras, and ultrasonic sensors – the ferry is used to test semi-autonomous docking maneuvers and intelligent collision avoidance systems in real-world harbor traffic. This project aims to develop digital assistance systems that will eventually support crews on all types of inland vessels. ■

ERLENBACHER SCHIFFSWERFT

Precision in steel: the new multi-purpose Vessel »OHF 400«



Under construction at the Erlenbach site, the new motor cargo vessel takes shape through expert craftsmanship and 3D-planned precision

The Erlenbacher Schiffswerft, a subsidiary of the Felbermayr Group, is reinforcing its reputation as one of Germany's premier inland shipyards. With the completion of the »OHF 400«, a 50-m motor cargo vessel specifically designed for hydraulic engineering and water construction, the shipyard marks its 1,188th build in a long history of maritime excellence. Commissioned in mid-2024 and scheduled for delivery in early 2026, the »OHF 400« was entirely

planned, engineered, and constructed at the Erlenbach site. Measuring 50 m in length and 9.50 m in beam, the vessel is tailored for the demanding conditions of river maintenance and construction. It features a shallow draft of just 86 cm (empty) and a maximum displacement of 800 t, making it an ideal workhorse for the Rhine.

To ensure maximum maneuverability during complex water construction tasks, the »OHF 400« is equipped with a dual-engine setup, each providing 478 kW of power. This is complemented by a powerful 294 kW bow thruster, allowing for pinpoint positioning even in challenging currents. The vessel was built using the advanced block construction method, where 30-t steel sections were prefabricated in the shipyard's specialized halls before being assembled on the historic 135-m slipway.

The newbuild will operate in tandem with the »OHF 380« dredging pontoon, which was also delivered by the Erlenbach yard in 2023. This project underscores the shipyard's strategic focus on providing turnkey solutions for specialized infrastructure projects. By handling everything from initial 3D design to final outfitting in-house, Erlenbacher Schiffswerft continues to set standards for »Made in Germany« quality in the inland sector, with the next project—a new deck barge—already underway for 2026. ■

HITZLER WERFT

A modern landmark of green bunkering

With the delivery of the new »Johannisbollwerk« bunker station to Hoyer Marine, the Lauenburg-based Hitzler Werft has completed a vital piece of maritime infrastructure for the Port of Hamburg. This highly advanced floating gas station is designed to provide sustainable energy solutions for the harbor's diverse fleet and represents a significant upgrade in regional maritime logistics.

Located vis-à-vis the legendary »Cap San Diego« at the Landungsbrücken, the new bunker station replaces an older unit that had served the port for decades. The 30-m-long platform was constructed with a focus on maximum flexibility and environmental safety. It features four main fuel tanks with a total capacity of 360 cubic metres, allowing the station to provide not only conventional marine diesel but also innovative, low-emission alternatives like HVO 100 (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) and Ad-Blue. This makes the »Johannisbollwerk« a key player in the Port of Hamburg's strategy to decarbonize its local shipping traffic.

The yard shows engineering excellence for high-traffic environments. The construction at Hitzler Werft involved complex engineering to ensure the station remains stable and safe even

in the heavy swell caused by passing container giants and cruise ships. The hull was reinforced to meet the highest safety standards for floating fuel depots. Inside, the station offers more than just fuel storage; it includes a specialized hall for lubricants and oils, as well as a 20-cubic-metre fresh water tank to supply harbor craft. For the crew working on-site, modern office and social rooms were integrated, providing a high-quality workplace in the heart of the Elbe.

The bunker station stands for the sustainable future at the Landungsbrücken. Looking ahead, the station is prepared for further ecological enhancements. The roof structure was designed to support a future installation of photovoltaic panels and a green roof system, which will help regulate the interior temperature and contribute to the local microclimate. »This station is our commitment to a future-oriented shipping industry in Germany and Europe,« emphasizes Hoyer Marine in a statement. Its successful delivery in June 2025 underscores Hitzler Werft's excellent expertise in building specialized, tailor-made maritime assets that go beyond traditional vessel construction, ensuring that the Port of Hamburg remains one of the most efficient and sustainable maritime hubs in Europe. ■

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NEPTUN WERFT

A centenary milestone in European river cruising



© Neptun Werft

The »Viking Honir« represents the 100th vessel delivered by the shipyard to Viking, marking a unique long-term partnership

In October 2025, the maritime world witnessed a historic event as Viking River Cruises officially named its 100th river vessel, the »Viking Honir«. Built by the renowned Neptun Werft in Rostock, this state-of-the-art Longship is a testament to a decades-long partnership and a symbol of the rapid evolution of sustainable river tourism.

The delivery of the vessel marked the highlight of a simultaneous naming ceremony that spanned continents – from Basel and Rostock to Cairo and the Mekong. As the official 100th vessel in the fleet, the »Viking Honir« represents the pinnacle of the award-winning »Longship« design. Since the introduction of this series, Neptun Werft has delivered 67 of these specialized vessels to Viking, showcasing the extraordinary production capacity and engineering excellence of the German shipyard located on the Warnow river.

The vessel is engineered to navigate the heart of Europe, operating on the Rhine, Main, and Danube rivers. Her design is characterized by the patented offset corridor configuration and the iconic Aquavit Terrace, which offers passengers an indoor-outdoor viewing area unlike any other on the rivers. Beyond the aesthetics, the vessel features a sophisticated hybrid-electric propulsion system. Equipped with large battery packs and high-efficiency engines, the ship can optimize its power consumption, reducing both fuel usage and noise emissions – a crucial factor for modern cruising in sensitive urban and natural environments.

The realization of the »Viking Honir« is the result of a highly specialized production process that has made Neptun Werft a world leader in river cruise construction. Building such a vast number of identical yet complex vessels requires a masterclass in supply chain management and modular assembly. By utilizing standardized engine room modules – often prefabricated and tested before being integrated into the hull – the shipyard achieves a level of precision and reliability that is unmatched in

the industry. This »serial DNA« ensures that every Longship, including the centennial »Viking Honir«, meets the exact same high standards of safety and performance, while allowing for continuous incremental improvements in energy efficiency with each new delivery.

On board the »Viking Honir«, the focus remains on the »thinking person's cruise«, a philosophy that is reflected in every square meter of the interior. The 95 staterooms, including the expansive Explorer Suites, are designed with a minimalist Scandinavian aesthetic that emphasizes natural light and open spaces. To achieve this level of comfort while maintaining the ship's strict weight and draft requirements, Neptun Werft and Viking utilized advanced materials and space-saving innovations. From the heated bathroom floors to the specialized acoustic insulation that ensures a near-silent voyage, the ship is a sanctuary of calm. This dedication to the passenger experience, combined with the technical reliability of German shipbuilding, is what has allowed Viking to define the modern standard for luxury on the world's great rivers.

The milestone of the 100th ship is more than just a numerical achievement; it reflects the deep integration of German shipbuilding expertise into the global travel industry. The Neptun Werft's ability to deliver high-quality, standardized yet luxurious vessels in rapid succession has been the backbone of Viking's unprecedented growth. »The Viking Honir is a symbol of our shared commitment to excellence and innovation,« the shipyard stated during the handover. With 23 more river vessels already in the order book until 2028, the »Viking Honir« is not the end of a journey, but the beginning of a new chapter in emission-reduced, high-end river cruising »Made in Germany«. For the 190 passengers on board, the vessel offers a seamless blend of Scandinavian minimalism and cutting-edge technology. From the solar panels on the deck to the vibration-free electric drives, every detail is designed to discover Europe's cultural heritage. ■



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H. BARTHEL WERFT

Full electric power for Hamburg's waterways

The modernization of the »Flotte Hamburg« municipal fleet has reached another significant milestone. At the H. Barthel shipyard in Derben, the keel-laying ceremony for two identical, fully electric utility vessels marked a decisive step toward an emission-free maritime future for the Hanseatic City of Hamburg.

Commissioned in the summer of 2024 for the »Landesbetrieb Straßen, Brücken und Gewässer« (LSBG), these 16-m-long newbuilds are specifically designed for transport and inspection duties. Scheduled for delivery in late 2026, the vessels will operate on the Inner and Outer Alster lakes as well as throughout the Port of Hamburg. They are set to replace the veteran inspection craft »Fleetenkieker«, dating back to 1967, and the 2013-built launch »Alster«, which will be reassigned to Elbe river duties.

The design of these newbuilds had to overcome unique geographical constraints. To navigate the low bridge clearances and shallow water depths of the Alster network, the engineers integrated a hydraulic wheelhouse that can be lowered to a clearance height of just 2.35 m.

The vessels are powered by a twin 105 kW electric propulsion system. The onboard battery capacity is sized to allow for a full day of operation without the need for intermediate charging – a crucial factor for the efficiency of municipal service schedules.

By investing approximately 8 mio. € in these two vessels, the City of Hamburg is fulfilling its commitment to transition Alster

operations to zero-emission standards well ahead of the 2030 deadline. The quiet and emission-free operation will significantly reduce environmental impact, particularly in densely populated residential areas along the city's canals. These vessels serve as prime example of how German inland shipyards like Barthel are successfully implementing high-tech electrical integration for specialized municipal requirements. This pioneering project not only sets a benchmark for sustainable urban waterways but also demonstrates the scalability of battery-electric systems. ■



© Flotte Hamburg

The 16-m newbuilds feature a zero-emission propulsion system and a hydraulic retractable wheelhouse for low bridge clearances

LUX-WERFT

New EMS »Gmund« for Lake Tegern

Sustainable mobility is reaching the scenic waters of Lake Tegernsee. Bayerische Seenschifffahrt, the state-owned operator of Bavaria's major lakes, has commissioned the renowned Lux-Werft to build a new, fully electric passenger vessel. Named EMS »Gmund«, the 25-m-newbuild is scheduled to enter service in mid-2026, marking another milestone in the electrification of the Bavarian fleet.

The decision to opt for an all-electric propulsion system aligns with the regional strategy to transform Lake Tegernsee's shipping operations into a zero-emission service. The new EMS »Gmund« will replace its namesake predecessor, which has been a staple on the lake for decades. By integrating modern battery technology, the new vessel will not only eliminate carbon dioxide emissions but also significantly reduce noise pollution, enhancing the experience for tourists and local residents alike.

The contract was awarded to Lux-Werft due to their extensive expertise in complex electrical integration and high-end interior finishing. The shipyard, located in Mondorf on the Rhine, has already delivered several successful electric vessels to the operator, including the award-winning EMS »Berg« for Lake Starnberg. The new »Gmund« will feature state-of-the-art systems designed for a full day of operation without intermediate charging, ensuring maximum efficiency for the tight seasonal schedules. Measuring 25 m in length, the vessel is tailored to the specific geo-

graphical conditions of Lake Tegernsee. Beyond its eco-friendly propulsion, the EMS »Gmund« will offer a modern, barrier-free interior design, catering to the growing demand for sustainable and inclusive tourism. With this latest investment, Bavaria continues to set new standards for »Green Shipping« in the regional inland sector, proving that high-tech German engineering is the key to preserving sensitive natural environments. ■



© Bayerische Seen

Following the success of the EMS »Berg«, Lux-Werft is now implementing the next stage of electric mobility for the Bavarian fleet



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