

Contents

European corvette, on track to build first prototype. Decisive days also for Romania's corvettes	1
Swedish Navy tests Saab Enforcer III USV during exercises	2
NTSB investigation into fishing vessel fire highlights importance of personal locator beacons	3
EU ban on Russian fuel imports is seen as a boon for global tanker demand	4
Russian oil continues to flow into Europe as ships use ship-to-ship transfers off the Greek coast	4
Iran's Navy (IRGC) receives Shahid Soleimani missile catamaran ship	5
New chainPORT member Tanger Med welcomes partner ports	5

European corvette, on track to build first prototype. Decisive days also for Romania's corvettes



European Patrol Corvette (EPC), concept image. Photo: Fincantieri

The European Patrol Corvette (EPC) programme is slowly taking shape. The countries involved in the programme are waiting for new EU funding to develop the first prototype. The programme includes coordinating country Italy, France, Spain and Greece. The programme has already received initial funding from the European Defence Fund (EDF) worth

€60 million. The money was earmarked for the development of the ship.

The programme countries are waiting for \$200 million in funding to start building the first prototype.

According to Defense News, which quotes Andrea Quondamatteo, a representative of the Italian Naval Forces General Staff, funding for the programme will continue into 2023.

As a reminder, in January 2021 the European Defence Agency (EDA) Steering Board recently approved the launch of a cooperation project aimed at developing a European patrol corvette.

The project involves Italy, the coordinating country, France, Spain and Greece. The participating countries aim to produce the first corvette in 2026-2027.

The ship's main design features are: total displacement 3000-3500 tonnes; length 110 metres; draught 5.5 metres.

The French Naval Forces will buy 9 - 11 corvettes. The Italian Navy, for its part, plans to purchase eight ships to replace the "Cassiopea" and "Comandante" project ships which have been in service for 30 and 20 years respectively.



Decisive days for Romania's "Multipurpose Corvette" programme

Gowind 2500, photo source: Naval Group

Without going into details as dozens of pages have been written on the subject, the programme is stuck since 2019. Back then, the Naval Group and Constanta Shipyard joint venture won the tender for the construction of four Gowind 2500 corvettes, as well as the modernisation of the two frigates Regina Maria and Regele Ferdinand.

The contract has not been signed to date due to misunderstandings between the French side and Constanta Shipyard, a fact confirmed by MAPN and Paris.

After successive postponements throughout this year, Minister Vasile Dîncu has recently stated several times that following the request of the Association, MAPN has extended the deadline for signing the contract until September, so that the next few weeks will be decisive for a decision in the program that has stagnated since 2019.

Source: https://www.defenseromania.ro/corveta-europeana-in-linie-dreapta-pentru-construirea-primului-prototip-zile-decisive-si-pentru-crovetele-romaniei_618095.html

Swedish Navy tests Saab Enforcer III USV during exercises

Saab's test platform for developing autonomous Enforcer III functions, which has been converted from Combat Boat 90, has been tested in a joint trial by Saab and the Swedish Navy in the southern Baltic Sea. Unmanned technology is under rapid development, and future Swedish corvette divisions could consist of a combination of manned and unmanned platforms. The unmanned platform makes the manned platform more efficient and reduces risks to units and personnel. Saab Enforcer III contains techniques for improved navigation assistance and unmanned operation capabilities. It can be used for advanced reconnaissance. This is where you send the boat over long distances and provide useful information with radar and camera. For security reasons, there is a crew on board during tests, but the craft's operations are directed from the corvette HMS Nyköping. Targets discovered by Enforcer III are sent to Saab personnel on the corvette and then transferred to the ship.

"We used Enforcer III tactical for advanced reconnaissance. Then we're able to be more withdrawn and be quieter. That makes my ship much more difficult for the enemy to locate." Viktor Tornerhjelm, commander of HMS Nyköping.

"A risk assessment is done every time you send a boat out and today we always have people on board. But we see that it is now possible to send unmanned craft in higher risk scenarios. The Swedish Navy is looking at how autonomous platforms can fit in with their existing operations and that's where we are stepping in to create the technology and the possibilities. We look forward to receiving feedback from the exercise." Jens-Olof Lindh, project manager at Saab.

Source: <https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2022/09/swedish-navy-tests-saab-enforcer-iii-usv-during-exercise/>

NTSB investigation into fishing vessel fire highlights importance of personal locator beacons

The U.S. National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) released its report this week into its investigation of the November 10, 2021 fire aboard the fishing vessel Blue Dragon. No injuries or fatalities were reported in connection with the fire, but the incident resulted in more than \$500,000 in damage to the vessel. The Blue Dragon was deployed in the North Pacific Ocean conducting longline fishing operations when the vessel caught fire. The six crew members and one National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) observer tried unsuccessfully to fight the fire and were forced to abandon ship to be rescued by a Good Samaritan vessel. The Blue Dragon was subsequently towed to San Pedro, California. Blue Dragon departed Honolulu, Hawaii, to fish for swordfish and tuna on October 25, 2021. Weeks later, on November 9, the NMFS observer discovered a fire in the wheelhouse below the console as the crew was preparing to retrieve fishing gear. As the crew attempted to fight the fire, the NMFS observer and a deckhand on board retrieved the 10-person life raft and the vessel's EPIRB from above the wheelhouse. The NMFS observer used his satellite emergency notification device (SEND) to send an SOS along with a text that read "fire." He also manually activated the vessel's EPIRB and personal locator beacon. The NTSB concluded that the actions of the observer and deckhand contributed to the crew's survival by recovering the EPIRB and life raft before they caught fire. The observer's activation of the vessel's EPIRB and use of his NMFS-issued emergency communications equipment also contributed to the timely rescue of the crew because the equipment was transmitting the crew's location. The NTSB determined that the probable cause of the fire aboard the Blue Dragon stemmed from an unknown source, likely electrical in nature, that ignited the wooden console in the wheelhouse. Substantial use of combustible materials in the woodwork, fittings and furnishings in the wheelhouse and accommodation spaces contributed to the extent of the fire damage. The NTSB previously issued a safety advisory to the U.S. Coast Guard to require the use of personal locator beacons to increase the chances of survival after the sinking of the cargo ship El Faro in 2015, with the loss of all 33 crew members. The NTSB reiterated the recommendation after the fishing vessel Scandies Rose sank off Sutwik Island, Alaska, in 2019. Two of the vessel's crew were rescued; the other five crew members were never found. The NTSB concluded that personal locator beacons would aid search and rescue operations by providing continuously updated and accurate coordinates of the crew members' locations. The recommendation remains open. Improving fishing vessel safety remains a priority for the NTSB and is an issue on the NTSB's 2021-2022 Most Wanted Transportation Safety Improvements List. The NTSB advocates for new standards that address and periodically reassess intact stability, subdivision, and watertight integrity on commercial fishing vessels up to 79 feet in length, as well as personal locator beacons for crew. The NTSB identified two lessons learned from this investigation: substandard electrical installation and equipment - including bare wires, unsecured wire nuts, overloaded circuits, loose wiring, and household wiring not designed for marine use - is a common cause of electrical fires aboard ship/vessels. In addition, batteries have been identified as sources of fire ignition in several modes of transport.

Vessel operators must ensure that electrical systems are properly designed, installed and maintained in accordance with established marine standards to prevent fires. Personal locator beacons helped validate the position of the vessel's emergency position indicating the radio beacon, and a SEND helped responders identify the nature of the emergency. Vessel

owners and operators can enhance the safety of their crews by equipping vessels and crews with these additional satellite technologies to supplement the EPIRB.

Source: <https://gcaptain.com/ntsb-investigation-into-fishing-vessel-fire-highlights-the-importance-of-personal-locator-beacons/>

EU ban on Russian fuel imports is seen as a boon for global tanker demand

The European Union's ban on Russian fuel imports is likely to increase the global need for tankers, according to the owner of the Torm A/S. Seaborne arrivals of crude oil from Russia into the EU will be banned from early December, and imports of diesel, jet fuel and other petroleum products will be banned several months after that. This means the region will have to bring in replacement supplies from further afield, while Russian barrels will also have to find new homes. "The EU ban on Russian oil products in February 2023 will trigger a recalibration of the oil trade ecosystem," Torm said in a statement. "Part of this trade recalibration has already begun." The company estimates that the oil products trade realignment will drive a 7% increase in ton-miles, the key measure of demand in the shipping industry, as it captures the two things that occupy ships - the amount of cargo and how far it is carried. Freight rates for refined fuels have already risen since the start of the year, Baltic Exchange data shows. Europe will have to import petroleum products, mainly diesel, from regions such as the US, the Middle East, India and other Asian countries. Russian diesel exports will also have to find new customers, probably in places like Latin America, Africa and Turkey, while some could also go to Asia, Torm said. "We expect further support for the tanker trade from the need to replenish both commercial and strategic oil stocks in many countries," the statement said. Tanker demand is also being supported by refinery closures in importing regions - partly due to the transition to green energy and the Covid pandemic hit - and new capacity being built in exporters. Torm said it has seen a significant increase in imports from Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, where refineries have closed recently, and expects the general trend to continue. Torm says it has a wholly owned fleet of more than 80 vessels to transport energy and clean petroleum products. The company said earlier this year that it would not enter into any new deals involving calls at Russian ports for the time being.

Source: <https://gcaptain.com/eu-ban-on-russian-fuel-imports-seen-as-boon-for-global-tanker-demand/>

Russian oil continues to flow into Europe as ships use ship-to-ship transfers off the Greek coast

Despite several sanctions from the West, Russia's oil continues to funnel via ship-to-ship transfers to Europe off Greece's Mediterranean coast, according to a Nikkei Asia report. The analysis found that since Russia launched an invasion of Ukraine, the Greek coast has been the location for 41 ships carrying out ship-to-ship transfers of oil that have come from Russia and subsequently arrived in Europe. In the previous year, there was only one such ship. In the six months to 22 August, Nikkei reporting confirmed that 175 transfers off the Greek coast involved Russian tankers. The figure compares with nine transfers seen at the same time in 2021. Nearly 89 tanks in the batch arrived in ports, with 41 landing in ports in Greece, Belgium and other European ports. This is an increase from one tanker observed a year earlier. The survey also highlighted the vital role of the waters near Greece as a key hub for oil shipments between Russia and Europe, according to Nikkei Asia. Russia exported about 23.86 million barrels of oil offshore Greece for ship-to-ship transfers, according to data from Refinitiv, up from 4.34 million barrels delivered simultaneously in 2021.

Ship-to-ship transfers have emerged as a way for sellers and buyers of Russian oil to cover up the origin of supplies in recent months allowing sanctioned items to continue to exchange hands. Come 2023; the EU is set to introduce a new set of sanctions banning oil imports by sea from Russia. The US is also leading a Group of Seven initiative to cap Russia's oil prices to tighten Moscow's finances. However, Nikolai Shulginov, Russia's energy minister, reportedly warned on Tuesday that the country would respond to the price cap; however, sending more crude to Asia and efforts to cap rates will end up roiling energy markets. He specifically noted at the Eastern Economic Forum, according to Reuters, that actions to impose a price cap will lead to a shortfall in countries' market initiation and increase price volatility.

Source: <https://www.marineinsight.com/shipping-news/russian-oil-continues-to-flow-to-europe-as-vessels-use-ship-to-ship-transfers-off-the-greek-coast-since-the-war-in-ukraine/>

Iran's Navy (IRGC) receives Shahid Soleimani missile catamaran ship



A solemn commissioning ceremony of a new ship was held on 5 September in the port of the Iranian city of Bandar Abbas. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps took delivery of a missile catamaran, the Shahid Soleimani. In the near future, this flagship will begin service, and then more ships of the same type will join it as it goes through various stages of construction. For a new project

In May 2020, the IRGC Command announced its intention to build a series of small missile ships/missile boats of a new type. They will reportedly receive missile systems to hit distant targets. It also plans to install modern air defence and artillery systems. The project was named "Shahid Soleimani" - in honour of General Qassem Soleimani, who was killed a few months earlier.

Apparently, development of the project was completed no later than 2020, and construction of the first ships began at the same time. By the spring of 2021, significant progress had been made on the matter, and foreign intelligence agencies were aware of it. So in February last year, foreign satellites revealed the construction of three ships simultaneously at different yards. The first catamaran was located in the Bushehr area, the second was spotted at one of the shipyards in the city of Bandar Abbas, and the third was built near Kushm. Satellite images showed hulls formed with superstructures. Presumably, by then, the ships under construction had managed to receive some of the internal units and systems, and installation work had continued. Completion of construction apparently took at least a few months.

Source: <https://topwar.ru/201497-vms-ksir-poluchili-raketnyj-korabl-katamaran-shahid-sulejmani.html>

New chainPORT member Tanger Med welcomes partner ports

The ports of Singapore, Hamburg, Rotterdam, Antwerp, Barcelona, Gothenburg and Montreal met at Tanger Med with the aim of intensifying close collaboration and discussing joint projects on topics and innovations in port operations. The meeting succeeded in taking the ongoing and fruitful dialogue to the next level. Participants focused on a number of common port issues, such as new technologies and innovations driving day-to-day port

operations. These included digitisation processes shaping the digital culture of ports, corporate social responsibility and renewable energy and sustainability projects. The meeting also looked at a number of initiatives aimed at promoting the development of the maritime sector. Designed to simultaneously combine both meeting sessions and site visits, the two-day programme included tours of the Tanger Med port, the Free Logistics Zone and the industrial platform supported by the port. Participants visited facilities such as Renault Tanger Med, Africa's largest car factory. The tour concluded with a visit to the Tanger Med innovation cluster, including the third campus of the 1337 MED coding school, part of the global IT 42 education network. Mr Mehdi Tazi Riffi, CEO of Tanger Med, said, "Tanger Med is delighted to host its partner chainPORT ports to collectively address the common challenges ahead and to reaffirm the vital and growing role ports play in improving the efficiency of global supply chains. The meeting was an excellent starting point to design joint projects in the areas of digitisation and decarbonisation. "We are very pleased that Tanger Med opened its doors to chainPORT members, providing such a comprehensive overview of its operational, strategic and social projects. This is a sign that smart ports are willing to transparently drive supply chain optimisation to achieve greater security, connectivity and efficiency. The case study trip is a new gathering that complements the intense debates that take place at Annual General Meetings, Academy programmes and regular working group meetings." said Mr Jens Meier, CEO of the Hamburg Port Authority. At the end of the meeting, chainPORT member ports showed their willingness to continue this global maritime dialogue and to base the discussions on concrete collaborative projects.

Source: <https://en.portnews.ru/news/335337/>