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Container lines avoiding Suez turn to long route to Asia for backhaul

THERE IS EVIDENCE that container lines are starting to take the long route around southern Africa on the backhaul to Asia, rather than wait for the Suez Canal to reopen.

Vessel-tracking data from Lloyd's List Intelligence shows that the 23,820 teu *HMM Rotterdam* (IMO: 9868338), which was previously destined for Port Said, performed a U-turn just before entering the Strait of Gibraltar and is now off Casablanca, heading south.

The vessel, which had last called at DP World's London Gateway terminal, was en route back to Asia when it changed course overnight.

Automatic Identification System tracking showed it heading east at 0259 hrs GMT, but by 0302 hrs it had begun to alter its course to turn back on its track and head south.

A second HMM ultra-large containership, the 23,964 teu *HMM Dublin* (IMO: 9863314), will have to make a similar decision shortly. It is heading south off Lisbon, destined for Suez, but could continue south rather than take the turn into the Mediterranean.

In the past few hours, its heading has changed westward from 170° to 185°, indicating it will avoid Suez.

The decision follows moves by at least one container line to reroute around the Cape of Good Hope on the headhaul.

As Lloyd's List reported, Evergreen's the 20,000 *Ever Greet* (IMO: 9832729), a sister ship to *Ever Given* (IMO: 9811000), which caused the canal blockage, altered course to avoid the congestion building up outside the canal and instead turned south to take the long route to northern Europe.

Data from Lloyd's List Intelligence indicates it is so far the only vessel to have decided to take the southern route to avoid Suez, but others are expected to join it if the canal remains closed for much longer.

Evergreen will make the decision on whether to reroute ships via the Cape of Good Hope on a ship-by-ship basis, according to Evergreen Marine (UK) honorary chairman Maurice Storey.

The Taiwanese line has already diverted the Europe-bound *Ever Greet*, but whether others will follow depends on what happens on Sunday and Monday when another attempt will be made to refloat *Ever Given* during a higher-than-normal tide, Mr Storey told Lloyd's List.

Lloyd's List Intelligence data collated on Friday shows that the number of ships awaiting a canal transit is 248, compared with 213 yesterday.

The majority of those ships are the 75 bulk carriers comprising 5.1m dwt, including 10 capes and 39 panamax and supramaxes. But there are also 55 containerships, including 10 ultra-large containerships.

The remainder are made up of crude and product tankers and 15 vehicle carriers.

Even if *Ever Given* is cleared from the canal, the build-up of ships waiting for transit could take time to clear. On average, there are only 50 transits a day, and the canal's one-way convoy system means it is difficult to increase the capacity of the canal.

For shipping companies, this now means making the decision to route around Africa, thereby adding another week to the passage time, or waiting off the canal in the hope that it will reopen.

But salvors have warned it could be several weeks before the waterway is cleared, particularly if it is necessary to lighter containers off *Ever Given* in situ.

Concerns are now mounting about what this will mean for the already fractured containerised supply chain.

Shippers have been frustrated by long delays in cargo arrivals caused largely by a shortage of available equipment and congested ports.

While the postponement of ship calls may superficially appear beneficial in terms of the congestion problem, it will also lead to a bottleneck of exports from European ports and a further shortage of containers.

Slower backhaul journeys will have a similar impact in Asia's export hubs as the return of empties is delayed.

But uncorking the canal will also lead to a sudden flood of inbound containers to European destination ports that will further increase delays and congestion.

Shipping is tough enough to endure the Suez closure

THE Suez Canal has been closed before, sometimes for extended periods.

No ships traversed the key international waterway between October 1956 and March 1957, thanks to a spectacularly ham-fisted intervention against Egypt's president Gamal Abdel Nasser, which historians now regard as the moment that marked the end of Great Britain's pretensions to superpower status.

Worse was to come in the aftermath of the Six-Day War between Israel and its Arab neighbours in 1967, with the canal blockaded with mines and scuttled ships and not reopened for eight years until 1975.

Less spectacularly, there have been not particularly infrequent closures of hours or several days' duration, thanks to routine shipping casualties.

This was particularly the case prior to the expansion of six years ago, often occasioned by the fact that Egypt's dredging efforts left much to be desired.

Traffic is once again at a halt, this time due to the grounding of one of the world's largest containerships.

It could have opened again by the time most people read this; on the other hand, salvors Smit have suggested the necessary work could take weeks.

But even if that worst-case scenario pans out, we have been in similar dire straits — if that's not the wrong expression for a canal closure — before.

Shipping, being perhaps the hardiest of the world's major industries, has always coped in the past, and will cope again.

The converse of the statistic that 12% of world trade passes through the Suez Canal is that 88% doesn't.

That figure alone suffices to slay the most doom-laden prognoses. No, world trade has not been brought to a standstill by a single ship, whatever the more excitable commentators in the general media would have you believe. The overwhelming majority of it will not even be touched by this.

For those who were until now planning an impending Suez transit in the short term, the obvious workaround is a detour round the Cape of Good Hope, which adds nearly 5,600 miles (9,000 km) and 10 days' transit time to an Asia-Europe trip.

That's bad news, but not as bad as may appear at first sight. Many freely adopt this expedient voluntarily when times are commercially tough and slow steaming makes the maths stack up.

What is more, the move will be compensated by higher rates that are already starting to percolate through from the broking shops.

There will be savings, too, in not having to pay canal dues, which are individually negotiable but frequently run to six figures in US dollars.

That leaves the 300 or so vessels caught up in the tailback. Most of them, as we have reported, have no delay cover, and will find themselves out of pocket.

But 300 is less than half of one percent of the 60,000-plus ships that make up the world trading fleet, and even here, there are factors that will ameliorate the pain.

Crucially, time-chartered vessels remain on-hire, as the delays are extraneous to the ships.

Tough on the charterers still paying out on tankers and bulkers that are literally going nowhere. But at a shrewd guess, the owners still getting paid can live with that.

Those on voyage charter and those repositioning are losing commercial opportunities.

But spot market vessels are not unaccustomed to sitting idle when markets so dictate, and in the round, the damage will for many be offset by the rate uplift enjoyed by other vessels in the fleet.

Once the backlog is cleared, there will no doubt be knock-on effects at ports worldwide, adding to the impact of the pandemic has already imposed. This, too, will be a burden, but it should not be an unsurmountable one.

Meanwhile, if there is a welcome aspect to what has happened, it is the spotlight it throws on our role in keeping 7.7bn people fed and clothed.

Watching a giant boxship straddle the Suez Canal has captured the public's imagination, in way that casualties that happen away from the cameras don't.

Hopefully, some of them will even spare a thought for seafarers caught in the crew change crisis.

But for us, the *Ever Given* grounding certainly has highlighted not shipping's fragility so much as its resilience, and with it the resilience of the supply chain as a whole.

Asia-US East Coast rates ramp up amid Suez blockage

SPOT container shipping rates have started to surge on Asia-US east coast trade through the Panama Canal, an alternative channel to the blocked Suez Canal between the two markets.

The situation has put shippers in a dilemma: whether they should wait and bet on a quick relief of *Ever Given* (IMO: 9811000) operated by Evergreen Line, or swallow the current price spike to avert risks of a prolonged logjam that could lead to further mark-ups or even a lack of available slots.

Rates on the Taiwanese carrier's online booking platform on Friday soared to more than $13,000 and $16,000 teu per 20 ft and 40 ft box, respectively, for space on *Ever Lyric* (IMO: 9629108).

The 8,508 teu vessel will depart from China's port of Yantian on April 21, destined for New York via the Panama Canal.

By comparison, the rates for Evergreen's *Ever Fair* (IMO: 9850886) leaving on April 7 on the same route stand at $5,200 and $6,500.

The early April rates reflect the current price level considering a lead time of 10-14 days required for the booking, according to a Shenzhen-based freight forwarder.

"The price movement indicates a carrier's expectation on the demand-and-supply picture for that time period. Of course, now the impact of the Suez Canal must also have been factored in."

About 60% of the boxships serving the South China-US east coast trade travel through the Suez Canal, with the rest going via the Panama Canal, which accommodates smaller vessels, he said. The blockage of one passage will naturally increase the traffic of the other.

Shippers in spot markets who prefer to take a wait-and-see attitude will have until around April 12 to make final call about whether they should embark on that April 21 vessel.

"If *Ever Given* can be freed over the weekend, the price may drop back to $$7,000. If it drags on, the price could breach $20,000 or even reach $30,000 later," the forwarder said.

"The worst case for some shippers would be no slot being left by then and they will be forced to pay for even more expensive air freights."

Several attempts over the past three days to refloat *Ever Given* have failed, with salvage experts now expecting the work could take several more days or even weeks.

The setback comes as over 200 vessels have now joined the queues at either end of the canal awaiting transit and shipping lines start to weigh up options of costly rerouting.

Data from Lloyd's List Intelligence AIS tracking indicates that the first containership to do this is 20,000 Evergreen's *Ever Greet* (IMO9832729), which appears to be diverting around the Cape of Good Hope.

Bigger ships create bigger problems

THE blocking of the Suez Canal should be a wake-up call to an industry that has failed to account for the accumulating risks associated with larger ship sizes, according to Capt Rahul Khanna, the global head of marine risk consulting at Allianz Global Corporate & Specialty.

The grounded 20,000 teu *Ever Given* has to date thwarted the small flotilla of tugs and dredgers sent into free the giant containership from the banks of the Suez Canal, highlighting a growing problem in dealing with ultra-large vessel casualties.

The rapid ballooning of vessel sizes has not been matched by industry infrastructure available to deal with these floating giants when things go wrong.

The issue has been raised repeatedly by insurance experts over the years who have argued that bigger ships and the resultant concentration of cargo risks is creating the potential for ever-larger losses for marine insurers and dealing with incidents involving large ships, such as fires, groundings and collisions, are also becoming more complex and expensive.

"We have to ask ourselves, have we gone past a point where we are losing control of the risks that these ever larger vessels bring along, whether it's fire, whether it's losing containers overboard, or causing a grounding in an incident like this which is now affecting world trade?" said Capt Khanna, speaking on the Lloyd's List Podcast.

According to Capt Khanna the shipping sector remains largely reactive to incidents and has failed to tackle known safety issues in a sufficiently proactive manner. The closure of a world economic chokepoint has for a long time been one of the disaster scenarios calculated by insurers and Capt Khanna argues that the *Ever Given* grounding is an inevitable warning sign that the industry needs to pay attention to.

"We can see the evidence is already there when it comes to these big ships — the costs are astronomical and they're only going to go up," said Capt Khanna.

While the number of total losses have reduced over the past decade, some of the benefits are being largely offset by the increased cost of losses for large vessels.

The cost of incidents is rising, with an increase in severity and this is down, in part, to the increasing size of vessels. Such ships generate economies of scale for shipowners but also increased risk and a disproportionately greater cost when things go wrong.

Fires on board large container vessels are now a regular occurrence — logistics insurer TT Club says there is a fire on average every 60 days — but ULCS pose a pose a complex series of salvage challenges, exacerbated by the fact that firefighting capabilities have not kept up with the upsizing of container vessels.

The size of a vessel can significantly increase general average costs, as well as salvage costs. ULCS require specialist tugs and finding a port of refuge with capacity to handle such a large ship can be difficult, which increases the salvage operation costs.

For example, in the case of the containership *Maersk Honam*, which caught fire at sea in March 2018, salvage and general average costs represented close to 60% of the cargo value. A high contribution was also requested for the boxship *Yantian Express*, which suffered a fire on board in January 2019.

"There is absolutely an issue in the industry of not accepting that we have a serious issue. And it needs to be dealt with a little more urgent action than we are doing," said Capt Khanna.

OPINION:

Wilhelmsen eyes hydrogen and offshore wind in renewables push

WILHELMSEN, the Norwegian maritime company, will focus on offshore wind and hydrogen as part of a new strategy to focus on renewables and shift away from servicing the oils and gas industry.

The company that already has significant holdings in offshore wind companies unveiled earlier this week a new segment called New Energy that will oversee the Wilhelmsen group's renewable energy push.

The new segment will be backed by up to $500m investments over the next five years.

Chief executive Thomas Wilhelmsen said that the new segment represents a desire to have both a more concentrated direction towards renewables and more recognition for its existing business.

Offshore wind and hydrogen will be the focus of the new segment, given the company's competence in these areas, their relevance to the maritime sector and Norway's aggressive energy transition push.

"Norway needs to transition away from oil gas to renewables and offshore wind for us is a slam dunk, when you think about the actor picture both from an energy perspective and from an employment-in-Norway point of view," he said in an interview.

Wilhelmsen already owns a majority stake in offshore support provider NorSea Group and a 50% in offshore wind support vessel operator Edda Wind, and is seeking an initial public offering for the firm on the Oslo market.

With other maritime companies such as Scorpio and Awilco recently setting up offshore wind businesses, Mr Wilhelmsen anticipates other players from the shipping industry to turn to that sector.

"I think there will be a huge competition push within these fields because the perceived growth is so significant," he said.

Similarly, he expects that hydrogen will play a key role in shipping's decarbonisation.

"We believe that, as in many things in the marine industry, you start local then you go regional and then you go global."

Wilhelmsen is already leading a project to develop two hydrogen-powered short sea ro-ro vessels.

Wilhelmsen will look to new acquisitions, investments as well as debt and equity markets to help it finance the new unit.

Group senior vice president for strategic investments Jan Eyvin Wang will lead the New Energy segment.

ANALYSIS:

Asia is becoming key LNG battleground

IF the tone of a webinar organised by the International Gas Union is anything to go by, Asia is not backing away from using liquefied natural gas, even though powerful lobbying voices arguing against the seaborne commodity have gained traction in the west.

This month, the World Bank's European representatives penned a petition calling for investments in gas-fired power generation to be gradually phased out.

This did not seem to hold back Asia from expanding its LNG import capacity, particularly in floating regasification projects.

The Association of Southeast Asia Nations, which is the second-largest economic bloc after the European Union, remains on track to add another 12 tonnes per annum of regasification capacity over the next three years, according to Hazli Kassim, the International Gas Union's representative for South and Southeast Asia.

Floating regasification units make up the bulk of these projects for a simple reason.

The Philippines, for one, is racing against the clock to fill a shortfall in domestic gas supply that will emerge when resources at the country's sole producing field become fully depleted in the middle of the decade.

Fast-growing economies in Asia cannot afford to turn away completely from LNG, which is still the most feasible energy source at least through this decade.

PipeChina deputy general manager Tang Shanhua said that gas consumption is projected to peak in China only from 2030 and beyond.

The world's largest economy answered for more than one third — or 53.6m tonnes — of total regasification capacity being developed globally, according to a recent estimate from energy and commodity agency Wood Mackenzie.

Even in Japan, arguably Asia's most developed economy, LNG stands to stay relevant among the primary energy sources for at least another decade.

Japan has already lined up large-scale demonstration projects to introduce ammonia into large-scale combined combustion power plants that also run on coal or natural gas.

Tokyo Gas executive adviser Shigera Muraki pointed out, however, that blue ammonia, which is derived from fossil fuel sources including natural gas, is not expected to command a significant share in Japan's power sector until the 2030s.

Mr Muraki also flagged the higher cost of ammonia use as a major hurdle.

Blue ammonia costs $14 to $15 per million British thermal units, more expensive than LNG.

He added that projects running on green ammonia derived from renewable sources would only come into operation in the next decade.

Japan is now the world's number one LNG importing country. It will still bank on natural gas as a key energy source in the near future.

But there is no denying the country, as well as the rest of Asia, eventually needs to find greener substitutes for fossil-based fuels.

This only goes to support the push for infrastructure with the least possible environmental footprint that can fast-track LNG imports.

It is little wonder investments in regasification capacity are still rising significantly across the globe, despite the vilification of LNG by the green lobby.

Brazil congestion sparks lift in dry bulk freight rates

CONGESTION at major Brazilian ports is fuelling strength in the dry bulk market, with more than 100 bulkers waiting to load either iron ore or grains.

There are about 56 mainly ore carriers at or near Ponta da Madeira, while 54 bulkers, mostly panamaxes, are waiting to load soyabeans and grains at Santos port, the country's largest, according to Lloyd's List Intelligence data.

Several vessels have been waiting for more than a month.

The vessel *Tong Ying* (IMO: 9717163) has been in Santos anchorage since February 22, while *Christina B.* (IMO: 9304162) arrived on February 25, Lloyd's List Intelligence data shows.

Xin Feng (IMO: 9537628) has been waiting since February 27, while *SSI Excellent* (IMO: 9693757) has been in the queue since March 1.

Mynika (IMO: 9525613) arrived in Ponta da Madeira's inner anchorage on February 25, while *Cape Race* (IMO: 9601728) entered the area on March 1, the data shows.

While some vessels wait in a queue, others have reached port and are loading.

The 76,155 dwt *SITC Huangshan* (IMO: 9642497), which arrived in Santos anchorage on February 27, called at the port on March 25 to pick up its cargo of linseed and grains.

Likewise, the 80,650 dwt *Aeolian Heritage* (IMO: 9483542) berthed this week for its soyabean and grains cargo, according to the Santos Port Authority.

Meanwhile, *Zheng Run* (IMO: 9593816) arrived at Santos on March 26 after reaching anchorage on February 24.

The delays in loading have added to the bullish sentiment in the dry bulk market.

According to Maritime Strategies International, an uptick in congestion "can quickly absorb tonnage and remains a major underlying reason behind rapid earnings growth this year".

The London-based consultancy said that congestion in Brazil was currently at "very high levels" with waiting times averaging 25 days at some of the worst-affected ports.

A delayed soyabean crop was overlapping with a rise in sugar exports, it said, adding that it expects the congestion would likely remain elevated in the coming weeks.

Brokerage Braemar ACM echoed the notion that Brazil currently had some of the most congested anchorages.

"With grains volumes starting to ramp up, we have seen a surge in vessel arrivals to meet this supply," it said in a note.

So far this month, about 10.3m tonnes have been loaded, the highest volume in the last four months.

Arrow research saw congestion reaching the highest level in 10 months, with the surge most notable this year, as a slowdown in iron ore exports had caused the vessel build-up around Ponta da Madeira.

"A flood of vessels arrived at Brazil a bit early, but now congestion is likely around a peak as the fast export pace clears though the line-up," it said.

Indeed, a number of vessels were at Ponta da Madeira port, while several more were due at Itaqui port in the coming fortnight, Lloyd's List Intelligence data showed.

MARKETS:

Panamax and supramax freight rates may enjoy Suez boost

THE fall-out from the closure of the Suez Canal has been gradually spreading into the dry bulk market, potentially boosting panamax and supramax freight rates amid tightening vessel availability.

A rerouting around the Cape of Good Hope will add 10 to 15 days to a voyage and generate additional fuel costs, although saving on the considerable canal fees. As the tonnage supply has already been tightening any incremental inefficiency is likely helpful for the segments.

Total congestion outside both canal entrances has soared, with Lloyd's List Intelligence showing around 46 bulk carriers awaiting transit through the busy waterway in the wake of the *Ever Given* grounding.

Of the bulkers stuck in the queue to transit through the canal, four are capesizes, five are panamaxes, 20 are supramaxes and 17 handysizes, according to Lloyd's List Intelligence vessel-tracking data.

Braemar ACM pointed out in its latest report that there are at least four vessels turning around and heading back into the Indian Ocean to avoid the congestion.

Although the dry bulk market is not heavily reliant on the Suez Canal, there are certain trades that utilise it.

For the capesizes, the disruptions will be relatively limited, according to Braemar ACM dry bulk analyst Nick Ristic. But he sees a more significant impact on the cards for the panamaxes and supramaxes, with these markets already tight.

The canal is usually critical for Canadian and Black Sea iron ore shippers, which primarily employ capesizes. Backhaul shipments, such as coal volumes from Australia to Turkey, use this route heavily too. It provides a significant saving in sailing duration.

As the North Atlantic accounts for small cargo volumes compared with Brazil and Australia, and the Tubarao to Rotterdam market is currently tight, he believes any disruption to the trade would be minimal.

However, there could be more meaningful deviations on the Black Sea–Far East and backhaul routes, he added.

"If capes are employed on the Ukraine–China trip via the Cape of Good Hope, and assuming normal export volumes remain unchanged, it could have the effect of tying up approximately 2m dwt of capesize capacity per month, given the doubling in sailing duration."

Similarly, backhaul coal trips from eastern Australia can also lengthen if they divert towards the Cape of Good Hope, said Mr Nistic.

Within the panamax segment, Black Sea grain cargoes grain and coal and grains from the US' eastern coasts are frequent users of the canal.

Here too, the canal is a key source of ballasters and has facilitated about 4.7% of the entire panamax trade so far this year, Braemar estimates

For the geared ships meanwhile, Suez transits have accounted for 3.9% of this sector's total dry bulk trade so far in 2021.

In these markets, the canal is a linchpin for fertiliser trades, which run both east to west and west to east, due to the wide range of goods that make up this cargo group.

"With Chinese demand for grains still extremely high, prolonged Suez closures could translate to more of these ships taking the long route to the Far East, providing a boost to employment at a time of scarce vessel supply," he said.

Likewise, steel exports this quarter are on track to reach their highest level in five years. Import demand for these products in some regions is extremely high due to the mismatch between rapidly recovering steel demand and lagging production capacity.

Countries such as China and South Korea, which did not see heavy capacity closures during the pandemic, have capitalised on this and have enjoyed a surge in steel sales over the past few months.

"A combination of these bumper trade flows and increased diversions due to prolonged Suez Canal issues could also lengthen voyages and tighten the market for geared ships further."

Navios chief Frangou keeps her faith in steel

NAVIOS Maritime Partners has unveiled the acquisition of six new dry bulk carriers as it moves to close its merger with a subsidiary.

The all-share merger with Navios Containers creates an 85-ship fleet that will make it one of the 10 largest dry cargo shipping companies publicly listed in the US.

While the dry bulk deals took second or even third billing behind shareholders' ratification of the merger and the company's financial results, they amounted to $225m worth of commitment to the sector and underscored an enduring priority for chief executive Angeliki Frangou.

When Ms Frangou first emerged in the international spotlight with her 2005 acquisition of Navios Corp, a priority was to build the company up as a shipowner.

Back in its days as a subsidiary of United States Steel, the company's emphasis had been on operating and logistics as much as having its own steel in the water.

Ms Frangou, whose background is from the shipowning island of Chios, has expanded the Navios franchise's involvement with logistics in South America as well as continued its chartering tradition.

But ships have been an item of faith and she has also been resolute in expanding and renewing the Navios fleet as opportunities have arisen.

This was again evident on Wednesday when she was asked about the outlook for Navios Partners to increase its distribution to unitholders as well as potential unit buybacks, in light of the recent strength of both the dry bulk and container sectors.

The answer suggested that steel and debt are at least equal priorities to returning capital through dividends and share repurchases.

"Shipping is always very, very profitable," said Ms Frangou. "It is a matter of leverage."

Navios Partners could be expected to continue investing in the fleet and also use excess cashflow for deleveraging, she said.

Most eye-catching of the new moves to strengthen the dry bulk side of the business is a deal to bareboat charter-in three Japanese capesize newbuildings for delivery in the second half of this year.

The 15-year charters, with purchase options from the fourth year, imply a $51.5m purchase price for each vessel and 4.4% fixed interest over the full duration of the charters.

The partnership has also agreed to acquire a new Japanese kamsarmax for delivery in the second half of 2022 for $31.6m and is spending $39.3m on two nine year-old kamsarmax drop-downs from Navios Maritime Holdings.

At the same time, since January the partnership has sold three containerships and one ultra-handymax bulker for $32.8m.

While the average age of the additions is two years while the outgoing tonnage averages 13 years, the partnership was not only renewing its fleet but "repositioning" the fleet with younger, larger and "more commercially attractive" vessels, Ms Frangou said.

There may be "more opportunities" for attractive deals to acquire bulkers, relative to containerships, because the pick –up in the dry bulk market had been more recent and there was more remaining scope for the market to recover.

"We see a lot of value on both segments," Ms Frangou said.

Following the merger, the Navios Partners fleet is expected to comprise 49 bulkers of 5.6m dwt and 36 containerships of 182,386 teu.

IN OTHER NEWS:

Evergreen signs 20-ship order with Samsung Heavy

EVERGREEN, the Taiwanese carrier, has confirmed a newbuilding project for 20 15,000 teu boxships, with Samsung Heavy Industries as the builder.

The South Korean builder won out over four other competitors — China's Hudong Zhonghua Shipbuilding and Jiangnan Shipyard, South Korea's Hyundai Heavy Industries and Japan's Imabari Shipbuilding — which were also shortlisted in the tender.

In a stock filing, the Seoul-listed company said the shipbuilding contract was worth Won2.8trn ($2.5bn) in total, with delivery scheduled by June 2025.

Sanguinetti stepping down at UK Chamber of Shipping

UK Chamber of Shipping chief executive Bob Sanguinetti is stepping down to take up a role in Scotland.

Mr Sanguinetti, who joined the UK Chamber in July 2018, has been named the new chief executive of the Aberdeen Harbour Board. He will remain in his UK Chamber role for six months during the process to find a replacement.

"During my time with the UK Chamber of Shipping, I have enjoyed working with the best people across our great industry and it has been a huge honour leading such a terrific organisation," he said in a statement.

Yemen's partial reopening of key port praised by US

THE US government has said Yemen's decision to partially lift an oil embargo on its key port of Hudaydah would "help to mitigate the fuel shortage" facing the country.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken praised Yemeni Prime Minister

Maeen Abdulmalek Saeed for his government's decision "to ease the suffering of Yemenis, including authorising the arrival of four fuel ships at Hudaydah port," said State Department spokesman Ned Price.

Mark Lowcock, UN Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Co-ordinator, had warned the UN Security Council of the dire situation in Yemen, especially concerning the lack of fuel.

Bulker sales heading for record year

SALES of secondhand bulkers are set for a record year, according to shipping association BIMCO.

So far this year, 279 bulkers have changed hands in what has been seen as "blistering speed," chief shipping analyst Peter Sand said. That compares with a total of 794 bulk carrier transactions in the past year, comprising mostly handysizes and supramaxes.

Panamaxes were the most popular single ship size since the start of 2021, accounting for 82 of the sales. Since January, asset values for this bulker category have risen 47% for a 15-year-old vessel. That translates to a gain of almost $4m.

Classified notices follow