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HGK Shipping celebrates a double naming ceremony for its chemical tankers, “Courage” and “Curiosity”

State-of-the-art sister ships are "Future-Fuel-Ready"

Cologne / Leverkusen. HGK Shipping named both the latest additions to its fleet “Courage” and “Curiosity” on 4 May 2023. The innovative chemical tankers have already been in service for the materials manufacturer, Covestro, on the river Rhine and its tributaries for several weeks. The two sister ships are another indication that HGK Shipping is consistently pursuing its strategy of developing forward-looking and tailor-made vessels in conjunction with its customers. The striking colours sported by both the new ships represent the cooperation and partnership between HGK Shipping and Covestro.

The “Courage” and “Curiosity” are some of the most modern and innovative vessels afloat. The hulls of the shallow-water vessels, which are 93 metres long and 10.5 metres wide, have a very bulky and lightweight design with an unusual stern and bow shape. All the components installed on board have been tested and optimised to reduce the required draught and weight. By using two rudder propellers with comparatively small dimensions, HGK Shipping has managed to achieve outstanding load capacity and ideal shallow-water operations. As a result, the two sister vessels are able to carry a load weighing 160 tonnes in a draught of just 1.00 metre and still be fully operational and manoeuvrable.

The “Courage” and “Curiosity” are also setting new standards in terms of sustainability. They have a particularly efficient diesel-electric drive system and this reduces CO₂ emissions by up to 30 percent compared to conventional vessels that are currently in service. Emissions of particulate matter and other polluting substances have also been cut significantly.

Norbert Meixner, the Business Unit Director Liquid Chemicals at HGK Shipping, says, “We want to create sustainable and reliable transport chains in conjunction with our customers. The “Courage” and “Curiosity” are enabling us to take a huge leap forward in this respect. Thanks to the vessels’ design, which allows us to use different drive systems, we’ve set another milestone for inland waterway services, but also in our role as a partner for industry in the joint battle against greenhouse gas emissions.”

All the new vessels introduced by HGK Shipping during the last two years have also been planned and completed so that they can use future fuels or H₂. The “Courage” and “Curiosity” have also been designed in line with this concept. The hull has two empty areas, so-called “void spaces”, which can be equipped with storage solutions and the necessary technology for using alternative energy sources at a later date.

“We’re not only able to organise our supply chains on the river Rhine in a more reliable way with the two new vessels, but already make them more sustainable too. When we re-equip them to use renewable energy sources in future, we can take an important step along the road towards climate neutrality and the circular economy. We’re looking forward to continuing to follow this course together with HGK,” says Dr Uwe Arndt, the Head of Logistics EMLA at Covestro.

The “Courage” and “Curiosity” have once again been designed by the team at the HGK Shipping Design Center from the original concept onwards; it has also performed the engineering work and developed the hydrodynamic optimisation – and has successfully completed this up to the delivery time. The Severnav Shipyard in Romania constructed the hulls. HGK Shipping’s turn-key partner, the De Gerlien van Tiem B.V. shipyard in the Netherlands, was then responsible for the construction work until the vessels were put into service.

Photo caption

Numerous guests and partners attended the naming ceremony for the latest additions to the HGK Shipping fleet, including representatives from the City of Cologne and Covestro GmbH. The ships' godmothers were Cologne City Treasurer Prof. Dr. Dörte Diemert and Hannah Egbringhoff-John, responsible for the Basic Chemicals EMEA division at Covestro.

Contact details:

Would you like some more information? You can contact the HGK spokesperson, Christian Lorenz, on +49 (0)221 / 390 11 90 or send an e-mail to: lorenz@hgk.de.

About the HGK Group:

Häfen und Güterverkehr Köln AG (HGK) is the logistics company within the City of Cologne’s public utilities group. Formerly just a port operator, HGK has developed into a group that provides integrated transport and logistics services with operations across Europe. Structured in five divisions, Logistics & Intermodal, Shipping, Rail Operations, Infrastructure & Maintenance and Real Estate, the HGK Group operates the largest inland waterway port network in Germany, one of the largest private railway companies for transporting cargo, specialist logistics firms and terminals as well as its own railway network and workshops for railway goods traffic through its subsidiaries and holding companies. HGK Shipping GmbH is the largest inland waterway shipping company in Europe.

About the HGK Shipping division:

HGK Shipping is part of Häfen und Güterverkehr Köln AG. Its fleet comprises about 350 vessels, including owner-operated ships. The spectrum of goods transported ranges from liquid chemical products and liquefied gases to dry goods and even break bulk cargo.