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FLAGSHIP-HCA enables accurate hull condition forecasting for improved maintenance and investment

FLAGSHIP, the Pan-European maritime transport project part funded by the EU, has successfully developed software that can forecast the condition of a ship's hull over time to help improve the efficacy of surveys and reduce the amount of time a ship is out of service. FLAGSHIP-HCA (Hull Condition Assessment) is designed to accurately predict the condition of a vessel's structure, coating and components, enabling ship owners and operators to schedule maintenance in a more efficient manner and thereby reduce maintenance costs while improving safety at sea.

The principal economic objectives of FLAGSHIP-HCA are to extend the life of the existing fleet of Tankers and Bulk Carriers by up to five years, with a 10% to 20% reduction in service repair costs for ships throughout their life-cycle. In this respect a primary concern for ship owners and Class societies is that of corrosion of the ship's structure and this is the primary focus of FLAGSHIP-HCA.

Ben Hodgson, Project Manager at BMT Group and FLAGSHIP-HCA sub project leader commented: "Management of corrosion is being addressed through separate tools that meet the specific needs of the ship owner and the Class Society. The enhanced data exchange that these two tools will promote between Class and ship owner will quite possibly lead to the development of enhanced Class rules which will ultimately lead to better maintained, more available and safer ships."

FLAGSHIP-HCA includes three primary tools which enable the ship owner and class to exchange hull data in real time, based on crew inspections and maintenance work as well as periodic measurement campaigns. Firstly, the toolset includes the Survey Advisor Tool (SAT) which advises surveyors where individual ships are most vulnerable and therefore where they should concentrate their investigations.



Secondly, the Hull Health Programme Advisor (HHA) optimises the survey and maintenance programme taking in to consideration the vessel's work schedule and the predicted structural integrity of the vessel. Finally, the Corrosion Parameter Prediction Tool which takes the results of a survey or set of surveys and update a database if corrosion parameters associated with every aspect of a ship's hull – based on observed rules and results.

Designed as a tool for ship owners and surveyors FLAGSHIP-HCA enables ship owners to schedule vessel maintenance and ship replacement more accurately than has been possible to date. FLAGSHIP-HCA not only optimises existing asset lifecycle and investment decisions but can also provide the Class Societies with more robust data upon which to base their rulings.

Mr Herman de Meester, Coordinator of Flagship, commented: "FLAGSHIP has pursued the twin objectives of reducing still further both risk and the environmental impact of the world's commercial fleet whilst generating the opportunity for real commercial benefits. FLAGSHIP-HCA is a tangible example of the maritime industry collaborating to improve performance and efficiency in everyone's best interest.

The FLAGSHIP–HCA project was led by the BMT Group in the UK and was supported, delivered and trialled in conjunction with MARINTEK of Norway; Bureau Veritas and Sirehna of France, Germanischer Lloyd of Germany and PORTLINE - Transportes Marítimos Internacionais, of Portugal

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Notes to Editors

FLAGSHIP

FLAGSHIP is a consortium of more than 40 European maritime organisations taking part in a part EU-funded project the focus of which is on improving safety, environmental friendliness and competitiveness of European maritime transport. The project was designed to further increase the capacity and reliability of freight and passenger services and to further reduce the impact from accidents and emissions.

The emphasis of the project is on on-board systems and procedures, ship management systems on shore, impact of new technology on present ship-, owner- and operator organisations, effective and efficient communication interfaces and impact of standards and regulations.

Website: <http://www.flagship.be/>

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