

Press release

Offshore shipbrokers upbeat about the future

Since 2011, German Renewables Shipbrokers, or GRS for short, has been surging full speed ahead in the offshore market. The company founders, engineer / industrial engineer Philippe Schönefeld and naval architect Matthias Mroß, put all their experience as shipbrokers to good use to arrange chartering of special shipping capacity for the offshore wind industry.

The young shipbrokers from Hamburg have focused entirely on the specific requirements of the offshore wind industry. The supply of crew transfer vessels (CTVs), for instance, is becoming increasingly complex. The specialists at GRS have a strong network of contacts in the industry and updated databases in place. In a matter of hours, they can determine what ship can be chartered where and at what price. Short charter periods and the fact that standardised ships cannot be used in the offshore business mean that charterers are increasingly availing themselves of the services of informed, well connected shipbroking specialists.

“Tonnage needs to be secured early on”

Managing director Philippe Schönefeld currently sees a bottleneck for service vessels available to wind farms during installation and, later, operation: “In the German market at the moment, we have about 25 vessels, not including tugboats, that are specially designed to meet the needs of the offshore wind industry, such as CTVs, supply vessels, and diver base vessels. Just one wind farm keeps 20 to 30 of these service vessels busy for a year. We therefore urgently recommend securing the required tonnage at an early stage – service vessels at least a year in advance, installation vessels at least two years before the start of construction.”

Positive outlook

The shipbrokers from Hamburg brought their expertise to the market at the right time, and the team has now grown to five offshore shipbroking specialists. There is no sign of an offshore crisis. Matthias Mroß, who, like his partner, has national and international experience working with, for example, major shipping companies, believes his team is continuing on the right track: “All in all, despite the current delays we are upbeat about the future and intend to help the industry continue successfully on its chosen route.”

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