

 **For immediate release**

**Saga Shipholding’s Optimarin experience drives new BWT system orders**

***2 May 2016, Norway:*** Ballast water treatment (BWT) specialist Optimarin has signed a contract with Saga Shipholding for the provision of three of its market leading Optimarin Ballast Systems (OBS). The order marks a new chapter in the successful working relationship between the two, with Saga originally purchasing an initial 26 systems from Optimarin in 2012.

According to Nils Otto Bjorhovde, Saga Shipholding’s Hong Kong-based Technical Manager, it’s the performance of those systems to date that persuaded the firm to return for more:

“We spent 2011 evaluating the entire BWT market,” Bjorhovde comments. “At that time Optimarin’s simple technological solution, their professional approach and commitment to developing a totally compliant system gave us the confidence we needed to make a significant fleet wide investment.

“Four years of operation, with every system operational from its very first day of installation, has shown the wisdom of that choice. The technology is proven and the team are as hardworking, open and honest as they were on day one. The choice this time round was much easier.”

The three new 2000 m3 BWT units will be installed on newbuild’ open hatch vessels currently under construction at Oshima Shipbuilding in Japan. Like the majority of the firm’s 32 current ships, the new additions will predominantly carry pulp from South America to markets in Europe and the Far East.

Bjorhovde also sees a likelihood for trades in US water, making OBS’ upcoming USCG approval, expected in the second half of the year, of critical importance.

“We’re a global shipping firm and we need global compliance to be as flexible as our customers demand us to be,” he states. “USCG’s standards are obviously more stringent than those imposed by IMO, and I think Optimarin have been very wise to commit to them. That gives us complete confidence that the systems on-board our vessels will comply with regulations now, and into the future, and that’s vitally important for a responsible shipowner such as Saga.”

Optimarin has enjoyed its best ever start to a year in 2016, signing deals with, amongst others, Atlantis Tankers for ten systems, Sinopacific Shipbuilding Group for nine, and Carisbrooke - a fleet agreement with the potential to encompass retrofits on 46 bulk and multipurpose vessels. The Saga contract pushes the number of systems sold by Optimarin towards the 450 mark, making them a true leader in what is still a young industry segment.

Despite the success with the new names, Optimarin CEO Tore Andersen is keen to highlight the importance of repeat business with customers such as Saga.

“This really is the best endorsement for our proven BWT solution,” he says. “When customers like Saga, who use the system day-in day-out, across entire fleets, come back for more it cements our position as a preferred partner for responsible ship companies who require performance, reliability and compliance.

“With BWM ratification now upon us, this sends a very clear message to shipowners everywhere – we are tested, trusted and ready to talk. We can give them the same quality service, carefree operation, and compliant technology that Saga has experienced for the last four years.”

Of the 26 systems currently installed on Saga vessels, seven were newbuildings and the rest retrofits. Optimarin, together with its global engineering partners Goltens and Zeppelin, has now installed over 70 units on existing vessels, and more than 200 on newbuilds. Its flexible, modular and simple solution allows it to make the most of limited space on vessels, making it perfect for retrofit tasks.

Alongside Saga, Optimarin customers include names such as MOL, Grieg Shipping Group, Gulf Offshore, Farstad Shipping, NYK, Nor Line, and Evergreen Marine Corp, amongst others. The OBS is certified through DNV GL, Lloyd’s, Bureau Veritas, MLIT Japan, and American Bureau of Shipping. Together with its upcoming USCG approval, it is also fully IMO compliant.

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