
Slowdown signs -MSC to reduce its ship numbers

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FT quoted Mr Gianluigi Aponte chairman of Mediterranean Shipping Company as saying that the company is aiming to reduce its ship numbers but increase their average size as this would keep overall capacity stable.

Mr Aponte said that "When the crisis hit, there were not many alternatives. The first was to scrap older vessels. Many of our vessels were older than 30 years, so were due to be scrapped anyway. The crisis means that they will not automatically be replaced, and that we just use time charter vessels when needed."

He said that the company would take delivery of ships able to carry an extra 170,000 TEUs between now and the end of 2010, an 11% increase on the 1.52 million TEUs. He added that "We will give back vessels we have on time charter, and we will be scrapping about the same amount of container capacity as we are taking on."

According to AXS Alphaliner, as recently as a year ago, most of MSC's huge order book of ships, which still represent more than 40% of the line's current ships was expected to increase the fleet's overall size significantly.

(Sourced from Financial Times)

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