
Norilsk Nickel completed creation of its own arctic fleet

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OJSC MMC Norilsk Nickel announced that it has completed building up its own arctic fleet. A diesel electric vessel named Nadezhda delivered MMC Norilsk Nickel cargo to Dudinka. This is the fifth vessel built for the Company as part of its strategy adopted back in 2004 and targeting transport independence of MMC Norilsk Nickel.

According to the release, the first diesel electric ship named Norilsk Nickel was commissioned in April 2006. In July 2008 Monchegorsk vessel was delivered and another peer named Zapolyarny was handed over to the Company in October of the same year. In November the fourth diesel electric ship Talnakh joined the fleet. Nadezhda, the fifth complement to the fleet, which was commissioned in January 2009. All of these ships are graded as seventh class ice-breaking vessels and it is the highest rank awarded to Arctic vessels for the first time in history. The vessels are equipped with AZIPOD double-action propelling units: while sailing on its own each ship is capable of breaking 1.5 meters thick Arctic ice moving stern foremost at a speed of up to 3 knots. Furthermore, these vessels will provide additional economic advantages for MMC Norilsk Nickel because the Company will be independent in establishing its transport costs.

AZIPOD propelling unit is a podded rotary unit with steerable propellers fixed under the stern and powered by a 13 MW electric engine. Modern computer-based terminals and satellite communication equipment are installed to allow selecting optimal routes in the Kara Sea drifting ice. The Captain receives ice conditions data online from the Arctic and Antarctic Research Institute. The cost of each vessel is about EUR 82 million.

Container carrier Nadezhda is the only vessel of the five equipped with two 40 tonne cranes. These cranes are designed to handle cargo outside ports if required. Key specifications of the vessel include: length 169 meters, width 23.1 meters, deadweight 18.112 tonnes. Depending on water level at certain river rapids the ship will carry up to 12 kilo tonnes to 14 kilo tonnes of cargo, the only limitation being her draft of about 9 meters.

The first vessel of the fleet was built by Aker Finnyards in Finland and the other four in Germany at Aker dockyards.

On February 19th the Arctic fleet of MMC Norilsk Nickel was officially registered as a customs carrier. The status allows the Company to enjoy exemption from measures applied by the state to ensure that carriers comply with Russian customs regulations requiring guarantees of customs duty payments, customs support and fixed transport routes.

The official registration of the Company as a customs carrier along with the use of electronic customs declaration forms will ensure that the Company operates under optimized procedures related to clearance of its cargos.

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