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Wednesday, October 13th, 2010

PressReleases Articles

## Ecospeed Chosen to Protect Icebreaker During Expeditions to Antarctica

Tuesday, October 12th, 2010



The British Antarctic Survey needed a coating that would protect their ice strengthened research vessel Ernest Shackleton during expeditions to the Antarctic region in which it is subjected to extreme mechanical forces. Ecospeed has proven its ability to withstand the harshest winter conditions on numerous occasions and was therefore selected as the new underwater hull coating for the vessel.

The vessel was coated in Frederikshaven, Denmark, where the grit blasting and application of the two layers were done under the eye of an Ecospeed inspector. The timing was geared to the schedule of the yard. This flexibility can be easily achieved with Ecospeed because the coating has no maximum overcoating time.

Ernest Shackleton is a 1A1 ICE-05 class icebreaker which is used for expeditions to the South Pole. Throughout these journeys the vessel has to crush the thick ice of the Antarctic Ocean and its underwater hull therefore needs to be protected against the extreme mechanical forces that it has to encounter. Ecospeed's track record proved to the owner that the coating can withstand even the harshest circumstances.

For over four years several vessels coated with Ecospeed have been sailing the most northern parts of the Baltic Sea during the winter season when they are almost completely frozen. Despite the frequent impact of large pieces of floating dry ice, none of these vessels have required more than just a few touch ups during their drydock visits. Further evidence of Ecospeed's resistance is the excellent condition of the coating on the underwater hull of an icebreaker that has been sailing to both the North and the South Pole since it was coated 3 1/2 years ago. The owner of this vessel has since then also had Ecospeed applied on the icebreaker's sister ship.

Besides its durable resistance to mechanical damage, Ecospeed is also a non-toxic coating and offers a TBT-free, copper-free and biocide-free solution for the protection of the underwater hull. In 2008 stringent tests were carried out within the framework of an EU-LIFE demonstration project to provide scientific data and to authenticate the non-toxicity of the Ecospeed hull performance technology. This research proved that the coating is 100% toxic free and that it produces no negative effect on the water quality or the marine environment at any point.

Furthermore, because Ecospeed creates an impermeable barrier for protection against corrosion and marine fouling, the coating is ideal for in-water treatment, which consists of two procedures. First there is a one-time conditioning applied with custom-designed tools to improve the surface characteristics of the coating. Conditioning is followed by regular underwater cleaning, removing any marine fouling at an early stage of development without causing damage or deterioration in the quality of the Ecospeed coating layers. Its drag characteristics will even improve significantly with repeated and multiple underwater treatments. Instead of suffering from the cleaning action designed to remove biomatter in its very early stages, an Ecospeed coating will gradually improve, thereby steadily enhancing the ship's performance. This translates into substantial fuel savings and a reduced carbon footprint.

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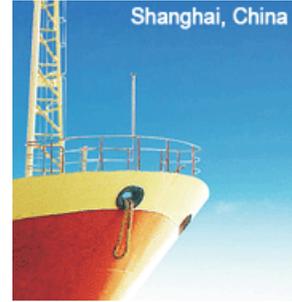
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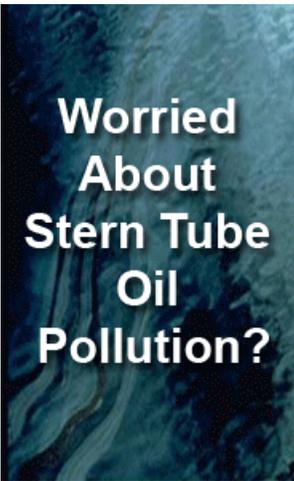
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