



LNG in the cruise industry: New cooperation with Wessels Reederei provides practical training at sea

Hamburg, 23 August 2018 AIDAnova is due to usher in a new era at the end of the year when it becomes the first cruise ship that can run on environmentally-friendly liquefied natural gas (LNG). To fully prepare the captains and officers for this technological changeover, a series of practical training sessions at sea started in June. The basis of this training project is a new cooperation between Carnival Maritime and Wessels Reederei, which is providing the LNG-powered container ship WES Amelie for training purposes.

The 30-day on-board training sessions on the WES Amelie enable AIDA's captains and officers to experience at first hand what it is like to control a LNG-powered vessel under real operating conditions. A training record book is kept throughout to document the skills acquired; the participants also take part in a bunker procedure and an emergency drill. In addition, Carnival Maritime's landside ship superintendents are completing training courses with Wessels.

"We are very happy to be helping Carnival Maritime by providing our valuable insight and experience in the operation of LNG vessels", stated Christian Hoepfner of Wessels Reederei. "Safe handling of LNG is a key aspect of the introduction of LNG as a maritime fuel. By contributing our expertise we hope to make the use of LNG more widespread, which will also help to further roll out LNG bunker infrastructure."

Caroline Baumgärtner, Director Maritime Training Carnival Maritime: "The purpose of practical training is not just to build knowledge, but also to gain confidence in handling the technology and develop safety awareness when using LNG. I am very grateful to Wessels Reederei for their excellent and unbureaucratic support. This cooperation is very valuable for our company and our crews."

AIDA Captain Vincent Cofalka, who has already completed his training course, added: "To experience hands-on what LNG operations are like on board the WES Amelie was a valuable opportunity, and the support provided by the team on board was tremendous. I would like to thank everyone, also on behalf of my colleagues, for their patience and their untiring willingness to share their knowledge."

As well as the training courses, Carnival Maritime has a cooperation with LNG supplier Shell. Officers also undergo intensive LNG Management Level Training at the Center for Simulator Maritime Training (CSMART) in Almere in the Netherlands. In the next five years, the Costa Group plans to commission five LNG cruise ships, and Carnival Maritime will be providing the relevant training courses for the crews.

Carnival Maritime is the marine service unit for Costa Group, the leading cruise company in Europe and Asia. This unit bundles competences and best practices in the area of marine operations to achieve the highest safety standards in the cruise industry throughout Costa Group. The fleet currently includes 26 cruise ships of the brands AIDA Cruises, Costa Cruises, and Costa Asia. Carnival Maritime was founded in 2015 and employs about 200 specialists.

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