

Ecospeed pays dividends for Interscan

Interscan's Michael Tensing explains why ice-traders need a hard coating. Mike Garside¹ reports.

Trading in ice is the toughest challenge for a hull coating. Regular anti-fouling paints or regular epoxy coatings are usually scraped off by the constant abrasion of the ice, and extra drydockings are needed to repaint, often after just one season.

This was a major issue for Hamburg-based shipowner Interscan Schiffahrt, which controls a fleet of 23 vessels, many of them operating in the Baltic Sea and seas in the far north. However, like other vessels operating in ice conditions, they required frequent repairs to their underwater coating, with time out of service every one or two years costing the owner dearly. The company no longer has this problem.

In 2005, Interscan's superintendent engineer Alexander Fedorcov heard about Ecospeed and suggested Subsea Industries' hard coating to the company's Head of Chartering, Michael Tensing. He decided to



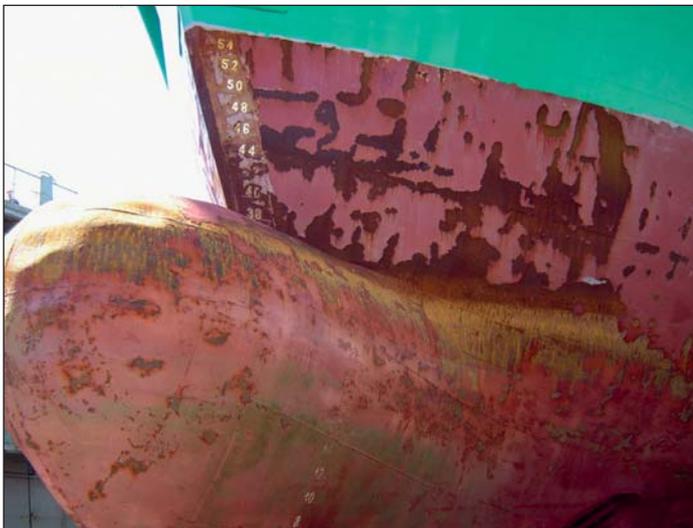
Ecospeed can be easily cleaned in drydock or underwater without damaging the coating.

apply it to the 3000dwt general cargo ship *Patriot* during the vessel's upcoming scheduled drydocking.

The underwater hull was blasted to bare steel and was coated with two 500 μ m coats of Ecospeed.

"*Patriot* was coated ten years ago and has traded in ice every year since then; but the coating has lasted perfectly well. Before Ecospeed we

¹ Mike Garside is a freelance trade journalist and Deputy Editor of the specialist shipping publication *Drydock*.



The hull of the ice-going MV Patriot: left – usual condition at drydock before Ecospeed application, and right – on return to drydock after 5 years trading in the ice with its Ecospeed coating.



MV Widor being painted and after launch.



MV Karin several years after initial application.

used normal epoxy coatings which would last for, perhaps, one to two winters. Now we need to pay no attention to the coating and there is no need for extra drydockings,” said Tensing.

He explained that during an Eco-speed vessel’s scheduled drydocking the hull is simply pressure washed. Where there is mechanical damage, the coating is easily repaired by just painting over the damage with a brush – a major advantage over other types of coatings.

“Cleaning has not been needed for the northern routes we use. For our

ships that sail in warmer waters, the Ecospeed hull does need underwater cleaning from time to time, but we know that after an underwater clean the fuel consumption goes down to what it was when the paint was new.”

Referring to Interscan’s 6288dwt general cargo ship *Karin*, which had Ecospeed applied following the success of the *Patriot* coating, Tensing said: “*Karin* sails in warm waters and in those conditions it might need an underwater cleaning every six months but it is an easy procedure because the coating is very tough. Cleaning takes only 6 to 8 hours.”

Subsea Industries’ hard coatings can also be used on rudders and other appendages, preventing cavitation damage. Since rudders have to be blasted to SA2.5 before a traditional coating this can be negated by applying Ecoshield at the newbuild stage.

“It is worth the cost because no welding work will be needed,” said Tensing. “Because Subsea Industries hard coatings are not harmful to the environment, the coatings are accepted in ports, such as Australia, where underwater cleaning is restricted.”

He added: “After 10 years of trading on the same routes, the *Patriot*’s Ecospeed coating is still going strong. We are very impressed with it and now have the coating on seven vessels; six coasters and one MPP. It’s performed very well for us.”

According to Tensing, Interscan calculated that full amortization of the cost of coating is 3.8 years.

“Since the coating lasts for more than 10 years it makes sense. Ecospeed more than pays for itself.” ■

