

Hapag-Lloyd first in world to convert large container ship to LNG

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Hapag-Lloyd will retrofit its 15,000 TEU ship “Sajir” to operate using liquified natural gas (LNG).

In future, the engine system will be able to function using either of two types of fuel: LNG or low-sulphur fuel oil (LSFO).

The contract for the retrofitting was signed at the end of last week with Hudong HONDHOA Shipbuilding (Group) Co., LTD. The conversion will be carried out in the Shanghai-based shipyard Huarun Dadong Dockyard Co., Ltd.

During its time in the shipyard, the ship’s fuel system and its existing heavy fuel oil-burning engine will be converted into a dual fuel engine. The plan will be to operate the vessel using LNG, but to also be able to use low-sulphur fuel oil (LSFO) as a backup.

“By converting the ‘Sajir’, we will be the first shipping company in the world to retrofit a container ship of this size to LNG propulsion”, says Richard von Berlepsch, Managing Director Fleet Management at Hapag-Lloyd. “By carrying out this unprecedented pilot, we hope to learn for the future and to pave the way for large ships to be retrofitted to use this alternative fuel.”

Using LNG in the shipping industry could potentially reduce CO2 emissions by 15 to 30% and sulphur dioxide and particulate matter by more than 90%.

The “Sajir” is one of the 17 vessels in Hapag-Lloyd’s fleet that were originally designed to be LNG-ready. Its 16 sister ships are also technically prepared for retrofitting. With the conversion of the “Sajir”, Hapag-Lloyd will be implementing a technological option to reduce the environmental impact of large vessels.