



MSC largest owner of elderly containerships

Marcus Hand | Nov 08, 2023

MSC controls nearly 25% of all containerships that are 20 years old or more according to analyst Alphaliner.

In its weekly report Alphaliner highlighted that 20% of containership fleet capacity, or just under 3 million teu, was now aged 20 years or more. There are around 1,200 containerships that are now aged 20 years or over.

The largest owner by far of this older tonnage is MSC controlling close to 25% of this portion of the global fleet. The line has 212 vessels, with a capacity of 718,000 teu that are 20 years or older. Much of this capacity was picked-up in the company's secondhand buying spree from August 2020 of 330 vessels, of which 145 are aged 20 years or more.

Related: [MSC containership fleet to hit 5m teu capacity this month](#)

The next largest owner of older tonnage is Maersk with just 48 vessels, followed by Evergreen with 36 units.

With container shipping facing serious overcapacity from record levels of newbuilding deliveries this older fleet would appear ripe for recycling, however, this may not be the case. So far this year only 70 older vessels totalling 140,000 teu in capacity have been sent to the breakers.

Related: [MSC's secondhand boxship buying spree passes 300 mark](#)

"However, many vessels remain in sound technical condition or perfectly fit for certain trades where very little -or no replacement- is on the way. This is especially true in the smaller sizes," Alphaliner commented.

"As a result, a lot of ships in this age group will likely continue to trade in the coming years, especially carrier tonnage, irrespective of the market headwinds or tougher environmental regulations."

The report noted very few of the 20 year or older vessels had been retrofitted for decarbonisation and less than 100 were fitted with scrubbers.

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