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MSC strikes 10-ship newbuild deal at Hengli Heavy

[Adis Ajdin](#)

September 23, 2024



Yangzijiang Shipbuilding

Gianluigi Aponte's Mediterranean Shipping Co (MSC) has continued its newbuilding spree with a maiden order at Hengli Heavy Industry.

The Swiss-based liner giant has signed up for a series of 10 LNG dual-fuelled containerships of 21,000 teu with deliveries likely in 2027.

No value has been placed behind the deal, which could, according to the latest shipbuilding trends, top \$2.5bn and follows a strategic cooperation framework agreement on a wide range of areas, including newbuilds, engine manufacturing, ship repair, and vessel retrofitting the duo inked in August.

MSC, led by Soren Toft, has a fleet in excess of 6m teu, commanding a 20% share of the global operated container fleet. The world's largest containerline has inked multiple large orders across Chinese shipyards this summer, and before the latest deal, the company's massive orderbook stood at

about 130 ships, which according to Alphaliner figures was projected to boost the fleet by an additional 1.8m slots in the coming years.

In related boxship newbuild news, brokers suggest German liner Hapag Lloyd is lining up a series of 9,000 teu and 17,000 teu LNG dual-fuel vessels at yards in China with a letter of intent on the cards in the fourth quarter, while an unnamed Greek owner is in talks for 16,000 teu newbuilds in South Korea for delivery in 2027.

As for the fast-growing shipbuilder, formerly known as STX Dalian, for which the MSC deal marks its first containership order, the yard has also recently reserved four VLCC newbuild slots for Hengli Group — the second supertanker order from its parent company — with deliveries set for 2026 and 2027.