

SHIPPINGWATCH

Scorpio Group calls for better customer service from suppliers

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Published 19.02.18 at 08:47

Suppliers are not good enough at consulting and helping their customers when problems arise in relation to ballast water management systems, says Ole Christian Schröder, Head of Compliance at Scorpio Group, which has so far spent USD 100 million on the systems.



| Photo: Scorpio Tankers/PR

NEW YORK

Scorpio Group calls for better service from suppliers of ballast water management systems, noting that they are not good enough at helping their customers comply with environmental regulations.

By September 2019 at the latest, all ships globally must clean their ballast water, while there are already regulations in place in the US. As such, many shipowners have started installing the necessary systems.

But the technology can often be difficult to operate, just as problems can arise and result in the owner breaching the rules.

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OLE CHRISTIAN SCHRØDER, HEAD OF COMPLIANCE, SCORPIO GROUP

Unfortunately, suppliers are not good enough at responding when carriers need help, says Ole Christian Schrøder. He serves as head of compliance at Scorpio Group, which covers the two listed carriers Scorpio Bulkers and Scorpio Tankers.

"It is important that the vendors beef up their after sales service and training, so if a system is deemed in-operable, we need swift responses and resolutions, in order to provide compliance, especially under the USCG regulations. Right now many manufacturers of ballast water treatment systems are lagging," Schrøder tells ShippingWatch.

Widespread problem among shipowners

His argument is supported by a survey carried out by classification bureau ABS in August 2017, in which shipowners responded that 43 percent of the ballast water systems on their vessels were either problematic or out of order <<https://ww2.eagle.org/en/news/press-room/ABS-Report-Key-Insights-Ballast-Water-Management-Systems.html>>.

According to the survey, the problems often concern the software for the systems. This requires comprehensive training of the crew and often needs to be updated. However, maintenance is also causing difficulties, as ships rarely carry the right spare parts on board the ship.

Scorpio Group has so far spent more than USD 100 million installing 105 units of ballast water treatment systems on f the company's ships. The group expects to spend another USD 90-100 million, said Schrøder recently at a panel debate during the Hellenic/Norwegian-American Chambers' Shipping Conference in New York.

But it remains unclear where these orders will be placed.

"We don't not see any obvious candidates at the moment that fit our trading pattern and type of ships right now," Schrøder tells ShippingWatch.

English Edit: Daniel Logan Berg-Munch

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