

Green Award adds an LNG dimension

The Qatargas-chartered, MOL-managed *Dukhan* has become the first LNG carrier to receive a Green Award certificate

The Rotterdam-based Green Award Foundation marked the certification of its first LNG carrier with a special ceremony on board the 2004-built, 135,000m³ *Dukhan* at the port of Ras Laffan on 14 October 2011. The spherical tank ship is long-term chartered to Qatargas, the world's largest producer of LNG.

Since it was established 18 years ago, the Green Award Foundation has issued its certificates to oil tankers of 20,000 dwt and above that have been shown to implement safety and environmental standards beyond the established and accepted norm. These capabilities are proven by means of audits of the ships and the relevant shipowner/manager offices and systems by Green Award surveyors.

Ships in possession of a Green Award certificate are in a position to reap various financial and non-financial benefits. These include fee reductions from ports and other service providers participating in the programme as well as charterer recognition of the esteem accorded to Green Award ships.

More recently the Green Award Foundation has opened the scheme to bulk carriers, inland waterway vessels and now LNG ships. The decision to bring LNG carriers into the programme stemmed from a Qatargas initiative, and the Qatari gas company has supported the work carried out during the course of 2011 to broaden the scope of the Green Award regime to encompass LNG ships. Qatargas has 44 LNG carriers on long-term charter, including *Dukhan*, which is used primarily to carry cargoes from Ras Laffan to Spain.

Built by the Chiba yard of Mitsui Engineering & Shipbuilding and classed with ClassNK, *Dukhan* is jointly owned by Mitsui OSK Lines (MOL), Mitsui & Co, Qatar Gas Transport Co (Nakilat), NYK Line and K Line. The vessel is managed by MOL LNG Transport (Europe) Ltd, an MOL group company based in London.

MOL established an LNG division in London in 2003 but initially the LNG carriers were managed



Jan Fransen of the Green Award Foundation (right) hands *Dukhan's* certificate to MOL LNG Transport (Europe) Ltd's managing director Capt Ed Carr (centre)

by MOL Tankship Europe, the Japanese group's oil tanker management company. The group's London-based LNG business was expanded from the outset, including with the addition of several managed Q-flex and Q-max ships for charter to Qatargas. The need for specialist training and vessel management programmes to accommodate the growing fleet and the new technologies it incorporated prompted MOL to establish a separate shipmanagement company in Europe focusing exclusively on LNG carriers. MOL LNG Transport (Europe) Ltd now manages 15 in-service LNG carriers and will also take responsibility for a further four new ships on order in China.

As part of preparations for opening the scheme to LNG ships, the Green Award Foundation is putting four of its auditors through specialist LNG training programmes, including at Warsash in the UK, while Bill Wayne, the general manager of the Society of International Gas Tanker and Terminal Operators (SIGTTO), has been welcomed to the board as an LNG expert. **LNG**