

Tug Newsletter

all about tugs



The photo above shows the arrival of yet another Boluda tug in Europe. VB CAYENNE is part of a six-tug order with Damen Shipyards. The first tug in the series – VB LOUP – was delivered in the third quarter of 2024 to the French port of Le Havre.

Apart from VB CAYENNE the United Heavy Lift carrier UHL FREEDOM had on board a further two tugs of the series: VB AMSA and VB AZLA. These two were delivered to the port of Tangier, Morocco.

All three were built by Damen Song Cam Shipyard in Vietnam. The stern drive tugs are of the Damen ASD TUG 2813 design. Bollard pull 82 tonnes. The 389 GT tugs have dimensions of 27,59 x 12,30 x 5,20 m. Main engines are two Caterpillar, 3516-C TA HD/D with a total output of 6.862 bhp. Speed 12,7 knots. Also on board was the Damen ASD Tug 2312 design TALAVERA which was built for

account of the Spanish operator Remolcasona. The tug will be operating at Vigo.

Another United Heavy Lift carrier – UHL FIGHTER – delivered two electric Damen RSD Tug 2513 series to Barcelona. CALA GAT and CALA MESQUIDA were built by Damen Song Cam shipyard. They have electric propulsion of 2x 3.700 kW connected to the two azimuthing thrusters. Bollard pull over the bow is 70 tonnes, over the stern 65 tonnes. Dimensions are 27,70 x 13,10 m with a maximum draught of 6.50 mt. The batteries can be recharged in two hours using their own or external generators.

Electric Sanmar

A groundbreaking fully-electric ElectRA design built by Sanmar for major operator SAAM Towage has successfully completed sea trials. This will be the first fully-electric tugboat to operate in Latin America

and the 8th fully-electric tugboat Sanmar Shipyards has built. 6 more fully-electric tugboats are also under construction at the shipyard in Tuzla, Istanbul.

SAAM Towage, the largest provider of towage services in the Americas, already operates two emissions-free ElectRAs – SAAM Volta and Chief Dan George – on the west coast of Canada.

This latest tug is based on the exclusive Sanmar ElectRA 2500SX design from Canadian naval architects **Robert Allan Ltd.** With an overall length of 25,4m, beam of 12,86m, draft of 5,6 m and maximum battery capacity of 3.616 kWh, it can achieve a bollard pull of at least 70 tonnes, and a speed of 12,5 knots.

Rüçhan Çıvgın, Commercial Director of Sanmar Shipyards, said: "It was

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United Heavy Lift's UHL FIGHTER arrived at Rotterdam 27 March, 2025, carrying the new Damen ASD Tug 2813 FAIRPLAY-97. Built by Damen Song Cam the tug has a length of 28 m, a draught of 6 m, a bollard pull of 83 tonnes and is fitted to FiFi-1 standard. The tug is intended for operations in the Baltic photo: Ruud Zegwaard



FAIRPLAY-97

photo Frits van der Hoek

extremely important when we were developing the ElectRA Series with our partners Robert Allan Ltd and **Corvus Energy**, that the move to electricity and other alternative fuels should not come with any loss of power or performance."

The Turkish tugboat-builder has taken a strategic decision to lead the tug and towing industry towards a sustainable future, based on low and no-emission tugs, by utilising alternative fuels and innovative technological advances to protect the environment.

Abeille name-change

The French ETV *Abeille Bourbon* is currently undergoing her regular 5-year maintenance which is scheduled to last 4 weeks. After that she will re-enter service with a new name: *VB Abeille*

Bretagne. While out of service the tug is replaced by the spare tug *Abeille Horizon*.

The 16.000 kW / 209 ttp tug was delivered in 2005 being stationed at Brest. She was built at the Norwegian Kleven Marine Shipyard having been designed by naval architect Sigmund Borgundvaag who also designed her predecessor *Abeille Flandre* 27 years earlier.

During the past 20 years she has assisted some 100 vessels in distress. Recent operations were, amongst others, the *One Hammersmith* in September 2024, the *Larus* in December 2024, the bulk carrier *Indiana*, also in December 2024 and the cable ship *Teliri* in March this year.

The French Government was the first to put dedicated salvage tugs on year-round station on the French coast. In TugeZine vol 2 nr 6 the ETV service is highlighted from its early beginnings.

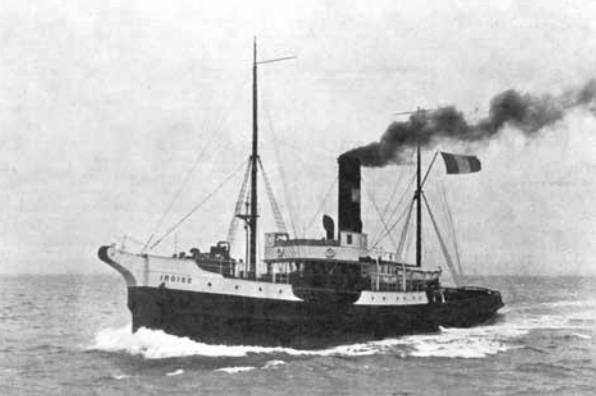
In 1922 the **Union Française Maritime** – a Government-operated shipping company that handled restoration of the French post-World War 1 merchant fleet - stationed the tug *Le Puissant* at Brest. *Puissant*, however, was found to be lacking capabilities. Another salvage steamer was therefore acquired. *Iroise* had been built in 1911 for account of the Imperial (Tsarist) Russian Navy. *Tchernomore* – in 1919 - was taken over by the French Navy which sold her to the Union Française Maritime in 1923.



ABEILLE BOURBON at sea during storm Ciaran, 2 November, 2023

photo: Mathieu Rivrin





IROISE, the first-ever ETV

photo: coll. Job van Eijk

worked out of St.Nazaire under command of capt. Dousset. From here she carried out two salvage operations prior to taking up salvage station at Brest on 13 December, 1924, under command of the legendary capt. Louis Malbert.

It is of interest that the original name of the tug means 'Black Sea', which in French translates as 'Marée Noire' – a term used in France since the 1970s for 'oil spills'.

By then she was in a bad state and needed extensive repairs. Once completed the vessel

Abeille International was acquired in 2024 by the Spanish tug operator **Grupo Boluda**.



ABEILLE BOURBON twenty years ago replacing ABEILLE FLANDRE at Brest

photo: Marine Nationale



Hebo Maritime is a fast-growing marine services provider based in The Netherlands. Offering a wide range of services in transport, salvage, emergency response they currently also operate a large fleet of heavy lift vessels and sheerlegs. Seen here their semi-submersible barge HEBO-SUB 1 (91,44 x 27,43 m) towed by CATHARINA 7 (900 hp) on 15 February, 2025

photo: Nico Giltay

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