

Date: Jan 09, 1998  
(Seatrade)

#### Heidmar-Pleiades form tanker pool

Ambitious Panamax tanker operators Pleiades Shipping Agents, Greece and Connecticut-based Heidenreich Marine have formed a joint venture tanker pool to operate in the demanding US trades. Initially, about 20 vessels will be run under the Heidmar-Pleiades Pool banner, with up to 10 Panamax-size newbuildings slated to join the pool on delivery from China (Pleiades) and South Korea (Heidmar) commencing in 1999. The pool will charter-in further tonnage as needed to meet customer requirements. In one of the few Greek/Norwegian ventures, the jv believes it has identified strengths in each other's operation which will enable the pool to provide uninterrupted high quality transportation services as demanded by the South and North American market where both already have a powerful presence. Pleiades chairman, Constantine P Peraticos, said creation of the pool "reflects the needs of our market and will enhance the breadth and quality of service we can give our customers". Per Heidenreich, chairman and ceo of Heidmar, also said the pool would enable customers to enjoy "a better service with the benefits of the combined fleets". Effective immediately, employees of Alma Maritime, the US chartering affiliate of Pleiades, including Costas Brillis, Alma's president, will be employed by Heidmar and will relocate to Heidmar's office in Greenwich, Connecticut. Heidmar's existing handysize tanker jv with OMI Corp of the US will be unaffected by the new pooling arrangement.