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(Lloyd's List)

US-based Dorado Tankers takes full advantage of the pool

To augment the capabilities of its Singapore office, which has always focused on the Dorado pool, Heidenreich Marine, the pool's commercial manager, has placed chartering personnel dedicated to Dorado in both its London and US offices and has also opened an office in Caracas.

This network ensures that all the major chartering markets are fully covered.

Each of these offices has full authority to fix Dorado pool ships, enabling each location to react quickly to charterers' requirements. "The year 2002 to date has been a growth period for Dorado Tankers," points out the company's general manager Glenn Gronseth.

Several owners have joined the pool and we expect to attract more companies because of the poor product tanker market and the growing awareness of the advantages that stem from belonging to a tanker pool.

Dorado owes much of its success to the strong relationships which Heidenreich Marine has established with charterers over the years.

The strong emphasis placed on customer service leads to repeat business from the charterers which, in turn, leads to improved trading of the ships, not least by reducing the number of ballast legs.

This makes pool participation more profitable for owners than trading ships by themselves.

Dorado Tankers, which at present has eight ships in the 35,000-55,000 dwt size range in its fleet, prides itself on keeping all the pool members continuously apprised of operations.

Our excellent IT systems, with our website www.eFleetwatch.com as the centrepiece, ensure that all pool activities are fully transparent to all members," explains Mr Gronseth. "Irrespective of the hour, participants can refer to the site for all relevant information regarding chartering, operations and financials, including recaps, voyage orders and the financial status of the pool."

The Dorado Tankers pool is due to take delivery of a 47,000 dwt newbuilding from Japan's Onomichi yard in 2003 and a new 45,800-tonner from Shin Kurishima in 2004.

Both ships are being built for Unicorn Shipping and both will be committed to the pool for periods of five years.

Further ships are expected to be added to the fleet in the next two years as several pool members are looking to contract tonnage and purchase additional ships. All the new ships will serve as additional, rather than replacement, pool tonnage.

The rapid establishment of the Dorado presence in the product tanker field has been facilitated by the Heidenreich chartering and pool management system already in place for Star Tankers, another pool managed by the company. The Star Tankers pool comprises nine member companies which own panamax-size tankers.