

**Two heavyweights of the MPP scene bundle the forces: BBC Chartering (Leer) and Jumbo (Schiedam) want to cooperate strategically in the future and form a »Global Project Alliance«.**

The commercial and operational cooperation between the two family-owned shipping companies in the heavy goods and project cargo business is intended to improve the market position of both partners and the tonnage offer.

BBC is regarded as market leader in the MPP sector with a fleet of currently 180 MPP freighters with ambulances of up to 900 t. Jumbo is the leader in the Super Heavylift segment with a fleet of currently ten ships and a capacity of up to 3,000 tonnes. The two fleets and offers are expected to complement each other in the future.

As a first step, both shipowners want to offer joint offers for specific project cargoes in the future in order to offer the best possible service to the customers. Despite the exclusive partnership, both companies will continue to operate independently. Other cooperations such as the BBC with Harren in the so-called "BHS Pool Weser-Ems" are not affected.

It is another step in consolidating an industry that has long been suffering from low rates. Earlier, Zeaborn (Bremen) had already taken over the Rickmers line (Hamburg) and Harren & Partner (also Bremen) SAL from the »K« Line. The container shipping company APL also wants to strengthen its MPP business through a cooperation with Swire Shipping.

Lastly, however, the timecharter rates had risen - in view of the moderate charge volume rather surprising. The Toepfer Transport MPP index for a six- to twelve-month charter of a classic F-type with 12,500 tdw last had a day charter rate of \$ 6,475 - a relatively strong improvement of \$ 161 compared to September.

Assuming that freight rates had reached the "absolute low point", it would make sense to secure larger volumes on a longer-term basis, followed by securing sufficient tonnage by carriers for these cargo volumes, the Toepfer market report said.