



Going places

Adam Fiander offers an insider's guide to letting the professionals take care of your yacht transportation needs

With the availability of free time being regarded by many yacht owners and business people alike as one of their most precious and valuable 'assets', the fact that there are specialists out there willing, able and experienced in taking the hassle out of transporting yachts and equipment from one country to another, will serve as a comforting thought for many.

Similarly, instances involving yachts and significant craft subject to any kind of commercial agenda are known to be frequent users of professional transportation. Take the case of a yacht builder or dealer having to honour a particularly important customer delivery deadline, for example, or requiring their boat(s) to be present

at an important boat show, perhaps, or a racing team due to compete in a high profile regatta in some far flung destination.

Typically when Europe's weather gradually starts to decline and evenings become shorter, October to November time, thoughts for some turn to the Caribbean and other equally 'beneficial' destinations where transport routes start to become populated. Similarly from the US and the Caribbean, pre summer routes back to the Mediterranean then start to become busy again.

For some providers up to 70% of their business is contained within these two half year peak periods, an

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unavoidably seasonal business then, or so it would appear. But the larger transportation providers have nonetheless become adept at marketing themselves within other aspects of the marine industry and are now finding themselves busy throughout the whole year. We've established that the market clearly has a need for professional yacht transportation services, therefore, so let's take a look at some of the different businesses out there.

Innovation has been the key to success, including the development of new loading methods and adaptable shipping cradles

One of the most well known and visible providers is Sevenstar Yacht Transport, who were acquired in 2000 by the Spliethoff Group, a major Dutch cargo ship owning company with a fleet of around 100 plus company owned vessels, ranging from 2,100 to 23,000 tonnes. If one of the purposes of a yacht transportation company is to offer owners and management companies a wide choice of the most interesting, tempting and exotic cruising and far away destinations to explore, then Sevenstar's destinations inventory cannot fail to impress. From as far away as New Zealand, through to the Pacific Islands, North and South America, the Middle East, the Far East, India, Africa and of course almost all parts of Europe, the list of possibilities is endless and Sevenstar's claim that there is "always a vessel near you" is no idle boast.

Sevenstar's Marketing and Communications Manager, Sander Schuurman, told us: "Innovation has been the key to Sevenstar's success, including the development of new loading methods and adaptable shipping cradles. Today, the company arranges the transport of motor and sailing yachts up to 60 metres in length and 650 mt. Sander adds: "Traditionally one of our busiest months is always May, charging and discharging ports where we have been known to make over 70 port calls and delivering more than 200 yachts in one month alone."

At the end of 2013 Sevenstar acquired the interests of Dockwise Yacht Transport (DYT), another well known provider with the deal including two dedicated yacht transport vessels (Super Servant 4 and Yacht Express) for a total consideration of some USD 40 million. Known for their amazing 'semi-submersible' float-on, float-off vessels, DYT have an emphasis on Central and Northern US routes and although they are sister companies, it has been decided that from a marketing perspective the two brand names should remain trading separately for now.

News more recently, that Sevenstar has expanded its liner operations by merging with Complete Marine Freight's UK operation (CMF UK), is further evidence of Sevenstar's significant commitment to this market. Announced as a news item on Sevenstar's website, on the 3rd August, the merger strengthens Sevenstar's smaller 'production boat' transportation interests, as this was an area where traditionally CMF UK were strongly known for. It's important to mention, however, that CMF's Mediterranean operation remains wholly independent and was not part of the 3rd August merger announcement.



Peters & May

Peters & May Ltd provides worldwide yacht transportation services to over 4,000 vessels each year via sea, road, rail and air to any global destination. Their clients include professional and commercial organisations, individuals and leisure clients, and are the long term preferred logistics supplier to many manufacturers and race teams. Peters & May has opened wholly owned offices in the UK, USA, France, Spain, Hong Kong, China, and Germany. To support their network and extend their global reach, exclusive agencies were opened wherever partnership opportunities have been identified. Locations include: Dubai, Australia, Italy, South Africa, New Zealand, South America, Belgium and Russia. For more details Tel: +44 (0) 2380 480 500 or visit www.petersandmay.com



Sevenstar

Sevenstar Yacht Transport has successfully transported a 165 foot, 267 tonnes Wally yacht with a 70 metre mast from Genoa to Fort Lauderdale. The transport requested a precise planning and immaculate execution by the Sevenstar operations team and its experienced load masters. The enormous rig and the delicate carbon fibre material of this precious sailing yacht made the operation all the more impressive. Sevenstar Yacht Transport is the world's leading provider of yacht transportation services. In 2013 DYT Yacht Transport was acquired with its float-on, float-off specialism and two semi-submersible vessels. Making it the perfect fit. Sevenstar operates offices all around the world and offers a global network of destinations. For more details Tel: +31 20 448 8590 or visit www.sevenstar-yacht-transport.com

Sevenstar Yacht Transport is the world's leading provider of lift-on lift-off yacht shipping services. Dedicated partner DYT Yacht Transport specializes in float-on, float-off yacht transport of yachts of any size. Utilizing our 125-carrier fleet, including 2 semi-submersibles, we offer frequent sailings to more than 50 destinations throughout the world. Where would you like to go?

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One would assume quite correctly that it's in the interests of all of the different service providers to maintain at least working (if not entirely friendly) relationships between each other, ostensibly for those occasions when there is 'spare' capacity on a transport ship that is contracted to sail.

While Sevenstar is the best example of how a fleet owner/operator conducts its business, then CMF Mediterranean is typical of a smaller, independent style broker outfit and Tom Sell, Managing Director of CMF's Palma de Mallorca based operation told us: "We act as freight forwarders and broker freight transport on behalf of clients, to get the best prices. We handle the full range of yachts from small boats in containers, right up to large superyachts and the associated logistics connected to the necessary customs paperwork and liability included. With the forwarding of yacht spares and equipment also part of our remit, we like to think we offer a truly bespoke, personal service, a 'one stop shop' if you like."

*It is in the interests of all of
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relationship with each other*

One other operator known as a 'freight forwarder' is Peters & May, who are the first to admit they don't actually own any trucks or cargo ships outright, but nonetheless offer a very international and highly capable service as a broker and carrier, providing worldwide boat transport services to many of the premier race teams, superyacht owners and manufacturers, as well as many private boat owners. Peters & May's approach is to be as 'open' about the business as possible, an important consideration when explaining the pros and cons and what-ifs between a 'Liner' and a 'Charter' service, for example.

Peters & May, Global Sales and Marketing Director, Robert Blades, told us: "In terms of volume we are moving over 4,000 marine crafts of all kinds in any one year. The marine business for us is segregated into leisure, commercial, superyachts and racing & events and each category is marketed and handled in its own unique way." Asked about the intricacies of quoting for leisure marine, Robert adds: "Rates are based upon demand, timing, port infrastructure and numerous factors and variables, including the fact that sometimes a 'door to door' price might include road and sea, with the additional use of a skipper and supplying all customs advice."

"As a service orientated company, last year's ARC (Atlantic Rally for Cruisers), for example, was typical of the lengths we will go to, to do a good job. To bring participants back to Europe, customer requests dictated an additional port calling in to Antigua, as well as St. Thomas, and this year saw over 100 yachts depart the Caribbean over four vessels; a fair proportion of which were ARC participants."

With the all important customs paperwork, VAT and insurance formalities taken care of as part of the package, there's a lot to be said for using one of today's professional yacht transportation companies for complete piece of mind.



Cigisped

Cigisped Yacht Transport is an international logistics providers specialising in yacht transportation, as such they offer clients the full spectrum of yacht shipping with cradle rental, in house custom clearance, load master and transport insurance. This year, Cigisped celebrates its 30th anniversary, over the years they have established themselves as one of the leaders in the industry developing a strong network of offices, agents and partners worldwide. As a result, Cigisped Yacht Transport offers a wide range of routes but the best seller remains the ever so popular line from North Europe (Hamburg-Antwerp) to Asia (Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong, Dalian) via the Mediterranean sea (Genoa, Turkey and/or Greece) and Dubai. For more details Tel: + 971 4 380 6045 or visit www.cigisped-me.net



Complete Marine Freight

Complete Marine Freight specialises in the transport of sailing yachts and motor yachts worldwide plus handles all movements by air, sea or road of all marine related equipment. Over the past 5 years, Complete Marine Freight has established itself as a leading player in the yachting industry, providing hands on experience in global yacht shipping, freight forwarding and a range of other yacht services. Complete Marine Freight work with people who are serious about yachting and selling yachts and boats worldwide, They are a small team who offer an incredibly personalised service.

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