

# REGASIFICATION OPERATIONS RESTART IN EARNEST AFTER OLT CONTRACT WINS

*FSRU Toscana takes up its role in the Italian energy supply chain*

Permanently moored 12 miles off the coast of Livorno, the Floating Storage and Regasification Unit *FSRU Toscana* has been serving as a peak-shaving facility for Italy's gas supply over the past two years. As Italy shifts towards a more diversified supply, operations have increased over the past months. According to client-owner OLT, 2017 may get even busier. The crew has proven to be totally ready for more action.



Site Manager Pierpaolo Vinciguerra: "Since *FSRU Toscana* was moored and commissioned off the coast of Livorno in late 2013, it has been mainly used a storage facility for LNG. Our terminal

was contracted by the government to be ready for operations within 48 hours. Over the past years we have had to keep it well maintained and ready to start up, but we had to perform relatively few regasification operations to cover the demand. That has changed this year and the result is an overall upbeat atmosphere." Pierpaolo, who is responsible for the unit's maintenance and operations towards client OLT and the Italian Authorities, is well aware of what is happening. As the linchpin between ship and shore, he has daily contacts with the terminal's staff and goes on board for operations and other important activities to follow up.

## MORE DIVERSIFIED GAS SUPPLY

Until recently, Italian gas was substantially supplied through pipelines from Russia and North Africa. Lately, the Italian government has started to diversify its supply and procured LNG from Qatar, Northern Europe and South America. *FSRU Toscana* was allocated five out of six cargoes on order for Ship-to-Ship-transfers and regasification. From June to August 2016 the crew

welcomed five LNG tankers and processed the LNG delivered.

*FSRU Toscana* is managed by ECOS, a joint venture between EXMAR Ship Management and the Italian shipping company Fratelli Cosulich SPA. "Our crew is 80 percent Italian combined with 20 percent people from ESM, who all work on short rotation cycles of 28 days on – 28 days off. People with good LNG experience and, particularly regasification expertise, are still not easy to find. ESM's knowledge about LNG was and remains important for this project. Though our ESM colleagues are evidently involved in general maintenance and operations, they are mainly selected for their operational experience in regasification. In addition to the crew on board, ESM's support and know-how is an added value for ECOS when it comes to high level consultancy and technical support. And we are training our young Italian officers to be ready for the near future and to fulfill contractual obligation", says Pierpaolo.

## SMOOTH OPERATIONS

He continues: "The importance of regular operations clearly showed in December 2014, when we resumed regas operations after an idle period of nearly a year. We saw many issues related to the terminal design and the ageing of the gas. This proved to be challenging, so we have completely changed our approach. Since 2015 we



Above: The *Toscana* crew during the recent send-out (regasification) operations.

perform regas tests on board *FSRU Toscana* at least every three months. We are glad to say that our esteemed client/owner OLT allows us to use their LNG for these tests. They have been especially useful with regard to the parts of our plant which cannot be checked without actual operations. The new approach has resulted in a distinct improvement. Regasification of the five cargoes from June to August went very smoothly. Both the client and the operators were happy."

## A BOOST FOR MORALE

Moreover, the new assignments have boosted the crew's morale. "Even if the job and daily activities do not change too much for most of the crew members, the sense of actually contributing to the country's energy supply creates a good atmosphere on board. So we all hope to continue or even increase operations in 2017", concludes Pierpaolo.

## AN ENERGY GATEWAY TO THE WORLD

*FSRU Toscana* also featured in an extensive report about Italy's future energy supply on Italian national television. Lack of information to the community about the terminal and other offshore units had generated critical questions regarding public funding and safety. The crew welcomed a film crew on board to demonstrate its use and counter the concerns. The report clarified the importance of gas as an environmentally-friendly source of energy and of the unit as a gateway to the worldwide gas market, eliminating dependency on a limited number of gas suppliers. It also explained the plant does not pose a threat nor a source of pollution, as its operation follows strict government procedures when it comes to these matters. *FSRU Toscana* can cover 4 percent of Italy's yearly national gas consumption and allows the country to obtain gas from all over the world and obtain better prices.

Watch the report online at <http://bit.ly/2cbFdHb> starting at 17'30".

## LPG MIDSIZE FLEET UPDATE

# MEET OUR NEXT LPG NEWBUILD – AND PREPARE FOR MORE

Though the newbuild TBN\* *Kontich* may have looked tiny compared to neighbouring container ships at Subic Bay, we know that she will be much harder to match when it comes to versatility and sophistication. We are proud to announce that on 30th June the mid-size LPG carrier has been delivered from Hanjin Heavy Industries – Subic Bay Shipyard to EXMAR and taken into our management.

In the final quarter of 2016 we will see the delivery of newbuild number four, TBN *Kortrijk*, which was launched in September and is now in the final stretch of construction.

Meanwhile, 4 more newbuilds are on the planning at the same yard and are due for delivery in 2017 and early 2018. Keel laying of the first vessel, TBN *Kallo*, has taken place shortly after TBN *Kortrijk*'s launching. A pat on the back to our crew and office teams for keeping up the good work at an uninterrupted pace!

\* To Be Named



TBN *Kontich* during sea trials.



TBN *Kortrijk* is nearing completion and is due to soon join the fleet.



TBN *Kontich* at Subic Bay, Philippines amongst some larger but less sophisticated ladies...