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QATAR – STANDING UP AND STANDING OUT



A Qatari Family...



Here's a job description: you have a big tent and everything and everyone in it is your responsibility. That includes a population of 3 million and a GDP somewhere north of USD150 billion. The Al Thani family has had such a job since the early 1900s. Their tent is Qatar, an 11,500 sq km peninsular jutting into the Gulf from the east coast of Saudi Arabia. Its fortunes are at fever pitch right now. Several generations of Al Thani emirs have steered their state from a British Protectorate known mainly for its Gulf Pearls, through independence, to a micro superstate with international presence and a distinct approach to cultural and social development.

It's in the Constitution

Qatar's Constitution, approved by 96.6% of voters in 2003, places the Al Thani family at the centre of State governance and rule, a position of immense power. It also requires of the Al Thanis that they, through the State authorities they rule over, protect

all Qataris, nurture their children, provide rich education and life opportunities, care for the environment, manage investment and development, and engender a strong and enlightened cultural spirit, all the while keeping things peaceful. It's a big ask, but Qatar's emirs have never been shy of ambition - or imagination. Our coverage starts on page 8.

Musing about Cruising

People like cruises. Almost 30 million took voyages in 2019. Then Covid happened. Things went quiet. But in fact, it seems the hiatus has simply created pent-up demand. As restrictions loosen, people are getting back onboard. Our Cruise Manager Fergus Poole takes a dive into the sector in our Insight section on page 6.

Brazil just got easier

GAC Brazil is now an Authorised Economic Operator. This certification does two things: it approves the company's financial stability and operational standards; and it allows our people to provide faster customs clearances for our customers (see page 5). Meanwhile, we've opened new digs at Chaguaramas in Trinidad and Tobago. This is now our hub for supporting offshore operations and crew movements for the surrounding region (see page 4).

Paper-free now permanent

From early next year, we're moving GAC World content on to our website (gac.com). It's all part of GAC's drive towards more sustainable, earth-friendly practices. Think of the machinery, energy and transportation involved in converting a tree into paper and then into a printed page ready for transport as part of a magazine. We're going to keep all those resources in the ground while still keeping you posted and updated online about events, happenings and insights from around the GAC world.

A sporting chance

Qatar's international sporting outreach has made it known to the world outside the Gulf and the tanker trade. Its media outlet, Al Jazeera, has given it more weight and a larger voice than most of its neighbours. Its determination to chart its own political course means it does not shy away from disagreements with neighbours, while also making it a destination where competing powers can come to talk and reconcile their conflicts. These are a few parts of a multi-layered drive by Qatar towards a future beyond fossil fuels. Over the past 100 years, the Al Thani emirs have taken their people on an epic voyage to a position of international wealth and standing. Now they are seeking the means to maintain this lofty position.

Stuart Bowie

Editor

Sharing real-world experiences in virtual leadership initiative

When the General Stevedoring Council (GSC) called out to its members for issues to cover in its Virtual Leadership Course for younger managers, GAC stepped up with a session addressing the crew change challenge in the maritime sector.

Tackling the crisis

GAC is supporting ship owners and managers to disembark and repatriate seafarers detained on vessels due to the Covid-19 pandemic. One of the biggest repat operations GAC has ever conducted took place in India in April 2020. The leadership session was based on this event.

In three online sessions, a GAC senior manager served as facilitator and judge for the five participants and their coaches, who worked on the project, collaborating across time zones stretching from Bermuda to Hong Kong.

Future leaders

The course was followed up by a presentation on Business Development to 21 managers by Stuart Bowie, GAC's Group Vice President - Commercial.

"This was a good opportunity to connect with a group of future leaders, and explain GAC's history, culture, and the way we promote our business," says Stuart. "It is also good to learn how others have grown their companies. These young managers were given the chance to reflect on the past, present and future of selling in shipping." **GW**



Cats shift home

Two 95-tonne catamarans have made the 10,000+ km trip from Strategic Marine's shipyard in Singapore to the United Kingdom.



The cats were first towed from the shipyard to Jurong port and then lifted on to a heavy-lift vessel for the voyage to Southampton.

GAC Singapore's Senior Business Development Manager - Logistics, Pearlyn Tang, says the challenges of this job lay in multi-party coordination, challenging lashing and securing requirements, and the differences in the technical knowledge and understanding of the several stakeholders.

"When expectations differ, it is imperative that we make proactive efforts to find a win-win solution for all parties involved. This is where business relationship and trust come into play," she says.

"Constant communication, close collaboration and meticulous handling by the teams ensured the cats were well taken care of from the moment they left the shipyard to the time they arrived in Southampton."

The journey took 45 days. **GW**

Agency gong at ShipTek awards

GAC has been named the best ship agent in the 14th edition of ShipTek International Awards, which recognise companies that have made significant contributions to the maritime industry. The awards ceremony was held in conjunction with a two-day maritime, offshore and oil & gas conference in Dubai.

"Not only does this award recognise our contribution as one of the world's largest providers of ship agency services, it also acknowledges the hard work and dedication of our people, and the trust GAC has built with our customers, partners and other stakeholders since we commenced our ship agency services in Kuwait in 1956," says Stuart Bowie, Group Vice President – Commercial. **GW**



Growing demand prompts second Trinidad office



GAC has opened an office in Chaguaramas (pronounced: "shag-gah-rah-muss"), on Trinidad's north-west peninsula, west of Port of Spain, as a hub to cater for growing demand for offshore mobilisations.

The new base oversees vessels for projects in Trinidad & Tobago, Guyana and Suriname with services to move crew, cargo, bunkers and spares, plus procurement, ship agency and logistics services.

Crew changes

It also arranges air charters for crew changes. So far this year, more than 200 offshore personnel have used the charter service, all in full compliance with current Covid-19 measures.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, GAC teams in Trinidad & Tobago and Guyana have played a vital role overcoming challenges on the ground and complying with changing Covid-19 rules to execute services.

Critical services

"The development of such time critical services enables us to become the partner of choice of many customers, especially those engaged in upstream oil and gas activities" says GAC Trinidad & Tobago's Managing Director Ravindu Rodrigo. "Specialist training provided by the GAC Corporate Academy, in particular its Advanced GAC Energy Services course and other related training, plays an important role in equipping our staff with the operational expertise to meet customers' needs efficiently and safely." **GW**



Gas agent in Taiwan

Indonesia's leading LNG provider PT Donggi-Senoro LNG (DSLNG) has appointed GAC Taiwan as its agent to handle vessels, take care of cargo discharge and manage all husbandry needs at Taiwan ports.

GAC Taiwan's Managing Director Kenny So says the three-year contract was won on the back of the company's track record.

"We served as DSLNG's agent in 2018, so they are familiar with our service standards and commitment to Health, Safety, Security and the Environment (HSSE)," he says. "These are imperative for meeting the specialised and safety requirements of sophisticated LNG discharging operations."

Kenny is optimistic about Taiwan's LNG market, which has remained largely unaffected by the pandemic: "Demand is expected to continue growing as the government phases out coal and nuclear power in the coming years." **GW**

LNG Maleo ©DSLNG.



GAC Brazil accredited as Authorised Economic Operator

GAC Brazil customers can now get a simplified customs process with faster clearances and reduced costs for storage and administration after the company received Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) status from the Brazilian government.

The AEO programme recognises and certifies service providers as low risk and reliable strategic operators.

To qualify, the company had to demonstrate to the Federal Revenue of Brazil that it fulfilled the AEO programme's requirements for physical cargo security and compliance with customs and fiscal obligations.

GAC Brazil's Quality and Compliance Manager, Marco Jacobsen (pictured below), led the certification process which included demonstrating the company's solvency, operating a computer-based system to manage commercial, tax, financial and operational records, commercial and resources policies, and a compliance programme.



Milestone

"This is a tremendous milestone for us as we mark 15 years of operations in the country," says Thiago Luz, GAC Brazil's Sales Manager - Logistics. "The certification emphasises our commitment to transparent processes and procedures in line with our Health, Safety, Security and Environment (HSSE) policy." **GW**

Cruising out of the crisis?

It has been a long, tough year-and-a-half for the cruise sector. But now, as some operations tentatively restart, there is a spark of hope for the industry. GAC's Group Cruise Manager Fergus Poole assesses the post-pandemic prospects for the sector.



by Fergus Poole,
GAC's Group Cruise
Manager

The impact of Covid-19 on the cruise industry has been well documented. Rapid response by many companies allowed cruise lines to safely repatriate their crews and bring their vessels home, and much energy was put into reducing and stopping potential risk of contamination.

The industry did its part. The primary objective was to keep vessels and skeleton crews sustained, safe and well provisioned to sit out the ensuing lull until it effectively "burnt itself out"... but Covid-19 kept smouldering, flaring up from time to time in different regions, while ships lay dormant unable to mobilise as part of the grim reality of the pandemic.

Industry institutions like the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), the UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), British Ports Association, Chambers of Shipping, major ports groups and public health bodies worked on protocols to enable safe remobilisation of at least some of the world's cruise fleet of nearly 300 ships, not counting about 500 river cruise vessels.

The protocols applied to the industry are much stricter than those for hotels, public events, and rail or air travel.

Framework documents were worked upon, protocols agreed, and are being slowly approved nation by nation. Initially they will allow for a diluted cruise product, with restricted activity and capacity, but starting all the same, which is such welcome news to the industry and everyone associated with it.

Restart

According to the CLIA, since July last year, nearly 400,000 passengers, plus crew, have taken cruises with industry-leading safety protocols in Europe, Asia and the South Pacific. But that's just a drop in the ocean compared to nearly 30 million passengers who took cruises in 2019.

Some ports and countries have started offering vaccinations for cruise line crews. Passengers are required to be fully vaccinated to ensure protected on-board environments.



Optimism

Despite the uncertainty still surrounding the course of the pandemic, there is now a cautious air of optimism in the cruise industry after thousands of successful and safe nights on board. In this regard, the industry has taken the lead to meet the aspirations and expectations of its loyal customer base.

Ongoing vaccination programmes, both globally and shipboard, are feeding confidence that capacity levels will gradually rise. With the support of everyone in the cruise sector, the feeling is now that it can eventually recover and even go beyond current expectations.

Trials

Itineraries have been reshuffled, with lines reluctant to risk venturing outside known areas for the meantime. Trial cruises in some form are now either planned or have commenced in the Canary Islands, Greece, Germany, France, Italy, Norway, Croatia, Singapore, and the Middle East. The UK market has successfully navigated a domestic cruise season, allowing people to cruise, lines to resume and the recovery of some of the income lost over the past 18 months to begin. It is now opening up to international destinations, albeit with Covid restrictions dictating where vessels can go. That's a good start which is feeding optimism in the sector.

Among the ships restarting is Virgin Voyages' Scarlet Lady which set off on a domestic cruise for fully vaccinated UK residents.

In Norway, the Hanseatic Nature was the first cruise ship to visit since Covid-19 hit, taking passengers on a tour of the country's fjords. But there were no stops along the way.

The USA's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have agreed to allow trial cruises in preparation for the real thing. By the end of June, 11 cruise ships had been approved to operate simulated voyages and another eight for revenue voyages under rules that require 95% of passengers and crew to be vaccinated.

It is hoped that the US market will be able to open fully in the not-too distant future. When it does, it will have a huge impact on the Florida economy and a knock-on effect for the Caribbean islands served by US departures.

Work in progress

The voyage back to some form of normality for the global cruise sector is a work in progress, and one that is changing constantly. But the pandemic does not seem to have dented the appetite for cruising.

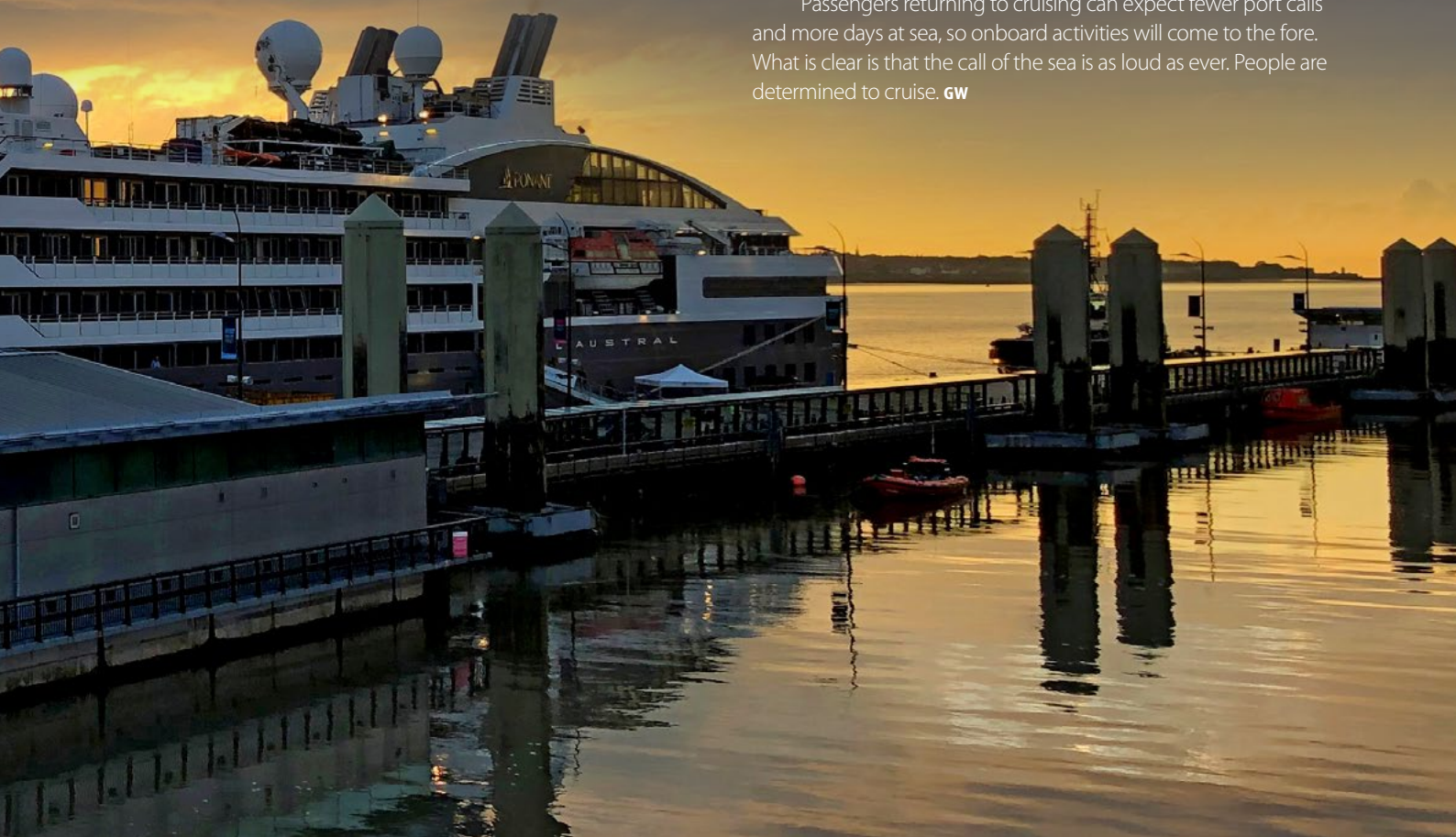
According to the CLIA, 81% of cruisers say they will cruise again, and 60% of non-cruisers are open to the idea.

With ongoing vaccination programmes, the eventual relaxation of restrictions is on the horizon, but it will be a gradual transition. Operators have to comply with lower passenger capacities decreed by governments, and it will take time to return to pre-Covid-19 levels. Embarkation testing and a self-imposed discipline requested from travellers will be another legacy of the pandemic.

Call of the sea

The wanderlust remains. Many lines have a fanatically loyal customer base and there is a genuine yearning to return to sea, evidenced by very strong demand that is already seeing some of the more exotic cruises selling out in hours.

Passengers returning to cruising can expect fewer port calls and more days at sea, so onboard activities will come to the fore. What is clear is that the call of the sea is as loud as ever. People are determined to cruise. **GW**



Small country with big visions

Qatar has come to occupy a key position in economics and politics in the Middle East. Under the leadership of the Al Thani family, the country has developed its energy resources to become a pocket powerhouse in the sector. It has also become a preferred host for international sporting events, particularly athletics and motorcycling. In 2022 Qatar will host the Football World Cup. GAC has been in Qatar since 1979, offering a full suite of shipping and logistics services. What follows is an excursion into the land and its people and GAC's part in its development.

HISTORY

The name **Qatar** dates back at least 2,000 years. In the 1st century A.D. Pliny the Elder used the word "Catharrei" to describe the inhabitants of the peninsula. A century later, the "Catara" peninsula appeared on a map by Ptolemy.

QATAR AIRWAYS

National airline of Qatar. Operations began in 1994 when the airline was a small regional carrier serving a handful of routes. The airline was re-launched in 1997 under the mandate of His Highness, The Father Emir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani. Qatar Airways has since become one of the fastest growing carriers in the history of aviation with double digit growth on average year on year.



LANDMARKS

The iconic Doha Tower, Burj Doha, provides the focal point for Doha's Central Business District, West Bay. Burj Doha has been voted both Best Tall Building Middle East & Africa and Best Tall Building Worldwide.

The Torch Doha, Aspire Tower, is Doha's tallest structure. It was built to house the 2006 Asian Games Flame. It now serves as a luxury hotel.

The Museum of Islamic Art (MIA) has become an icon. Standing apart on the waters of the Corniche, it draws influence from traditional Islamic architecture. The building is made from limestone, which captures hourly changes in light and shade.

FOOD

Machboos – Rice-based dish and a staple in Qatar. It is prepared with a variety of marinated meats or seafood of your choice.

Karak – Iconic drink of Qatar. One of the most popular drinks among locals and residents alike, Karak is a sweet concoction of tea flavoured with spices, condensed milk and cardamom.

CAMELS

Camels used to be the only mode of transport in the desert lands surrounding the Gulf. Today, they are bred for camel racing which is a huge sport in Qatar. They also remain an important source of meat and milk.

NATIONAL BIRD

The Falcon is the national bird of Qatar. Falcons are associated with nobility and wealth.

NATIONAL BEAST

The Arabian Oryx is Qatar's national animal.

SPORTS & EVENT LOGISTICS

**15th Doha Asian Games 2006**

GAC was the Official Logistics Provider

2011 Arab Games

The 2011 Arab Games was the 12th quadrennial Pan Arab Games and took place in Doha, Qatar from 6 to 23 December.

GAC Qatar was the official logistics service partner of the games.

IAAF World Athletics Championship 2019

Biennial athletics event organised by the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF), held in Doha, Qatar from 27 September to 6 October 2019.

GAC Qatar provided the full end-to-end logistics support for the event.

Motorcycling at the Losail Circuit Sports Club

MotoGP - March 2021

Grand Prix of Qatar and Grand Prix of Doha 2021

GAC is the 3PL partner for Losail Circuit Sports Club.

Football World Cup – 2022

The world's biggest soccer event being held for the first time in an Arab country.

**OIL**

Qatar drilled its first well in 1939 and began exporting crude oil as early as 1949. More fields were discovered in 1960 and again in 1970. Oil is now a huge part of the economy, and Qatar is even home to the longest drilled oil well in the world, at 40,320 ft.

CONTRACT LOGISTICS

GAC has six warehouse facilities within Salwa Industrial Area and Umm Salal – 30,000 m² of covered, temperature-controlled space including 11,000 pallet locations.

Monthly throughput of 12,500m³.

Multi-temperature storage for standard pallet, shelved, hanging garment and bulk commodities.

Value Added Services (VAS) for increased supply chain efficiency.

New contract logistics facility in Ras Bufontas Free Zone, expected to be ready in early 2022.

GAC container yard - tailor-made storage and handling for project cargo and bulk items. Capacity of 5,000 TEUs and daily throughput of 350 TEUs.

RAS LAFFAN

Established in May 2017, GAC Ras Laffan is one of the few companies in Qatar offering full agency services at the port, including hull cleaning using HullWiper.

PEOPLE AND DIVERSITY

More than 300 staff in GAC Qatar

18 nationalities



QATARI NUMBERS & NOTES



50 years

since Qatar gained independence from the UK on 3 September 1971.



11,586km²

Qatar's total area



563km

coastline



2,479,995

people live in Qatar (July 2021 est.)



800MW

capacity of the solar energy plant being built to power the 2022 Football World Cup. Qatar will be the smallest country and first Arab nation to host the tournament.



88.4%

of the population are non-Qatari nationals (2015 est.)



3:1

Proportion of men to women.



Doha,

the capital, is probably named after the Arabic word "dohat," meaning "roundness", referring to the rounded bays along the area's coastline.



Robot racers

Camel races take place at Al Shahaniya Camel Racing Track between October and February every year. Since 2004, the jockeys have been robots.



13%

of the world's proven natural gas reserves (the world's third biggest, at more than 25 trillion cubic metres).



World's

No.2

exporter of natural gas, after Russia.



Proven oil reserves of

25 billion barrels,

enough to allow production to continue at current levels for about 56 years.



USD138,910

Qatar's gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, according to the International Monetary Fund's 2020 estimates.



About

50%

of the GDP is now derived from non-oil sectors, such as manufacturing, construction, and financial services



Qatar is the world's

2nd flattest country,

behind the Maldives. Good news for cyclists!



Breaking ground in Ras Bufontas Free Zone

Construction is underway on GAC Qatar's new 27,000m² multi-user contract logistics facility following a groundbreaking ceremony in the Ras Bufontas Free Zone.

The facility is expected to be completed by early 2022. It will be built from sustainable materials, partly fuelled by solar power, have several energy-saving features and use recycled water.

The groundbreaking ceremony was attended by Anders Bengtén, Swedish Ambassador to the State of Qatar, the Chief Executive Officer of Qatar Free Zones Authority, Lim Meng Hui, Group CEO of Arabian Construction Engineering Company (ACEC), GAC's local partner, Ismail Tahboub, GAC Group Executive Chairman & Trustee Björn Engblom, GAC Group Vice President - Middle East Fredrik Nyström and senior members of QFZA and GAC Qatar executive management.

Sustainability showcase

Lim Meng Hui said the GAC logistics facility will be a showcase of sustainable building development and will contribute towards Qatar's rise as a regional logistics hub.

Connectivity

Björn Engblom said the Ras Bufontas Free Zone's strategic location and excellent connectivity to the Hamad International Airport made it a natural choice for the Group's expansion in the region.

"We are excited to be able to play a role in contributing towards the State's mission of becoming a major logistics hub for the region," he said. **GW**



(Front row): Sultan Al-Kuwari, Associate Director, Corporate Planning, Executive Office – QFZA; Lim Meng Hui, Chief Executive Officer – QFZA; Anders Bengtén, Swedish Ambassador to the State of Qatar; Fahad Zainal, A-Chief Zones Operating Officer, Chief Corporate Support Officer, Corporate Services – QFZA; Björn Engblom, GAC Group Executive Chairman & Trustee; Daniel Nordberg, GAC Qatar General Manager; Ismail Tahboub, Group CEO, ACEC Group. (Second row): John Gould, Head of Logistics, Maritime and Aerospace – QFZA; Wisam Matouk, Client Relations Manager – QFZA; Fredrik Nyström, GAC Group Vice President, Middle East.



GAC signs up to Eyesea ocean health initiative

The GAC Group has become a member of the maritime pollution reporting and mapping initiative, Eyesea.



Eyesea is a non-profit organisation supported by a range of shipping and maritime organisations. With their support, it has developed a smartphone app so users can submit geo-tagged photographs of hazards and pollution. The app was tested on board commercial vessels, with community volunteers and recreational boat users. It is now available to download by anyone who sees marine foul-ups and want to do something about it.

Commitment to sustainability

GAC's signing of the initiative chimes with its Roadmap to Sustainability, which sets out its commitment to adapt, reduce and mitigate the negative environmental impact of its activities and the communities it serves. **GW**

For more about Eyesea, go to <https://eyesea.org>



Delivering green shoots

Schools in Oman will become a whole lot greener after GAC delivered nearly 5,000 tree saplings.

The young palm, cedar, mango, fig, banana and lemon trees are now being tended by pupils at the schools in the Al-Batinah and Al-Wusta regions. The saplings were donated by OQ Refineries LLC as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility programme and in support of a national agenda that aims to plant 10 million wild plants. OQ aims to plant half a million fruit-bearing trees and plants by the end of 2023.

The saplings were entrusted to GAC drivers Mohammed Mahmood, Issa Sulaiman, Amin Dawood and Mohammed Ibrahim who completed the deliveries within three days.

Everything was done in full compliance with all Covid-19 protocols. **GW**



Taking the weight in the Med for North Sea windfarm

Work is underway in Greece to send more than 150 massive components for the seabed foundations of an offshore windfarm in the North Sea. At the port of Volos, GAC Greece has been contracted to coordinate the ten-month logistics project.

In all, 24 vessels will take on about 120 piles and 36 casings at Volos. The piles and pile casings are up to 50 metres long and weigh 290 tons. They are destined to submerge at the Neart Na Gaoithe windfarm project off the coast of Fife, Scotland.

GAC Greece has leased warehouse space for the project which also includes receiving, consolidating, and clearing materials from the UK and the EU. As the UK is no longer part of the European Union, the shipments are imported/exported under a T1 customs bond document. Care has to be taken with post-Brexit documentation to avoid misdeclaration.

Magnitude

GAC Greece Assistant General Manager Socrates Zorbas has been on site to ensure the first two shipments departed safely.

"This is a challenging project involving coordination and fine tuning of several services and contractors, to ensure the high service levels expected of GAC worldwide," he says. "Although it is the first time we are working with them in Greece, we look forward to expanding our cooperation in the future."



GAC is also the agent and logistics contractor in the UK, handling all vessels for the Neart Na Gaoithe windfarm project.

In addition to discharging shipments coming into the port of Blyth from Greece, and elsewhere, GAC UK teams have already provided extensive crewing support at Aberdeen Heliport with full Covid-19 precautions, as well as vessel agency and logistics support at Leith and Blyth for the installation vessels.

GAC UK local teams have also been providing ship agency, logistics and customs services to support vessels at the installation of the piles and casings, which has been underway since last year. **GW**



Supporting all-female sailing team at Marstrand

GAC colleagues and customers were out in force in Marstrand to cheer on Klara Wester and her all-female crew in the GKSS Match Cup.



Klara was joined on board the Far East 28 one-design yacht by Rebecca Netzler and match racers Julia Carlsson and Beata Törneman, and Ida Svensson.

GAC UK and its sailing logistics specialist arm GAC Pindar covered their accommodation and attendance costs for the GKSS Match Cup Marstrand. Supporting an all-female sailing crew aligns with GAC UK's signing of the Maritime UK's Diversity in Maritime Charter dedicated to closing the gender gap and making the maritime sector more inclusive. **GW**



Appointments



Lars Hardeland



Ian Boyd



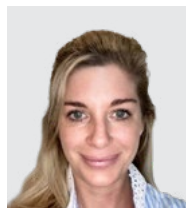
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Peter Orange



Henrik Althen



Sofie Bager



Magnus Sjögren



Rafaelito Javier



Göran Eriksson



Francois Traversa



Melwyn Crasto



Alwyn Mendonca



Julian Kordek

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Group Operations Director – Shipping, and Managing Director of GAC Hub Services DWC LL
Previously: Managing Director of GAC Hub Services DWC-LLC

Group Sales – Shipping

Ian Boyd

Group Sales Director – Shipping
Previously: Group Marketing Manager, responsible for Belgium, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands & UK

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GAC Dubai

Magnus Sjögren

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GAC Group

Rafaelito Javier

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GAC Thailand & GAC Thoresen Logistics, Thailand

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Delivering your strategy.