

SRC Group's Methanol Superstorage Receives Approval in Principle from RINA, Advancing Clean Fuel Adoption in Shipping

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SRC Group, a leader in maritime innovation, has announced that its groundbreaking Methanol Superstorage technology has received Approval in Principle (AiP) from international classification society RINA. This significant milestone follows a thorough verification process that considered the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) interim safety guidelines and amendments to the International Code of Safety for Ships Using Gases or Other Low-Flashpoint Fuels (IGF Code). The AiP confirms that Methanol Superstorage meets both IMO requirements and class society rules.

According to RINA, the AiP validates that the technology can “achieve an equivalent level of safety to prescriptive requirements and improve the utilization rate of space as required for methanol and ethanol fuel storage onboard different ship types.” This enhanced space efficiency is a key advantage of the system.

Alex Vainokivi, Innovation Manager at SRC Group, hailed the development as a “sizeable step forward” for the broader adoption of Methanol Superstorage. He highlighted the technology’s retrofit capability, stating that it can be implemented “without major disruption” across a wide range of existing vessel types.

Methanol Superstorage, which previously secured approval from Lloyd’s Register in October 2023, utilizes a proprietary Sandwich Plate System Technology. This innovative design replaces the traditional internal wall-cofferdam-external wall structure with a solid elastomer core ‘sandwiched’ between two steel plates, reportedly boosting storage volume by up to 85%.

SRC Group emphasizes that this technology offers a viable pathway for vessels with significant operational lifespans remaining to transition to methanol, a clean marine fuel. Methanol is positioned as a crucial solution for meeting the IMO's ambitious targets for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from ships: at least 20% by 2030 and 70% by 2040, based on 2008 levels.

The company notes that while other decarbonization technologies like hydrogen and carbon capture are still in early stages of development, conventionally produced methanol offers easier storage and handling. SRC Group underscores methanol's potential to become a "clear pathway" towards achieving the IMO's net-zero emissions goal.

With the number of methanol-fueled vessels rapidly increasing – currently around 240 units in service or on order, according to RINA – SRC Group believes that solutions tailored to this alternative fuel, such as Methanol Superstorage, are poised for significant growth and adoption within the maritime industry.