

# THE BBC NAVIGATOR



**BBC DUBAI**  
Celebrating 20 years

**LAKERMAX**  
New to our fleet

Navigating to excellence





**BBC LEER**  
in the Kiel Canal

Photo: Blake Caccavale

# NAVIGATING UNCERTAINTY



Dear readers,

The global shipping industry is currently facing a challenging balance of uncertainty and resilience. Political decisions such as trade tariffs and shifting geopolitical dynamics have introduced new complexities into the market. For instance, a trade war characterized by escalating tariffs between major economies has created an unpredictable environment for international trade.

Despite these challenges, the market outlook remains stable and positive. The limited new tonnage entering the market, coupled with steady demand, signals good news for us as operators. Although the slow pace of new vessel construction raises concerns about long-term fleet renewal, it provides immediate relief by keeping supply in check. Industry players must approach these challenges with caution, but for now, the market exhibits resilience, maintaining stability amid a turbulent global landscape.

So, what's new at BBC? Our LakerMax fleet continues to expand, with five vessels already in service and ten more on the way. The capability and versatility of these vessels have exceeded expectations, and the five delivered thus far have performed exceptionally well. Perhaps it is therefore not entirely unexpected that much of this issue revolves around this new type of ship, of which we are proud and which we will certainly report on in future issues.

Later this year, we will take delivery of the first of eight more F500-type vessels, featuring reinforced hulls classified as E3, which is equivalent to the Swedish/Finnish Ice Class 1A. These vessels will be named after cities in the Baltic Sea, where harsh winters require such classifications for operation in specific areas. The delivery of these specially ice-strengthened F500-Class vessels will continue through 2028.

We also have some anniversaries to celebrate. Volker Mattha and Ianto Keyk recently celebrated their 25th and 20th anniversaries, respectively, with BBC Chartering. Additionally, our office in Dubai has proudly served as our stronghold in the Middle East for 20 years. Congratulations to all the jubilee celebrants!

The trade fair season is already in full swing and we look forward to seeing you at major industry events this year,

I hope you enjoy browsing this fourth edition of the **BBC NAVIGATOR**.

Ulrich Ulrichs  
CEO, BBC Chartering

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# TIME TO CELEBRATE

Twenty Years of BBC in the Middle East



**Denis Bandura**  
Managing Director

BBC Chartering has proudly maintained a strong presence in Dubai since opening our first office in 2005. This strategic location has allowed us to enhance our role in the Middle East, supporting a diverse range of industries, including oil and gas, construction, and infrastructure development. Dubai's status as a major global trade hub makes it the ideal base

for coordinating operations across the region, enabling us to provide clients with top-tier logistics solutions for complex cargo movements.

Over the past two decades, we have built strong relationships with local and regional businesses, ensuring the safe and efficient transportation of oversized and heavy equipment. Our unwavering commitment to excellence in safety, service, and sustainability has established us as a trusted partner for numerous large-scale projects.

In recent years, BBC Chartering has regularly exhibited at Breakbulk Middle East, a rapidly growing exhibition that offers invaluable networking opportunities with companies from both the region and around the world.



**Manthan Bhomkar**  
Technical Engineer



**Ivan Miletic**  
Port Operations Manager



**Ibrahim Khan**  
Chartering Manager



**Gianluca Esposito**  
Senior Chartering Manager



**Cathrine Hejl Hybel**  
Chartering Manager



**Jesko F. Kaymer**  
Senior Chartering Manager



**Douglas Clarke**  
Operations Manager





BBC HOUSTON captured during loading operations in Dubai in December 2024.



Amrith Kumar  
Port Captain



Digvijay Zala  
Port Captain



Tanya Borisenko  
Operations/Postfixure



Rahel Girma  
Operation Assistant/Administration



Oleg Tereschenko  
Senior Technical Manager



Yegor Lyapin  
Port Captain



Anil Kumar Govindan  
Port Captain



# The LAKERMAX series

The current BBC newbuilding series vessels are typically referred to by their specific vessel names or simply as "LakerMax." However, there are various expressions, abbreviations, and even nicknames used to describe them. Here is a list of those names.

## ONE VESSEL TYPE many names

Traditional type designation

Official type designation

Announcement title

Working title

"BBC Leer type": following our old tradition to name a vessel type after the first delivery

"BBC-13K-500A": following the vessel category naming by combining deadweight and crane capacity

"LakerMax" / "L-Max": Like a Suezmax, this vessel type is matching one of the 3 max categories for a canal or lock transit, in this case the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System.

"V-Max": As this vessel was designed to optimize the volume intake, the V-Max stands for maximum volume.





**Unique Selling points or the competitive edge of the LakerMax:** Are there unique selling points in shipping building? Of course, there are. At least for a certain period of time, until a good idea or concept becomes market standard. One unique selling point of our L-Max is the triple deck or in other words a second tween deck to increase the intake, offering considerably more floor space.

**The names:** How did we choose the actual vessel names? Quite simple actually. To put the worldwide employees and BBC's office locations in focus it was decided that the LakerMax vessels should be named after BBC offices. The start was done with the head office, giving name to our new flagship, the "BBC LEER". Yet, there will also be a BBC GENEVA and a BBC BASEL. These names have been suggested by Briese Switzerland, a company based in Basel, active in attracting finance investors to a part of the BBC fleet.

**Planned, built and done?** No! A BBC task force has been formed, which monitors the technical, operational and commercial performance of this vessel type. Data is shared within Briese and BBC to share experience, to improve performance and to update potential future vessel designs and concepts. Throughout the entire phase of the newbuilding program, insights and findings gained on the vessels already in service can be incorporated in the sister ships yet to be delivered.

**Similarities with the previous newbuilding series?** You loved the little brick set model of our F500-series?

A version of the LakerMax is in the making. Stay tuned!







# IMPRESSIVE loading

Fully erected Buhler 540mt-shipunloader from China to Japan





**Cargo:** 540mt fully erected  
Buhler ship unloader  
**Loading date:** 8 December 2024  
**Loading port:** Zhangjiagang, China  
**Destination:** Kobe, Japan

#### Some background on the fixture

Buhler is a well-known Swiss port facility manufacturer with a strong relationship with BBC Chartering. This is already the fourth fixture with BBC, but this time the technical team from BBC in Singapore spent several months collaborating with Buhler's engineers to develop the loading and discharging methods.

In this photo, BBC OPAL had already safely discharged the ship unloader onto a pontoon in Kobe, Japan. We at BBC already look forward to the next potential shipment from Buhler and thank them for entrusting us with the transportation of their precious cargo.



# BBC KEY FACTS

Any port. Any cargo.

Welcome to a snapshot of our past year. In this spread, you'll find key statistics with highlights from our fleet and its daily operations etc. for our year 2024. From the number of vessels in our fleet to the volume of cargo transported, these figures demonstrate our commitment to delivering exceptional service and maintaining strong relationships with our clients and partners.



# 30

more than  
OFFICES  
WORLDWIDE

# 140

more than  
VESSELS  
OPERATED

# 300

more than  
EMPLOYEES  
WORLDWIDE

BBC SINGAPORE

## FOUR BBC VESSELS

in Rio de Janeiro, September 2024  
"photobombed" by a bulk carrier.

BBC FUJI



# 5030

PORT CALLS

# 950

VOYAGES



# 774

DIFFERENT PORTS  
WORLDWIDE LISTED

# 159

PORT CALLS  
@HOUSTON AS  
NO.1 PORT

# 1,8M

DWT TOTAL  
CARGO CAPACITY

# 4300

PARTNERS  
COOPERATED WITH



● BBC PHILIPPINES

BBC WASHINGTON ●



# IMPRESSIVE projects

1 country, 3 projects, 12 vessels

In 2024 and the first quarter of 2025, BBC has been actively involved in three projects in Brazil. The Mero field is an ultra-deepwater oil field located approximately 180 km offshore Rio de Janeiro. The Buzios field is situated about 200 km offshore Rio de Janeiro, while the Bacalhau oil field is in Brazil's pre-salt region in the Santos Basin, approximately 185 km off the coast of São Paulo.



## The 'easy' shipments

It all began with a straightforward contract of five pipe shipments from Bremen to Rio de Janeiro. Shipping pipes from Bremen is typically trouble-free. The port of Bremen, along with our local partners and our office there, ensures smooth operations. As a result, we delivered an enjoyable experience for our client, who appreciated the hospitality at our Bremen office.

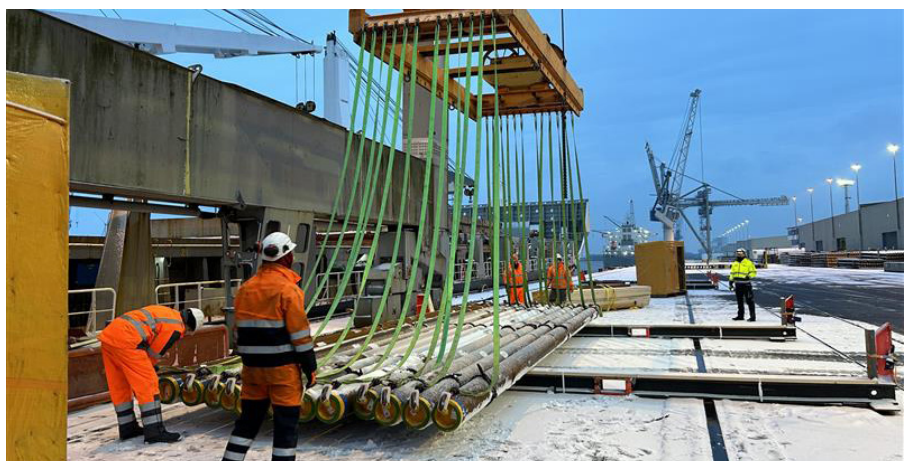
### Involved vessels:

- BBC RAISE (Nov 23)
- BBC SEBASTOPOL (Jan 24)
- BBC KIBO (June 24)
- BBC RIO (Sept 24)
- BBC AUSTRIA (Jan 25)

*Project lead: Gunnar Koenen*

## The challenging shipments

In 2024, BBC received a request for quotation (RFQ) for two shipments



of suction piles in a vertical position from Zhuhai, China, to Acu, Brazil. This required open hatch sailings. With our new series of L-Max vessels designed for open hatch operations, we were confident that we could carry out this shipment without major issues. However, it quickly became evident that we

needed larger vessels. After reviewing our fleet, we identified only one option: the BBC-14K-800A. Although it didn't have open hatch notation, our technical manager was able to secure the permission needed for open hatch sailing.





Open hatch sailings are not new to the industry. We at BBC Chartering anticipate that the need and demand for such sailings will increase. This is also why our new vessel class, the LakerMax, has been designed for open hatch sailings.

The technical preparations began in Leer, involving collaboration between BBC and Briese to obtain the necessary permissions. Once secured, the technical team in Leer handed over the project to the local team in Singapore for the final planning of the two voyages.

The first shipment on the BBC Citrine required extensive planning, excellent coordination, and participation in numerous preparation meetings. The arrangement of the hatch covers and tween deck panels, along with the installation of an additional bilge pump system, had never been executed on this







vessel type before, making it a significant learning experience. The loadout plan was also a new endeavor.

For the second shipment, we were able to move much more quickly. We improved and optimized the loadout process and the securing arrangements for the cargo. Additionally, the discharging process was optimized, making the overall operation more efficient.

#### Involved vessels:

- BBC CITRINE (Oct 24)
- BBC OPAL (Jan 25)
- BBC ECHO (Dec 24)

#### The “clean up” calls

After a project, much of the equipment needs relocation and demobilization. In the aforementioned projects, BBC successfully returned vessels to Europe with empty reels and other demobilized

equipment.

#### Involved vessels:

- BBC PHILIPPINES (Sept 24)
- BBC SCANDINAVIA (Feb 25)
- NORDIC KYLIE (Feb 25)
- BBC DAKOTA (Mar 25)

*Project lead: Carin Zestermann & Kristopher Bramley*

#### Quotes from the Captains:

**Vitaliy Levchenko:** “I was personally surprised when I received a request for the calculation of the specified cargo with an ocean crossing with open hatch covers and it is very pleasant for me that our calculations were implemented and our company proved that nothing is impossible in cargo transportation.”

**Alex Surkov:** “It was a good challenge for our heavy lifters. One of my best training and pre-planning exercises.”

#### Partners & Friends

Successful projects like these require a high level of flexibility and creative problem-solving. We have navigated challenges such as floating project schedules, bad weather, congested ports, changing packing lists, and many other uncertainties.

This success hinges on having good partners who are creative, flexible, open-minded, and willing to contribute as well as receive. This positive attitude has been demonstrated not only by the BBC team but also by our clients, subcontractors, ship managers, and crews.

We depend on our partners just as they depend on us. This collaborative approach is the key to transforming a plan into a successful project.







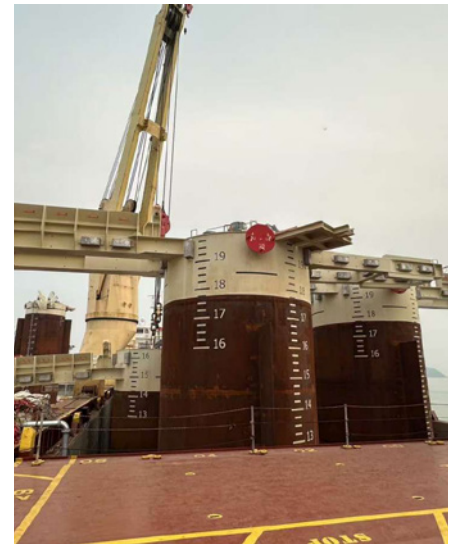
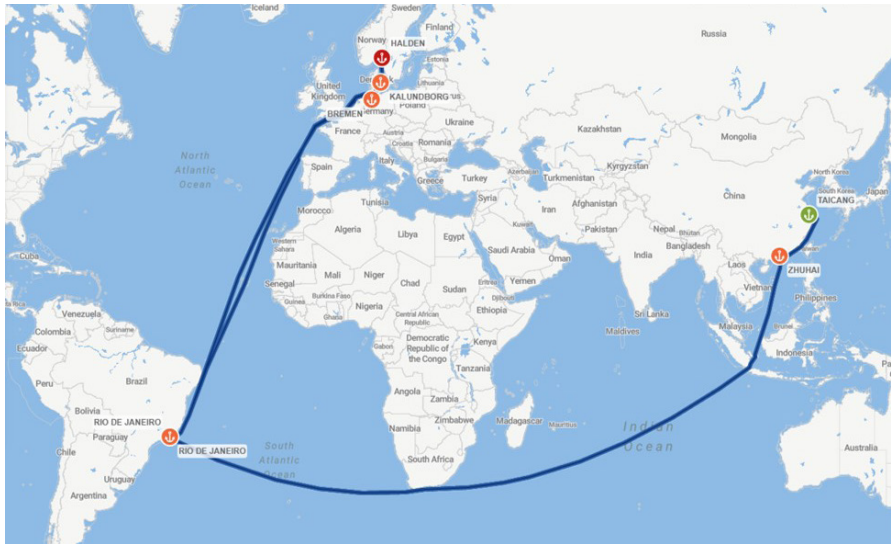
### Lessons learned

Having multiple shipments of the same nature within a project is highly beneficial, as it allows us to directly apply the lessons learned and transfer knowledge throughout the project.

A positive culture around lessons learned is essential. This does not mean we ignore mistakes, but rather that we focus on improvement and growth. In this instance, 11 shipments across three projects benefited from global project coordination and regular lessons learned sessions and feedback meetings with our client.







### Who is involved in a project?

BBC is a leading project carrier, making project shipments a core aspect of our daily operations. However, many people only interact with 1-3 BBC staff members during a shipment. The client's commercial team communicates with the Chartering manager and receives updates from the operator and the documentation team. Agents typically engage only with the operator. Meanwhile, clients from the Marine Warranty Survey (MWS) and technical teams connect with the BBC technical team, and the collaboration continues in this manner.

It is time to acknowledge the entire BBC team behind the scenes—at least 90% of the effort! There are still other important teams missing from this recognition, such as the Fix Macs team, the marketing team, the finance team, and many more.

THE WHOLE TEAM BEHIND			
BBC CITRINE		BBC OPAL	BBC ECHO
PROJECT LEAD	Adrian Lin		
OPERATIONS	Christoph Deters	Jan Hemmelskamp	Lasse Wettig
LOCAL OPERATIONS	Ryan Chan   Daniel Fernandes   Zuleica Rocha   Jenny Guo		
DOCUMENTATION	Matthias Harms   Susanne Kellert & Team   Ianto Keyk		
TECHNICAL SUPPORT & ENGINEERING	Volker Mattha   Phillip Müller   Xiaolin Cong		
PORT CAPTAINS	Hoyt Lai   Cristie Galvao   Björn Hellenthal   John Zhong		
HSEQ	Jessica Groen   Johannes Reifig		
LEGAL SUPPORT	Thomas Bock   Andrei Karchenkov		
LOCAL COMMERCIAL SUPPORT	Silvia Ortiz		
SUPPLIER MANAGEMENT	Kathrine Rostgaard		
VESSELS	Briese Schifffahrt - Florian Schepers Reederei Jüngerhans - Christian Hanses		
NAUTICAL TECHNICAL SUPPORT	Captain Vitaliy Levchenko Captain Alex Surkov & Crew	Captain Yuriy Shestov Captain Roberto Navarro Jr. & Crew	Captain Viktor Razinkov & Crew
MATERIAL MANAGEMENT	Stephanie Hoehme		



## OUT of the box

Not every piece of cargo fits perfectly inside a vessel's hold or even on deck within the vessel's limits. However, this doesn't stop us from shipping these items; our technical teams make it possible. With careful planning, detailed engineering, and a creative "out of the box" mindset, we can safely carry out such voyages. Additionally, our large and diverse fleet, along with our ongoing newbuilding program, enables us to provide the necessary services to our clients.

BBC SJARD with spreader frame

## ESSENTIAL training

Training is an essential part of our business. Knowledge transfer, lessons learned and training on new regulations, CP updates, technical updates and HSEQ are some items but not everything we need to be trained on.

End of last year BBC started internally the "Weak Signals" campaign, driven by our HSEQ department in our headquarters. In January 2025 we started with full speed and moved the campaign to North and South America, completed

by further internal training sessions like the BBC lessons learned campaign.

Besides this, BBC gets regularly invited for workshops with clients. These workshops create a solid foundation for mutual understanding of each other industries, knowledge transfer, lessons learned exchange and finally building a reliable partnership.





# ANNIVERSARIES to celebrate

We are celebrating significant milestones! Over the past 20 to 25 years, each of you has contributed your enthusiasm and strength to BBC, playing a vital role in the prosperity of our company with your expertise. Your colleagues rely on your experience, and you are always open to understanding their diverse needs. This dedication sets you apart every day.

**Thank you for your extraordinary commitment, and congratulations on your anniversaries!**





# FIRST PORT CALL

in Japan. Full flat deck. Three-tier tweendeck

The BBC GENOA made its first port call in Japan on February 17, where it docked at Honmoku Wharf in Yokohama Port. This vessel is the third in the 15-vessel LakerMax series and was loaded with parts for an industrial plant. Japanese local maritime media reported about the vessel and its maiden call.



Peter Roland, Managing Director of BBC Chartering Japan, highlighted some unique features of the BBC GENOA: "The vessel has a completely flat hatch cover that can be opened and closed in eight locations, and it features a three-tier deck that can be adjusted to nine different heights. These specifications enhance operational responsiveness and speed, allowing us to meet the diverse needs of our customers, including those in heavy industry."

To commemorate the occasion, Peter Roland and Senior Port Captain Yoshiki Kasagi presented a plaque to Captain Tamerlan Dzgoev and First Officer Andrey Druzhinin to celebrate the vessel's inaugural port call in Japan.

"I have been with the vessel since its construction in China, and it is also my first ship as a captain, so I have a very strong personal attachment to it," said Captain Tamerlan, "I especially like the flat weather deck, which has no obstacles at all, and it contributes to the safety of cargo and crew." After her maiden call in Japan, BBC GENOA headed to the U.S.

## 15-ship series

The third vessel in the series, the BBC Genoa, was delivered in August last year. This vessel has a deadweight tonnage of 13,417 dwt and dimensions of 149.95 meters in length, 24.44 meters in width, and 42.19 meters in height. It is equipped with two 250-ton lifting cranes, providing a total lifting capacity of up to 500 tons.

To facilitate the loading of ultra-long cargo, the ship features a bridge and living quarters located at the bow. Two cranes are positioned on the port side, with the funnel situated next to the hull, maximising the loading space on the weather deck to over 100 meters in total length.

The height inside the hold is 15 meters, which exceeds the 11-12 meters typically found in multi-purpose vessels of the same size, allowing for a cargo capacity of more than 27,000 cubic meters.

Additionally, two tweendecks enable cargo to be loaded in a three-layer configuration, with the locking positions of the tweendeck panels being located in nine different increments for enhanced flexibility when accommodating cargo of different sizes.







# NEWS from the Briese Group





# LAKERMAX

## advanced



On 17 and 18 February 2025, an advanced shiphandling workshop for the 'LakerMax' vessels was held at the Maritime Simulation and Resource Centre (MSRC) in Québec, Canada.

The M/V BBC HOUSTON is scheduled to transit the St. Lawrence Seaway at the end of April and will be the first of this vessel type to operate in the Great Lakes. These ships are specifically designed to travel upbound carrying wind turbines and downbound transporting grain or other cargo. With accommodations located in the forward section, this new series of DWT 13,000 multipurpose triple-deckers represents an innovative design for the Great Lakes system.

To ensure smooth navigation through the Seaway locks and narrow channels, the Great Lakes Pilotage Authority (GLPA) collaborated with Briese Schiffahrt to familiarize themselves with the vessel's handling characteristics.

The GLPA assigned four senior pilots, each representing one of the four GLPA districts, to participate in the training. Additionally, Briese Schiffahrt invited eight former and future captains of the 'LakerMax' vessels.

The workshop was attended by Briese's Nautical Fleet Manager, Bernd Hartmann, along with Superintendent Captains Asja Stomberg and Hanns Bergmann. Together, the GLPA pilots and Briese crew formed bridge teams to enhance their understanding of the 'LakerMax's' performance in the Seaway locks and narrow channels.

Prior to the training, the pilots designed a series of complex exercises to address district-specific challenges posed by the new ship design. These exercises included maneuvering with the unique approach walls of the Seaway locks and navigating the St. Lawrence River's confined spaces, crosscurrents, and gusty winds.

Both the experienced river pilots and the seasoned deep-sea navigators appreciated the open exchange and productive discussions. Each session concluded with a thorough debriefing by MSRC operators, which ensured a comprehensive evaluation of the training. The final assessment was clear: the 'LakerMax' design, featuring a 360° view wheelhouse and high-performance rudder, excelled in all exercises.





# UPCOMING events

We look forward to seeing you soon at these events.



## Intermodal

22-24 April 2025

São Paulo Expo, São Paulo, Brazil

## JOC Breakbulk25

23-25 April 2025

New Orleans, LA, United States

## Breakbulk Europe

13-15 May 2025

Ahoy Rotterdam, Rotterdam, The Netherlands



Detailed and up-to-date information on forthcoming events on our website: [bbc-chartering.com](https://bbc-chartering.com)





## BBC AMBER

as seen by Flying Focus in the North Sea, approaching Cuxhaven.

The next issue of **THE BBC NAVIGATOR** is scheduled for Q3-2025



# BUILDING THE FLEET FOR THE FUTURE

We are building the next generation of multipurpose heavy-lift vessels, the BBC LakerMax. By 2026 fifteen of these very versatile triple-deckers will have joined our fleet. They offer more space and stowage options under deck for your valuable and sensitive cargo. With more unobstructed space on deck and the ability to sail with open hatches. Equipped with tow Liebherr 250-mt shipboard cranes. On top, eight more F500-type vessels will join our fleet by 2028.

