



Launching of the first WB-18 CTV from Wallaby Boats GmbH

World premiere: innovative, suspension ship takes to the water for the first time

With the traditional ceremonial launching lift at Hitzler Werft GmbH in Lauenburg / Elbe on Thursday, March 21, 2024, the new build with the building number WB-18#001 from Wallaby Boats GmbH has now been successfully entrusted to its element and launched into the water. The ceremony was held in a large circle at the Hitzler shipyard, which built the hull in Lauenburg as a production partner in collaboration with Wallaby Boats. The ship, which weighs over 50 tons, was carefully lifted from its building site using two gantry cranes, each with a lifting capacity of 32 tons, “flown” through the shed and placed in the shipyard's own harbour basin.

The groundbreaking innovation is the world's first ship with a suspension system for commercial use. This suspension system, developed by Australian inventor Nauti-Craft, enables the two hulls of the catamaran to independently balance and compensate for wave forces and the resulting movements. As a result, the deck of the ship, the so-called chassis, can be kept relatively calm in the passive mode of the system and can dampen a considerable part of the accelerations during transit. In active mode, it even remains absolutely balanced. This makes the transit voyage much more comfortable, even with smaller ships, which significantly reduces the risk of seasickness and, above all, makes the transfer from technicians to offshore structures or from pilots to large ships much safer. As part of a development partnership resulting from a collaboration with the Carbon Trust, the innovation will initially be tested together with EnBW Erneuerbare Operation & Service GmbH, the new owner of the ship, during operations in their Baltic Sea wind farms.

In January 2022, shortly before construction of the ship began, the development of the Wallaby-18 was named "best innovation 2021" by the technical magazine **WINDPOWER**. "This award, from one of the leading international magazines in offshore wind, fills us with pride. We are delighted about the extremely high level of interest and the many registrations for test drives with the prototype!" says Eike Kristian Höper, Managing Director of Wallaby Boats GmbH.

"We are delighted to have brought the construction of this completely new type of ship to a successful conclusion and have been able to further strengthen our partnership with Wallaby Boats GmbH. The development of such an innovative vessel is always a great challenge. Since taking over the Hitzler shipyard in March 2021, we have been committed to innovative projects like this, which make shipping more environmentally friendly and the German shipbuilding location more attractive," says Marek Klimenko, Managing Director of the Hitzler shipyard in Lauenburg.

The ship's most innovative features include an upper main deck structure and two separate hulls connected by an active or passive hydraulic suspension and damping system to compensate for wave motion. The movement of the hulls caused by the swell is damped by the cylinders of this hydraulic system and also converted into pressure and heat energy. The waste heat is used to heat the ship, including the deck, in winter and the pressure will be converted back into electrical energy in future, which can be used to support the entire power supply on the ship (so-called energy recovery, patented).

In addition, the deck superstructures will be optionally equipped with integrated photovoltaic elements in order to reduce resource requirements during operation. The ship will meet all requirements for the highest environmental standards, such as TIER-3 and EU SRR, and will be considerably more efficient in operation than other ships with the same performance in rough seas.

The newbuild was accompanied by Lloyds Register and will be classed as +100 A1 SSC Workboat, Catamaran, HSC, G2A +LMC.

"It was very helpful for us, especially because of the logistical challenges in the post-CORONA times, to be able to rely mainly on local or national suppliers," says Höper. These include HYDAC (Hamburg office), with its Dutch subsidiary HYCOM, for the hydraulics, Zoller (Elmshorn) and Noris (Rostock) for the electrics and automation, Thitronik Marine (Kiel) for navigation and radio, Tischlerei Wessels (Haren/Ems) for the fittings and N. Jöhnk from Warder for the precise drilling of the swing arm bearings.

The prototype takes the Nauti Craft technology from TRL 5 to TRL 7 (Technical Readiness Level) - a huge step! Höper proudly reports on the next generation, which is already in the drawer. These ships, which will then be at TRL 8 to 9, will feature further innovations and will initially be offered in the sizes WB-20 and WB-24. The daughter craft variants, on the other hand, will be available in sizes WB-10 and WB-12.

"As a small shipping company from the tranquil town of Kappeln on the Schlei, we are very proud to have been involved in this exciting project from the very beginning. Over the next few weeks, the ship will be fitted out at Hitzler Werft's outfitting quay and tested in port before the

crossing via Hamburg and the Kiel Canal for sea trials in the Baltic Sea. There, the ship with its innovative suspension system will be put through its paces and, in particular, demonstrate its performance in rough seas, which is eagerly awaited by the industry. The christening is planned for the end of April in Kappeln," says Harald Hübner, Managing Director of OFFCON GmbH.

Interested parties can register for the newsletter on the homepage (www.wallaby-boats.de) to stay informed about further developments of this innovative type of ship or to request further information and, if necessary, an appointment for a test drive.

