
Outsiders and alliances in container shipping

2019/08/05 15:11 στην κατηγορία INTERNATIONAL

HMM recently announced that the carrier will join THE Alliance in April 2020.

This marks the end of HMM's search for alliance membership after the G6 alliance ceased to exist some 4 years ago. In 1998, HMM became an alliance member for the first time when the carrier joined the New World Alliance (NWA).

In the early 2010s, the NWA teamed up with the Grand Alliance members to create G6. A wave of M&A activity in the liner shipping industry resulted in a new alliance landscape in recent years. HMM found itself outside the alliance structure for the first time since the pioneering years of alliances. HMM made attempts to team up with the 2M alliance.



SMU - Center for Eurasian
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HMM's position alliance formation

Q2 1996	Q1 1998	Q4 2005	Q4 2009	Q1 2012
GLOBAL ALLIANCE	NWA	NWA	NWA	G6 ALL
APL	APL/NOL	APL/NOL	APL/NOL	APL
MOL	MOL	MOL	MOL	MOL
Nedlloyd	HMM	HMM	HMM	HMM
OOCL				Hapag
MISC				NYK
	GRAND ALLIANCE II	GRAND ALLIANCE III	GRAND ALLIANCE IV	OOCL
GRAND ALLIANCE	Hapag-Lloyd	Hapag-Lloyd	Hapag-Lloyd	CK
Hapag-Lloyd	NYK Line	NYK Line	NYK Line	Har
NYK Line	P&O Nedlloyd	OOCL	OOCL	K-L
NOL	OOCL	MISC		Yang
P&OCL	MISC		CKYH	COS
	UNITED ALLIANCE	CKYH	Hanjin	
	Hanjin	Hanjin	K-Line	
	Cho Yang	K-Line	Yang Ming	
	UASC	Yang Ming	COSCO	
	CYK ALLIANCE			
	K-Line			
	Yang Ming			
	COSCO			

While some slot charter agreements are in place, it became evident that HMM would not receive full member status of 2M. HMM's associate status to 2M will end in April. HMM has an impressive orderbook despite the carrier's somewhat smaller scale compared to the top 5 carriers.

Operating the new range of mega vessels alone did not seem to be an option, hence the announced membership of THE Alliance (other members include Hapag-Lloyd, Ocean Network Express - ONE - and Yang Ming).

The strategic move of HMM comes at a time when the European Commission is evaluating the impact and relevance of alliances in order to determine whether the

Consortia Block Exemption Regulation (Commission Regulation 906/2009), which expires on 25 April 2020, should be prolonged and, if so, under which conditions.

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