

Direct Access to Maersk's Latest World's Largest Methanol Dual-Fuel Containership: A Conversation with Singhai Seafarer, Chief Officer Yang Xinya



Danish shipping giant Maersk adds another new vessel! The "Barcelona Maersk" – the final vessel in the world's largest methanol dual-fuel containership series. We specially invited the vessel's inaugural Chief Officer – Singhai seafarer, Chief Officer Yang Xinya – for an exclusive interview to share his experience with the delivery of this 17,480 TEU methanol dual-fuel containership, the technical challenges involved, and his professional reflections against the backdrop of green shipping.

PART-1 Chief Officer Yang Xinya, hello! Please briefly introduce yourself.

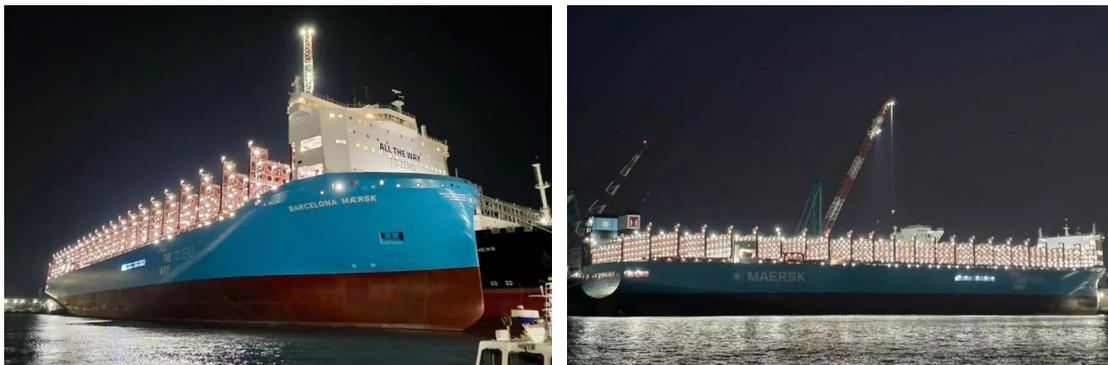
Hello everyone! I am Chief Officer Yang Xinya. I have been working at sea since 2011, for nearly 16 years now. In 2013, I switched from bulk carriers to container ships and officially began serving Maersk. Since Singhai took over the Maersk crew management business, I have also become a part of the Singhai family. The current vessel I serve on operates on the Asia route via the Cape of Good Hope to Europe.

PART-2 Chief Officer Yang, you recently took delivery of a new vessel, the "Barcelona Maersk," at a shipyard in South Korea. Can you share some details about this containership with us?

Certainly. It is a great honor to serve as the first Chief Officer of the "Barcelona Maersk." This vessel is the final one in a series of six 17,000+ TEU methanol dual-fuel containerships that Maersk ordered from HD Hyundai Heavy Industries in South Korea. Its naming ceremony was held not long ago in Ulsan.



Let me describe it with a few figures: It has an overall length of 350 meters and a breadth of 53.5 meters, truly a "maritime behemoth," with a designed capacity of up to 17,480 standard containers. The ship can accommodate a crew of 30 for living and working. Its most striking feature is its design. To maximize loading efficiency and navigational economy, its wheelhouse and accommodation are positioned far forward, while the funnel is cleverly arranged at the stern, saving a significant amount of space. It can be said that this vessel represents the most advanced design and engineering concepts in the current container ship sector.



PART-3 As the 6th 17,000 TEU-class methanol dual-fuel series newbuild for Maersk, what are the technological and design upgrades compared to earlier vessels? Have these brought any changes to your daily work?

Compared to Maersk's earlier dual-fuel vessels, the most intuitive upgrade on our "Barcelona Maersk" is that it is "wider." The increased breadth directly leads to a significant boost in capacity, from around 16,000 TEU to 17,480 TEU.

Undoubtedly, the biggest change to my daily work is the introduction of the methanol dual-fuel propulsion system. This means we manage not only the traditional fuel oil systems but also an entirely new set of systems for green methanol bunkering, storage, supply, and combustion monitoring. My daily task list now includes routine checks of methanol tank temperatures, pressures, and leak detection. Risk assessments and permit-to-work systems for related operations are also much more stringent. Every bunkering operation is a "major exam" requiring meticulous planning and intense focus. Furthermore, the linkage between the bridge and the engine room is much tighter, requiring seamless collaboration between deck and engine departments when switching between fuel modes or entering environmentally sensitive areas. This demands that I not only possess solid deck skills but also a deeper understanding of the propulsion system.

PART-4 As the first Chief Officer of the "Barcelona Maersk," what key preparations did you and the team undertake after taking delivery at the Korean shipyard to ensure the vessel's official operation? What special training courses did the team receive regarding the operation of methanol fuel or other new technologies?

Taking delivery at a shipyard is far more than simply "getting the keys." Our core team arrived at the yard well before the official delivery and participated extensively in mooring trials and sea trials. Together with

shipyard engineers and the owner's supervision team, we conducted functional tests and integrated commissioning on thousands of items for every critical system, especially the methanol dual-fuel system, ensuring everything was flawless from the drawings to the actual vessel.



Regarding training, this was the absolute priority in our preparations. The company and shipyard arranged intensive and in-depth specialized training for us, mainly including:

Comprehensive methanol fuel system operational training: Intensive theoretical and simulator-based training on fuel characteristics, hazards, bunkering station interface operations, tank management, supply system control, and emergency response.

Manufacturer training for new equipment: The vessel is equipped with numerous new energy-saving and intelligent devices, such as a high-efficiency rudder and an intelligent ballast water management system. Engineers from the equipment manufacturers came on board to provide hands-on operation and maintenance training.

Safety and emergency drills: We conducted multiple full-scale practical emergency drills for potential scenarios like methanol leaks or fires. I

recall that during a simulated methanol leak alarm drill, we were required to complete a series of actions – valve closures, concentration monitoring, personnel evacuation – within a specified time. This was an excellent exercise for enhancing the team's coordination capabilities.

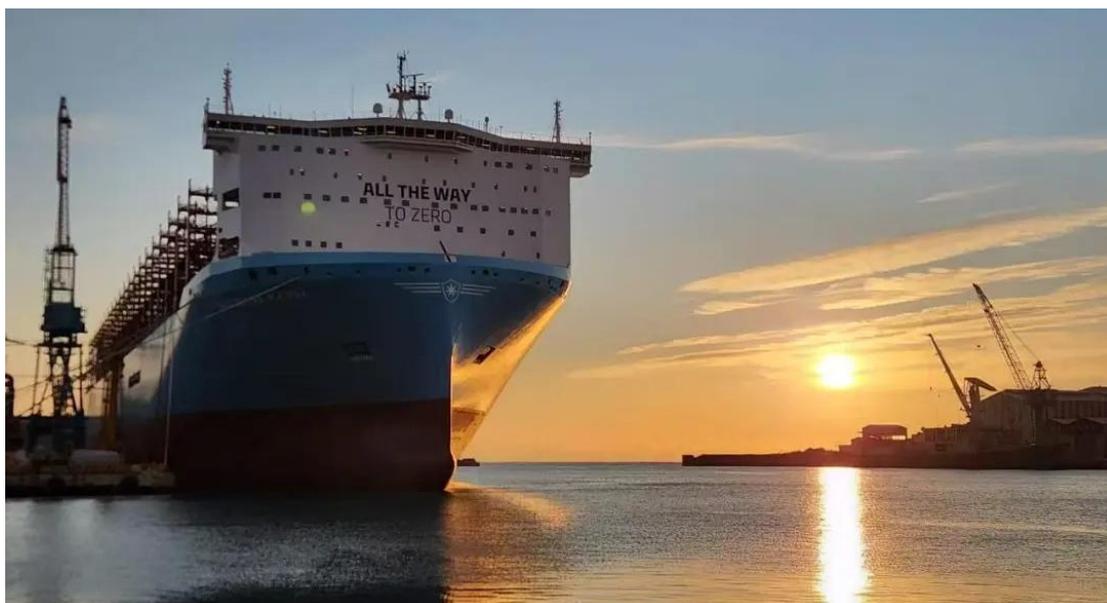


PART-5 Operating a new vessel featuring cutting-edge industry technology like the "Barcelona Maersk" undoubtedly provides invaluable experience and skill enhancement. From an industry-wide perspective, with the continuous investment in newbuilds, especially green vessels, what new opportunities and higher demands do you think this brings for seafarers, particularly young seafarers?

That's an excellent question. The wave of green shipping brings not just a change in ship propulsion, but a profound revolution in talent.

For young seafarers, the opportunities are unprecedented. Firstly, it's a fantastic chance for career "overtaking on the bend." Those who can master the operational skills for new energy vessels powered by methanol, LNG, or batteries become the most sought-after talent in the market. There's a significant shortage of seafarers with these skills domestically, meaning those with relevant qualifications will have a distinct advantage in salary and career choices. Secondly, it breaks the traditional path of a maritime career. Young seafarers are no longer just "ship handlers"; they can grow into roles like "Green Energy System Managers," "Smart Navigation Data Analysts," or "Ship Energy Efficiency Optimizers," broadening their career development paths significantly.

Of course, the demands are also higher. First, there's a shift from being "single-skilled operators" to having "composite knowledge." Young seafarers must proactively learn interdisciplinary knowledge like fuel chemistry, electrical automation, and data fundamentals. Second, safety literacy must reach new heights. The potential risks of new energies differ from traditional fuels, demanding extreme risk prediction and emergency response capabilities from seafarers. Third, the ability for continuous learning becomes paramount. Technology iterates so quickly; systems might be updated on the vessel during a single leave period. One must maintain a beginner's mindset and engage in lifelong learning.



PART-6 As a long-term partner officer with Singhai, what role has Singhai played in your maritime career, and what support have they provided? Could you share some of your personal feelings?

The fact that Singhai is the sole cooperating company for Maersk's Chinese seafarers fully demonstrates Singhai's immeasurable strength. From my promotion from Second Officer to Chief Officer, and then from Chief Officer to Captain, regarding the renewal and replacement of a series of certificates, they are always working silently behind the scenes. This ensures the validity and readiness of our certificates, making us ready to go.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank every colleague at Singhai who silently supports and contributes behind the scenes. It is precisely because of your efforts that our work can proceed smoothly.

Additionally, I'd like to say to young seafarers: Choose Singhai, and build your future.