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Tirrenia introduces two new vessels on Genoa-Malta route



The *Maria Grazia Onorato* will be specifically assigned to the Genoa-Livorno-Catania-Malta route operated by Tirrenia. Two new vessels will be introduced on the Tirrenia route from Genoa to Malta by the beginning of next year. Just weeks after rival firm Grimaldi accused the parent company Onorato Armatori of having an ageing fleet, the Italian company rebutted by announcing that two ro-ro ships, currently under construction in Germany, would be ready beginning 2019.

The *Maria Grazia Onorato* and the *Alf Pollak* offer 4,200 linear metres capacity and will be specifically assigned to the Genoa-Livorno-Catania-Malta route operated by Tirrenia. They have a capacity of nine kilometres of trucks/trailers.

Welcoming the erosion of the established monopolies

"This will ease pressures faced by the transport and logistics industries at the Strait of Messina and on the north/south bound European road network," the Italian company said, adding that the services would also be accessible to the small and medium-sized logistics service providers.

"Thanks to increased service options and cost related advantages, the end consumer will be reaping the benefits of these advancements," Onorato Group president Vincenzo Onorato said.

"We have received continuous appreciation and words of support from small and medium-sized freight-forwarding and logistics companies who are welcoming the erosion of the established monopolies on the highway of the seas, which were especially crippling for the business communities of both Sicily and Malta."

Approximately a year ago, Tirrenia allocated two ships with limited transport capacity to service various Catania-related routes. The frequency of service ranged from every two days to two weeks depending on the specific route, the company admitted.

However, a year later, the capabilities onboard Tirrenia vessels grew exponentially, motivated by increases in consumer demand. This led to small wins which further motivated the group to invest further, with the reintroduction of the Napoli route.

"It is no secret that the efforts by Onorato Armatori and its strategic partners have increased levels of competition within the industry, benefitting various well established and newly emerging business which not long ago suffered because of the lack of options.

"As opposed to our key competitors, Onorato Armatori did not seek to control the market by imposing specific monopolistic conditions. We simply accessed the market and decided to provide value-added services aimed at ensuring that benefits are effectively transferred to the end consumer," the Italian company said.

SMS is the local agent for Onorato Armatori, which includes Tirrenia.