

# Press Release



25 October 2023

## HGK Shipping acquires the tank container logistics business of Köppen GmbH

**Duisburg. HGK Shipping is expanding its business operations to include the pre-carriage and on-carriage business for tank containers and is therefore creating important synergy effects for customers in the chemical industry. Europe's leading inland waterway shipping company is taking over the entire operational tank container logistics business of Köppen GmbH in the form of an asset deal. Köppen has approx. 1,000 tank containers in service and is therefore a significant services company for the chemical industry in terms of intermodal traffic heading to destinations further inland. The purchase agreement was signed in Duisburg on 25 October 2023. Both sides have agreed not to reveal the purchase price.**

By taking over the three business sites in Duisburg, Hamburg and Ludwigshafen, HGK Shipping is in a position to efficiently connect the production sites of the most important centres of the chemical industry with the container terminals, both in the region and at the ARA ports. Overall, Köppen has a fleet of approx. 1,000 tank containers available for this business. The extended portfolio of services includes intermodal traffic for liquid and temperature-controlled chemicals as well as transporting compressed gases. As a result, its customers obtain integrated logistics services, which are geared towards their needs and make use of inland waterway shipping, rail and truck operations as the means of transport from one source. Road services to transport tank containers will continue to be handled in close partnership with Köppen GmbH.

"Intermodal services, which use inland waterway vessels, have proven their worth as a climate-friendly transport option for the chemical industry. This acquisition provides an ideal growth platform and extends the business portfolio of our company, but also of the HGK Group as a whole. The Group's objective is to provide an integrated supply chain using all the means of transport available," says Steffen Bauer, the CEO of HGK Shipping; and he adds, "We can offer our existing customers and new clients attractive one-stop logistics services through our extended service portfolio and also increase the resilience of our customers' supply chains, particularly during phases when water levels are low." The tank container business is also being strategically developed to transport goods such as hydrogen, hydrogen derivatives or CO<sub>2</sub> with tank containers and therefore make HGK Shipping fit for the future in this field too.

In organisational terms, the new business area is located within HGK Chemical Logistics GmbH. Dirk Czerlinski will take on the responsibility for this business, a position that he has already held at Köppen GmbH, and he can demonstrate comprehensive expertise in this business segment. Among other things, Czerlinski worked for many years at VTG GmbH, which has its headquarters in Hamburg, and was responsible for the tank container business there.

“Continuing the freight forwarding activities with a strong partner is the logical consequence of the growth that we’ve achieved during the last two years,” says Jochen Köppen, the Managing Partner of Köppen GmbH, who specifically thanked the employees working with Dirk Czerlinski for setting up the freight forwarding centres. Jochen Köppen adds with a sense of conviction, “The HGK Group not only offers our customers the guarantee that it will continue and expand our previous business by taking over all our personnel, but also complements this through its favourable portfolio of services.”

Köppen GmbH has already been handling the final transport services for imported tank containers for the chemical industry and the retail sector as a neutral seaport freight forwarder for many years. The company used the gradual withdrawal of a tank container operator as an opportunity to become active as a tank container carrier itself and establish its own fleet of tank containers.

Köppen GmbH will focus on continuing to develop its core areas of expertise – storing, cleaning and repairing tank containers – at its business site in Duisburg and enhance its transport companies in Duisburg and Dessau in future.

#### Photo captions:



Signing (from left to right): Claus Overlöper, Jochen Köppen, Steffen Bauer, Christian Möhrmann; Copyright: HGK Shipping



Group photo (standing, from left to right): Jochen Köppen, Dirk Czerlinski, Steffen Bauer; Copyright: HGK Shipping



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### About the HGK Group:

Häfen und Güterverkehr Köln AG (HGK) is the logistics company within the City of Cologne's public utilities group. Formerly just a port operator, HGK has developed into a group that provides integrated transport and logistics services with operations across Europe. Structured in five divisions, Logistics & Intermodal, Shipping, Rail Operations, Infrastructure & Maintenance and Real Estate, the HGK Group operates the largest inland waterway port network in Germany, one of the largest private railway companies for transporting cargo, specialist logistics firms and terminals as well as its own railway network and workshops for railway goods traffic through its subsidiaries and holding companies. HGK Shipping GmbH is the largest inland waterway shipping company in Europe.

### About the HGK Shipping division:

HGK Shipping is part of Häfen und Güterverkehr Köln AG. Its fleet comprises about 350 vessels, including owner-operated ships. The spectrum of goods transported ranges from liquid chemical products and liquefied gases to dry goods and even break-bulk cargo.

### About Köppen GmbH:

Köppen GmbH operates a tank interior cleaning unit for tankers and tank containers, a tank container workshop, a container depot and a hazardous goods warehouse to store tank containers and transportable tanks for approx. 350 containers in Duisburg. The business site is an operational area categorised as the upper class in the sense of the German Immissions Protection Act. Thanks to a cooperation arrangement with a terminal company, Köppen can currently store approx. 1,300 empty and cleaned tank containers. Its fleet of vehicles includes approx. 50 tractor units and 90 trailers and they are allocated to its business sites in Duisburg and Dessau.