



Sharma builds on ship recycling success

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ANIL Sharma is the world's largest cash buyer for ship recycling, and has done much to augment the credibility and transparency of the tight-knit, closed demolition market.



Anil Sharma

Dr Sharma's willingness to be the industry's public face for ship recycling, as well as translate the likely outcome of proposed regulation, has seen him quietly and effectively dismantle many of the emotive arguments put by strident critics.

At a time when record numbers of ships are heading to breakers' beaches, the Indian-born founder, president and chief executive officer of 21-year-old GMS is the biggest middle-man in ship recycling. He straddles industry self-interest and regulatory scrutiny with a pragmatic and practical approach to the environmental concerns that weigh on the sector.

As a cash buyer, employees from Dr Sharma's four offices worldwide buy vessels for scrapping and resell them to recycling yards, mostly in the five countries of India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, China and Turkey that undertake about 90% of business.

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try where global sales were seen topping an estimated, record-breaking \$6.5bn in 2012.

The counter-cyclical demolition market is soaring: the fleet oversupply that depressed freight rates to the lowest in two decades resulted in more than 1,300 vessels scrapped last year. Demolition sales might be down 20% in 2013, but high fuel costs means inefficient vessels are exiting trading at a younger age than ever.

Dr Sharma is aggressively positioning GMS as the market leader at a time when pending European and global regulation is set to change how shipowners contract and sell their vessels to cash buyers.

His newly introduced Responsible Recycling Initiative is a little-used, greener scrapping option accounting for less than 1% of his sales this year. But the environmental initiative stands as an alternative so owners can, if they want, show compliance.