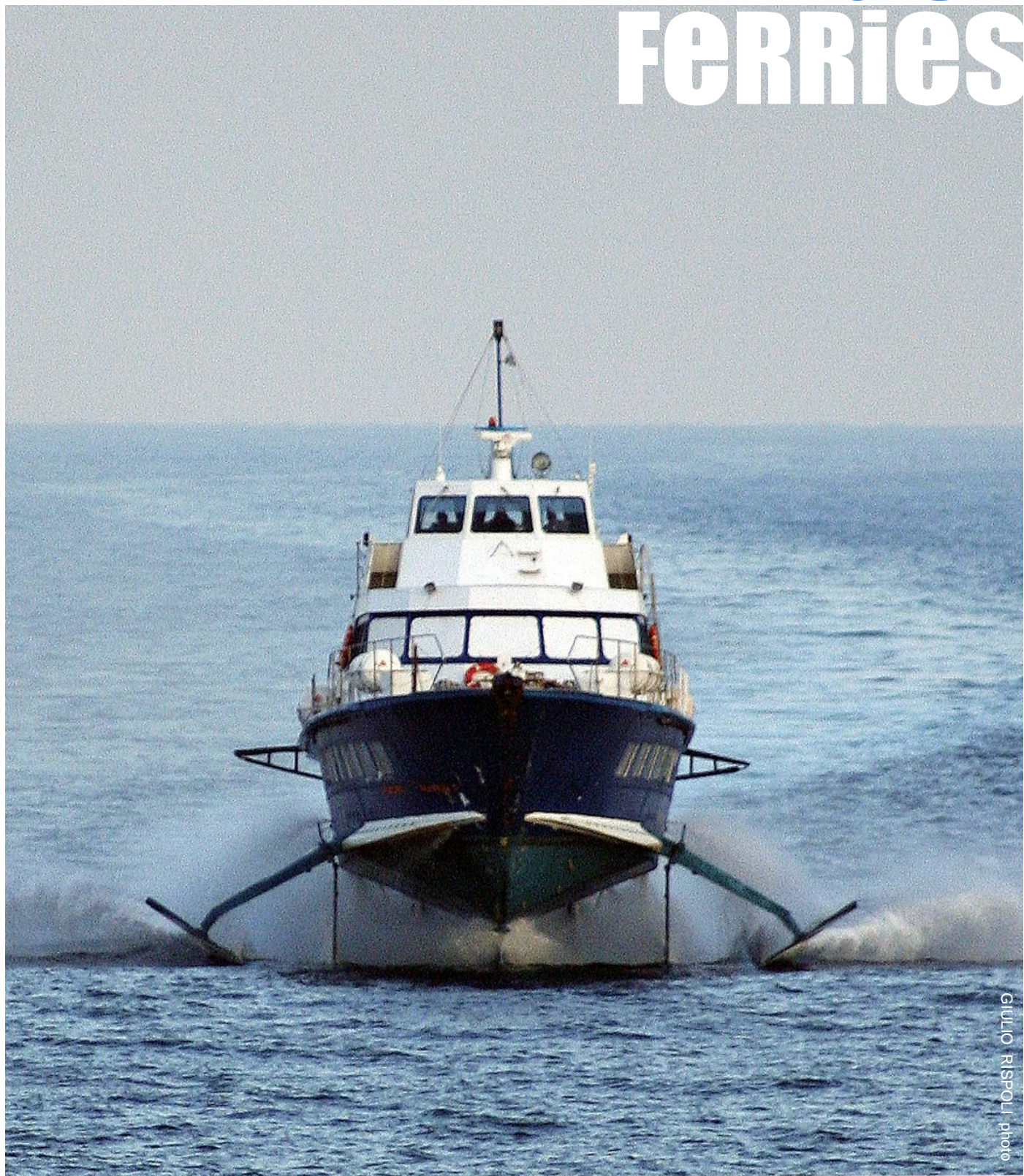


# CLASSIC FAST FERRIES

HYDROFOILS HOVERCRAFT SESS CATAMARANS



GIULIO RISPOLI photo

## SOUTH-WEST ITALY UPDATE





# FAMILIAR VESSELS AND NEW COLOURS

**W**ith a number of vessels approaching 30 in a few years time, something has to be done if the hydrofoil is to survive in Italy beyond just a handful of units.

A statement made in *CLASSIC FAST FERRIES* in November 2012.

And something has been done.

In 2013 Ustica Lines, based in Trapani in north-west Sicily, announced it was to commence building a new generation of hydrofoils. The first Admiral 250 appeared in 2014, a second followed in 2015 and currently under construction at the Liberty Shipyard in Sicily are two

more vessels. In addition, the first Admiral 350, the largest hydrofoil to be built in Italy, was launched in March last year. All three hydrofoils delivered so far are operated by Liberty Lines (formerly Ustica Lines), but the company anticipates orders from other operators, domestic as well as foreign.

However, there is also some bad news. An RHS 160F belonging to Liberty Lines was lost following a mooring incident in bad weather in the island of Stromboli last June. The vessel, *Masaccio*, had been acquired from Siremar only two months earlier.

**Top :** Sporting the new Caremar blue-and-white livery, RHS 160F Aldebaran arrives at Ischia last year / MARCO CAPEZZA photo

**Right :** RHS 160F Snav Shaula undergoing maintenance in Napoli

**Page 1 :** RHS 160F Monte Gargano approaching Ponza in December 2015 / GIULIO RISPOLI photo





The sole Seagull 400 catamaran built by Rodriguez, *Achernar*, entered service with Caremar in 1993 and is seen here showing off its new identity in June 2016  
/ MARCO CAPEZZA photo



With three more RHS 160Fs having been scrapped during the past few years, there are now nine of the type still in existence.

This update concerns the situation in the Bay of Naples area. Sicily will be dealt with at a later date.

#### **SNAV**

While perhaps not revolutionary, probably the most unexpected development since our last report is the addition of a hydrofoil to the SNAV fleet.

Originally set up by the Rodriguez Shipyard in the 1950s as Aliscafi SNAV and once a major operator of Supramar and Rodriguez designed hydrofoils, by 2010 only a single hydrofoil remained on the SNAV roster of active craft as the company had been busy acquiring catamarans on the second hand market since the new millennium. Also, in 2004 SNAV decided to sell off its business in Sicily, to Ustica Lines, including five RHS 160Fs, and focus on its operations in the Bay of Naples and across the Adriatic.

The hydrofoil added in 2015 is not a newbuilding but an RHS 160F originally delivered to Caremar in Napoli in 1986 as *Alnilam*.

Prior to being acquired by SNAV and renamed *Snav Shaula*, it was briefly operated by Laziomar.

SNAV continues to operate its hydrofoil flagship RHS 200 *Superjumbo*. The first of only two of the type built, this entered service with the company in 1981.

#### **LAZIOMAR**

Laziomar, or Lazio Regionale Marittima to give the company its full name, was formed in 2011 as part of the privatization of state owned Caremar. The company operates from Formia, north of Napoli, and Anzio, south of Rome, to the islands of Ponza and Ventotene.

**Below :** Former Caremar RHS 160F *Alnilam* was renamed *Snav Shaula* two years ago / CHARLES DAWSON photo





**Right :**  
*RHS 160F Alnilam*  
*in Laziomar colours*  
*in Napoli in*  
*September 2014*  
 / ENRICO VENERUSO  
 photo



**Below :**  
*RHS 160F Monte*  
*Gargano flying the*  
*colours of Laziomar*  
*in December 2015*  
 / GIULIO RISPOLI  
 photo

Journey times Formia–Ponza and Formia–Ventotene are 1 hour 15 minutes and 60 minutes, respectively, and 1 hour 45 minutes on the Anzio–Ponza route.

Four fast ferries are currently being operated. An Air Naval 38m monohull built in 2008 and acquired from Ustica Lines, a Rodriguez 42m monohull originally delivered to Alilauro in 2007, a Fjellstrand 60m Jumbo Cat car-carrying catamaran built in 2000 and previously operated by SNAV and, finally, an RHS 160F.

The latter, *Monte Gargano*, was originally ordered by Adriatica di Navigazione and entered service in 1989 out of Termoli on the Adriatic coast. It was transferred to Caremar in Napoli around 2005

Laziomar used to operate also the former Caremar RHS 160F *Alnilam* for a limited time before this was acquired by SNAV and renamed *Snav Shaula*.

#### **CAREMAR**

Originally state owned, Caremar, established in 1976, is now part of SNAV since some years. However, vessels continue to trade under the Caremar name – now sporting a new blue/white livery, replacing the handsome red/white which was the signature colour scheme of Caremar, Siremar and Toremar.

By 1987, Caremar had taken delivery of five Rodriguez hydrofoils; an RHS 140, two RHS 160s and two RHS 160Fs. Both of the latter remain in service in the area, *Aldebaran* with Caremar and the former *Alnilam* with SNAV.





The oldest catamaran in the Alilauro fleet, 33 CPV *Giove Jet*, was built in 1985 by Marinteknik Verkstads in Sweden and is seen here in Ischia in March last year / MARCO CAPEZZA photo



The first and only Seagull 400 catamaran built by Rodriquez, *Acherna*, entered service with Caremar in 1993. This was recently re-engined and refurbished and now also appears in the blue and white colours. Currently undergoing extensive refurbishing in Napoli is the company's third fast ferry, *Isola di San Pietro*. This is a Rodriquez Monostab 47m monohull, completed in 1992 and introduced on routes in Sardinia by Saremar the following year.

#### ALILAURO

Like SNAV, Alilauro is of course the other long-time operator of hydrofoils in the area. Or was, as the last were withdrawn some years ago. Unlike SNAV, though, Alilauro and its associate companies operated mainly

Soviet/Russian designed Kometa and Kolkhida hydrofoils.

The current fast ferry fleet comprises five catamarans built between 1985 and 2000 by two different shipyards and four monohulls from as many builders introduced 1988–2007. At least one of these appears to be cooperated with Laziomar.

#### VETOR ALISCAFI

Another operator of Kometa and Kolkhida hydrofoils is Vetur Aliscafi, based in Anzio. The first Kometa was purchased in the USSR in 1981 and this was joined by a pair of Kolkhidas, *Gabri* and *Vemar*, in 1988 and 1991.

In 2005 Vetur acquired a PT.50 built in 1969. Following a full overhaul and renamed *Nilo* it was put into service between Formia and Ponza.



*Ponza Jet* is one of two air cushion catamarans/ surface effect ships owned by Navigazione Libera del Golfo, NLG. Built by Eikefjord Marine in Norway in 1992, the UT 904 SES is seen in Napoli in April 2016 / ENRICO VENERUSO photo



Former Siremar RHS 160F *Fabricia* in Napoli last month. Apparently the vessel is being refurbished, but details as to its future assignments have yet to be confirmed



The PT.50 and Kometa have since been laid up, but according to reports both are being kept maintained and are available at short notice.

#### NLG

Navigazione Libera del Golfo in its present form dates back to 1953. It was not until 1988, however, that the first fast ferry was introduced. Unlike the other operators, NLG has not had any hydrofoils but was always true to monohulls. That is, up until 2008 when it acquired two air cushion catamarans/surface effect ships from another operator.

In addition to the SESs, the company owns nine monohulls of five different designs, built by five different shipyards between 1988 and 2003.

A comprehensive report on NLG appeared in CFF News February 2008.

#### THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY

There is yet another RHS 160F in Napoli. Currently sitting on dry land, this too was originally ordered by the group of state owned ferry companies and, as *Fabricia*, entered service with Toremar in Toscana in 1987.

Having been later transferred to Siremar in Sicily, it was not part of the sale of that operator's hydrofoils to Ustica Lines last April.

There has been some speculation as to when and where the vessel might re-enter service, however, details have yet to be confirmed. **CFF**



Vemar is one of two Kolkhidas operated by Vetur Aliscafi to the islands of Ponza and Ventotene. Here it is idling in Anzio on the mainland in May 2015  
/MARCO MARIANI photo



Delivered in 1981, RHS 200 *Superjumbo* is still going strong.

Until the HSC Shipyard (now Liberty Shipyard) launched its Admiral 350 design in March 2016, the RHS 200 was the largest hydrofoil built in Italy. Only two were delivered, both of which to Aliscati SNAV.

In this magnificent view *Superjumbo* is foiling by the photographer in the island of Vulcano in July last year  
/DANILO NATOLI photo

