



The Siremar name on the hydrofoils is giving way to Liberty Lines. Seen at the Rodriguez premises earlier this week are Platone (left) and Antiooco / ENZO ANNUARIO photo

CHANGES AT USTICA LINES

FURTHER TO our report last month, the expected purchase agreement between Ustica Lines and Siremar was signed on April 11. The acquisition by Ustica Lines is of Siremar's hydrofoil fleet, which comprises a pair of Rodriguez RHS 160Fs delivered in 1988 and nine Foilmasters built between 1994 and 2006. A third RHS 160F, originally delivered to Toremar in 1987 and later transferred to Siremar, is not included in the purchase.

No maritime personnel will be made redundant in connection with the take-over, which is worth approximately €50 million.

With the recent acquisition Ustica Lines now has a total of 34 fast ferries; 22 hydrofoils, seven catamarans and five monohulls. The oldest vessel was built in 1988 and the youngest in 2016.

NEW NAME

Another development occurred earlier this month as Ustica Lines introduced a new marketing name, Liberty Lines, to better reflect today's extensive route network as compared to when Ustica Lines was established in 1993. First hydrofoils to have the new name applied were Admiral 250 *Carlo Morace* and the Admiral 350 prototype *Gianni M*, the latter of which was launched in March and will enter service in June.

In addition, the other Admiral 250, *Ammari'*, has received a completely different paint scheme.

The former Siremar vessels likewise start to appear with the new company name on the sides. It has not been confirmed whether these will also receive the corporate colours of Ustica Lines or remain in Siremar livery. Repainting is not done overnight and is not likely to commence with the peak season coming up, if at all. **cff**



The brand new Admiral 350 hydrofoil Gianni M was one of the first to sport the new operator name of Liberty Lines earlier this month / ANDREA BUTERA photo