

# END OF THE LINE FOR DUTCH VOSKHODS



**Above :** Klaas Westdijk is one of four Voskhod 2Ms currently operated by Connexxion Water / WIM VAN DER MOOLEN photo

**DUTCH HYDROFOIL** operator Connexxion Water has announced it will cease operating its four Voskhod 2M hydrofoils on the 13 nautical mile route between Amsterdam and Velsen at the end of this year or in early 2014. Reason being that the provincial government body of Gedeputeerde Staten Noord-Holland has decided to not renew the subsidies for the hydrofoil service since a bus operation is cheaper to run.

Three of the vessels have been put up for sale and Connexxion Water reports it has received interest of purchase from several sources. Asking price is €325,000 per unit. The other vessel will be kept for tourist trips and possibly an alternative area of operation.

Marketed as Fast Flying Ferry, the current timetable offers twenty-four departures in each direction between 06:20 and 22:20 on Monday–Friday, less on Saturday and Sunday

reflecting the commuter nature of the route. Journey time is 36 minutes, which is up 9 minutes compared to previously due to new speed restrictions on the Noordzeekanaal.

Fast Flying Ferry goes back to 1998. Over the years the company has operated, or owned, four used Voskhods, one Meteor and one Polesye hydrofoil, none of which is no longer with the company.

The hulls of three of the present Voskhod-2M quartet, which are the ones offered for sale, *Karla*, *Catharina–Amalia* and *Rosanna*, were delivered by the Morye shipyard in the Ukraine in 2002, with a fourth, *Klaas Westdijk*, following in 2007. Being partly finished at the time – the construction of the vessels had commenced ahead of orders – Morye was able to meet with certain alterations to the standard Voskhod specified by the Dutch customer. The fitting out and paintwork were carried out in the Netherlands. **cff**

**Below :** The first craft to be operated by FFF was Meteor Prins Willem Alexander. This was sold in Hungary in 2003.

/ THEO BAKKER photo

