

thyssenkrupp Marine Systems and NVL agree on cooperation to build new frigates for the German Navy



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* **Oliver Burkhard and Friedrich Lürssen sign agreement to cooperate on the construction of the future F127 frigates**

* **The joint venture pools expertise, strengthens innovative energy and accelerates delivery to increase the defense capability of the Federal Republic of Germany**

On 3 September 2024, at SMM 2024, the leading major trade fair for the maritime industry, thyssenkrupp Marine Systems and NVL announced the planned establishment of a joint venture and signed a cooperation agreement. The aim of the cooperation is to jointly realize the construction of the MEKO A-400 AMD – a pioneering ship concept from thyssenkrupp Marine Systems that was specially developed to meet the requirements of a German Navy air defense frigate.

The cooperation agreement was signed by Oliver Burkhard, CEO of thyssenkrupp Marine Systems, and Friedrich Lürssen, shareholder of the NVL Group. As the principal shareholder in the joint venture, thyssenkrupp Marine Systems will play a leading role in the development and production of the Type F127 with its MEKO A-400 design, while NVL will contribute its extensive manufacturing capabilities and many years of experience in the construction of naval vessels to the cooperation. The exact structure of the work packages will be determined at a later stage. The cooperation will generate considerable synergies and make a significant contribution to strengthening and securing key national technologies in the field of naval shipbuilding. The planned cooperation was approved by the Federal Cartel Office on 2 September.

“We have already made considerable investments in the development of the MEKO A-400 technology and in the

expansion of construction capacities at the Wismar site. Now it is up to the politicians to successfully drive forward the project for the successor to the F124 and provide it with the necessary funding. With the signing of this contract, we are setting an important milestone for the construction and operational readiness of a completely new type of frigate,” explained Oliver Burkhard during the signing ceremony. He added: “The sole purpose of establishing this joint venture is to implement the future frigate program. This is all because commissioning the construction of the new F127 is urgently required in terms of security policy. The serious geopolitical situation demands the fastest possible realization and closing of a capability gap. The F127 must not be put on the back burner!”

Friedrich Lürssen emphasized: “The new air defense frigate is a key project for surface vessel shipbuilding in Germany. Through our cooperation, we are creating the industrial prerequisites for further technological development at a high level, sustainably strengthening our competitiveness in military surface vessel shipbuilding, and securing and expanding important industrial jobs at the shipyards and in the national supply industry.”

The MEKO A-400 AMD extends existing capability profiles with an improved energy supply for future weapon and command systems; in addition, the new type of hull offers more space for the installation of missiles and a higher cruising speed for multinational task forces. This means that the new frigate type can be equipped with a combination of novel defense missiles to combat threats from the air and engage several targets simultaneously at previously unreachable distances using long-range missiles. At the same time, the frigate can also be used against sea and land targets as well as for submarine hunting. Equipping the ship with systems that meet NATO requirements will also ensure integration and cooperation in NATO’s transatlantic strategy with this ship design.

Both companies also emphasized the military significance of the F127 project: The current Type F124 ships will reach the end of their service lifetime in the next few years. Extending the utilization period of the “Sachsen class” currently in service makes neither military nor economic sense.

The joint venture will be based in Hamburg and will act as the project company for the construction of the future F127 frigates. thyssenkrupp Marine Systems and NVL are thus creating the fundamental conditions for construction of the new frigate to begin as early as 2025. As things stand at present, the ships will be built by thyssenkrupp Marine Systems in Wismar and by NVL in Hamburg and Wolgast, among other sites. The German Navy wants the first ship to be ready for deployment in 2034; the prerequisite for this goal is that orders are received promptly.

“As project partners, we are joining forces to rapidly close the looming capability gap in seabased air defense, to secure the future of the key technology of naval shipbuilding in Germany and to equip the German Navy with state-of-the-art equipment,” said the two company leaders.