

## Italian yard changes direction

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**Italian shipyard Nuovi Cantieri Apuania (NCA) has been acquired by a yacht building company and will switch its focus from ship building to refit and repair.**

Located in Massa Harbour on the Italian West Coast, NCA has been a major builder of passenger and ro-ro ferries as well as coastal ships but the downturn in the Italian ship building sector has created a dearth of new contracts.

The yard has been purchased by Admiral Tecnomar, which has been very successful in securing new building contracts for super yachts. This yard currently has nine large yachts in build at its yards in Massa and Viareggio. With the purchase of NCA the group will now be known as the Italian Sea Group and it will focus on both new buildings and repair and refit in both the yacht and commercial shipping sectors.

The NCA yard has an impressive array of facilities including a 200m long dry dock and a gantry crane capable of lifting unit pieces of up to 1,000 tonnes. There are several construction halls and fitting out quays with deep water alongside. The whole yard covers an area of 100,000m<sup>2</sup> compared with the 20,000m<sup>2</sup> of the other two yards in the Group. The gantry crane will enable the yard to lift out large vessels directly onto the quayside.

The new group will be making a considerable investment, reported to be €8 million in upgrading and adapting the facilities at Massa for its new role, which will include a new reception and office area and extensive crew suites to accommodate the crews of vessels being refitted.

The chairman of the Italian Sea Group, Giovanni Constantino believes that refit work is the way ahead. "Refit is a promising business and a sector in great expansion and we believe that our position in the heart of the Mediterranean could be a critical success factor."

The purchase of NCA by Admiral Tecnomar is part of a trend amongst Italian yards to switch from commercial or military work to super yacht building and repair. The main shipyard in Livorno was taken over by the Azimut Group and the Ferretti group has taken over a facility south of Naples and the shipyard in Viareggio is now a yachting centre. Even the state owned Fincantieri Group that owns most of the major Italian shipyards is carrying out super yacht construction at its yard in the harbour of La Spezia.

By Dag Pike