

NewLead drops post-panamax charter

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- by [Nigel Lowry](#)

Owner returns to Nasdaq compliance

NEWLEAD Holdings, the Greece-based dry bulk and tanker owner, has claimed a double filip as it seeks to restructure its debt burden in marathon talks with lenders and other counterparties.

The company has regained compliance with Nasdaq minimum share-price rules and also appears to have extricated itself from exposure linked to a vessel halted in New Orleans last week in a charterparty dispute concerning two tankers formerly owned by NewLead.

NewLead was connected to the post-panamax bulker *NewLead Endurance*, on which bunkers were attached by decision of a federal judge, as manager and bareboat operator.

The company said in a filing that it had obtained release of its corporate guarantee under the bareboat charter.

The bulker's owning entity, Endurance Shipping, had earlier moved to terminate the charter and the management agreement, exercising its right to foreclose on the shares of NewLead's chartering vehicle, Curby Navigation.

A spokeswoman for NewLead told Lloyd's List that the agreement with the owners of *NewLead Endurance* was unrelated to the recent legal moves against the vessel in the US.

"This was part of the underlying restructuring process to ameliorate the financial situation," she said., with negotiations with the owner of the vessel going on for "some months".

"The important thing is the company has achieved its aim of the release of the corporate guarantee," she said.

The company continues to work with Endurance Shipping in "transitioning the management of the vessel" to another manager to be chosen by the owner.

Ending the bareboat charter of *NewLead Endurance* and the recent sale of handysize bulker *Navios Serenity* to Navios Maritime give NewLead a fleet of just six bulkers and two product tankers.

Written notice from the Nasdaq authorities that the company has regained compliance with the minimum bid price requirement of \$1 will be seen to vindicate NewLead's decision last month to call off a planned reverse stock split to cure the problem.

Based on a surge in interest in the stock, the owner put its faith in achieving the \$1 or more requirement for 10 consecutive business days in the ordinary course of trading.

Article from Lloyd's List

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