

Colas builds a complete footprint across the bitumen value chain with two new tankers



Photo credit: Rude Lee

In response to significant shifts in the global bitumen market, Colas is working to further secure its bitumen supply by acquiring two purpose-built tankers tailored for the European market. This strategic investment highlights Colas' dedication to controlling its entire supply chain, guaranteeing full compliance with the Group's stringent quality and ethical standards and its low-carbon targets.

Colas just took delivery of the first ship and the second is slated to arrive in August. These tankers will play a crucial role in supporting the terminal network of Continental Bitumen, a subsidiary of Colas. Established in 2020 as a cornerstone of Colas' industrial strategy, Continental Bitumen is entrusted with the tasks of ensuring a stable bitumen supply and expanding distribution and trading operations across the Europe, Middle East, and Africa zone, where Colas buys a substantial 1.3 million tons of bitumen each year.

The two ships provide the Group with the means to safeguard the long-term security of its own supplies as well as those of its clients, and to position itself as a major player in the European bitumen market. Each vessel meets market requirements, with a capacity of 20,000 tons, a length of 168.7 meters, and a draft of 9.2 meters.

Designed, engineered and operated by Colas, the tankers showcase cutting edge insulation and energy recovery systems. Additionally, they are powered by liquefied natural gas (LNG)¹ in line with the Group's low-carbon strategy. Moreover, enhanced oversight of bitumen selection and transportation helps ensure a steadfast supply of bitumen compatible with low-carbon solutions.

¹ Bicom bustible design incorporating marine diesel

In addition, a third bitumen tanker of similar design is scheduled for delivery this year to McAsphalt, a Canadian subsidiary of the Group. It will operate in North America, particularly on the St. Lawrence Seaway and the Great Lakes.



The delivery of these ships marks a significant milestone in our effort to strengthen our foothold in the global bitumen market, a journey that began in 2018. This strategic approach guarantees the quality and quantity of our supplies, allowing us to provide our customers with top-tier service and ensuring reliability for our businesses across our value chain, all the way up to road construction, and this on a global scale, elaborated Frédéric Roussel, Bitumen Director of the Colas Group.



Bitumen is used as a binder in the majority of asphalt mixes designed to pave roads. As a global leader in the construction and maintenance of transport infrastructure, Colas is the world's largest consumer of bitumen, trading nearly 5 million tons annually. The Group's existing logistics infrastructure includes one million tons of storage capacity in 71 terminals spread across five continents, a fleet of 10 tankers (excluding this order), and a series of dedicated assets such as heated wagons and containers.



Colas (www.colas.com)

Colas, a subsidiary of the Bouygues Group, has one mission: to imagine, build and maintain sustainable transport infrastructure. Backed by a network of 900 construction business units and 3,000 material production units in more than 50 countries on five continents, the Group's 58,000 employees act locally to connect communities and foster exchanges for today and tomorrow. Colas' ambition is to be the world leader in innovative, sustainable mobility solutions.

In 2022, consolidated revenue at Colas totaled €15.5 billion (60% outside of France).

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