

Demand for alternative fuelled engines and regulatory uncertainty

WinGD CEO Dominik Schneider talks about the demand for alternative fuelled engines, retrofits, and the company's progress with methanol and ammonia.

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April 4, 2025



Dominik Schneider, CEO of WinGD Credit: WinGD

If you are a shipowner today and you want to order new vessels the big questions are: What type of fuel will we use in the future? Should we invest in dual-fuel now, or alternative fuel ready, or should we wait?

Someone at the sharp end of these questions is Dominik Schneider, CEO of engine manufacturer WinGD.

Speaking to *Seatrade Maritime News* at [Sea Asia 2025](#) last week Schneider said that the energy transition was something where the whole WinGD organisation feels it can make a difference. “We can make these engines work with the new fuels and make them available, and with that have a long-lasting impact in decarbonisation shipping,” he explained.

Interest in alternative fuelled engines is extremely high and Schneider said that even customers that say they will not change fuel type until there is clarity on the regulations are interested to understand the technology. WinGD is not only looking at selling dual-fuel engines that can run on alternative fuels from day one but also how new vessels with diesel engines could be retrofitted for alternative fuels say 10 years down the line.

In the current environment of regulatory uncertainty LNG, which is still a fossil fuel remains alternative fuel of choice. He says that around 55 – 60% of WinGD's order intake is for dual-fuel engines of which a major portion is LNG dual-fuel.

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In terms of how customers decide on what engine type to invest its based around economics and fuel availability, and Schneider sees the upcoming [IMO](#) MEPC meetings this year as instrumental in terms of the future. “Are there enough financial incentives to go to a green fuel like [methanol](#) or [ammonia](#) or is it rather LNG?” He believes there is a risk that a focus on LNG will mean the scale up to green fuels will be too slow.

One option for a shipowner to hedge their bets is an alternative fuelled ready set-up and this is something Schneider says they have a strong focus on. The company has developed a design that can be “bolted onto” the existing diesel engine to run on methanol or ammonia as well as other future fuels such as ethanol are under discussion.

“We try to really make it a retrofit simple, so ready means it's real ready,” he stated. The owner only has to buy additional components rather than having to change existing parts. For a methanol conversion in terms of time dock this can be carried out in 10 – 14 days for the engine.

In terms of WinGD’s own alternative fuelled engines the next 12 months will see major developments. It’s first methanol-fuelled engine the ten-cylinder, 92-bore X-DF-M unit is to be delivered to the shipyard after passing type approval and factory tests. It is destined for a 16,000 teu capacity container ship newbuilding and according to the company is the largest methanol-fuelled engine built to date.

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WinGD has a range of 56 X-DF-M engines on order across bore sizes from 52 to 92, in similar cylinder configurations and engine rating fields as diesel-fuelled X-Engines. According to Schneider the company has around 55% share of the market.

Things are also moving fast on the ammonia engine front and the company’s first test units are up and running and he says it is running at full load output “with very good performance results”. The engine meets what WinGD promised with ammonia slip below 10 parts per million (ppm) with N₂O emissions of 3ppm. NO_x emissions in ammonia mode are only around 60% of those in diesel mode he said.

The first ammonia engine is expected to be delivered to the shipyard at end of June for an Exmar ammonia carrier which should be on the water in January 2026. The company has ammonia engine deliveries for nine Newcastlemax bulkers next year as well.