



# “We’re the leading propulsion supplier for the maritime industry in Germany”

Words: Rolf Behrens | Pictures: Robert Hack MTU

Tags/Keywords

The National Maritime Conference (NMK) is Germany’s most important summit meeting in the maritime industry, where stakeholders from politics, business, research and administration come together to discuss maritime issues and interests. Hosted by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy, the conference takes place every two years. For the first time, the conference is being held at a non-coastal region: in Friedrichshafen on Lake Constance. In the following interview, Knut Müller, head of Marine and Defense Business at Rolls-Royce business unit Power Systems, explains what contribution his company makes to the maritime industry, how it is preparing itself to meet future requirements, and why Friedrichshafen is not as far from the ocean as one may think.

*The National Maritime Conference is carrying the motto global, smart, green. How does Rolls-Royce Power Systems live up to that, Mr Müller?*

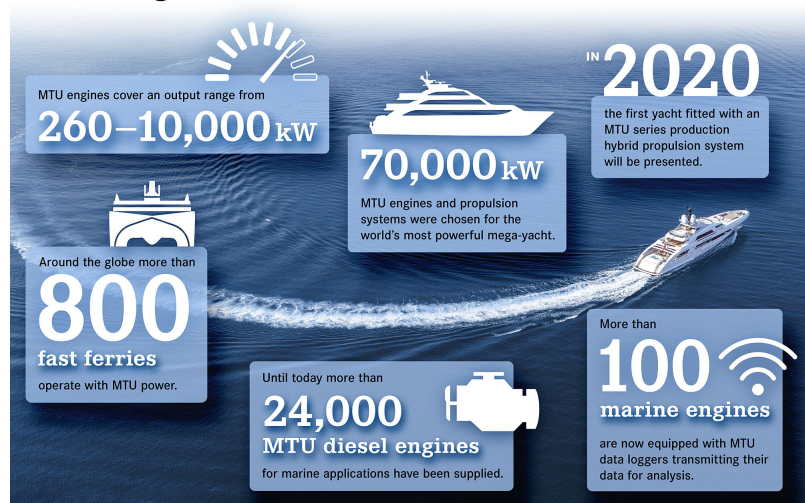
That motto is actually a perfect fit for Rolls-Royce Power Systems and the MTU brand. Clearly, when it comes to high-performance marine propulsion, we’re among the leading global players. MTU engines are in service in almost every country of the world and are used in numerous marine applications, all the way from high-speed ferries and wind farm supply ships to mega-yachts. Our drive and propulsion solutions are smart because we’re a pioneer in the field of digitalization. What customers expect from us are smooth operation, high propulsion plant availability, and a fast service response in the event of hitches. With the service solutions we offer today including digital real-time engine monitoring, that’s exactly what we can provide them with. At the same time, we’re working on making our propulsion systems cleaner, greener and friendlier to the environment: with our Green and High-Tech program, we’ve become a driver of the energy turnaround in the maritime industry. So by deploying technologies like exhaust aftertreatment and hybrid drives and a more efficient application of our systems due to digitalization, our engines are getting cleaner and cleaner and making a significant contribution to decarbonizing the shipping industry.

*Why is this maritime conference being held this year in Friedrichshafen – away from the sea?*

Well, right on our doorstep we have Lake Constance – which in Germany is often referred to as the ‘Swabian Sea’ – and a lot of vessels out and about on it happen to be powered by MTU engines. But, joking apart, it’s just turned out historically that a major offshore supply industry grew up here in south Germany, far away from the coast. More than 40% of sales in Germany’s offshore and shipbuilding supply industry are generated in Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria. At Rolls-Royce Power Systems, we’re posting revenues to the order of one billion euros in our marine propulsion and service segment. This makes us the leading propulsion system manufacturer for the maritime industry in Germany. I see it as an important gesture of recognition that Friedrichshafen has been chosen as the venue for this year’s

NMK, which puts the spotlight on the shipbuilding supply industry here. It will help raise awareness of the significance of this industry.

## MTU engines in MARINE APPLICATIONS



*What do you expect personally from the NMK?*

I'm really looking forward to it. It's a major platform for the maritime industry which is currently going through a radical change. The shipping world is increasingly opening up to new ideas, business models and concepts for propulsion. This is due to globalization, digitalization and a new sensibility on the part of end customers for costs, including the cost to the environment. What I'd like to see at the conference is discussion of these developments and arrival at a consensus regarding the areas into which the German maritime industry should channel its energies if it wants to hold its own on the world market. Moreover, it's important for all of us to be on the same page regarding the political framework conditions we need to retain and expand our technological leadership to ensure that the German maritime industry stays competitive. At the forthcoming conference in Friedrichshafen all the right people will be brought together – government policy-makers and decision-makers in industry and administration – to enable that consensus to be reached. For our company, this event provides us with an opportunity to engage with operators and find out what their priorities are for the future and how we can tailor our products to meet their needs.

*What are the future prospects of Rolls-Royce as a partner of the maritime industry?*

We're already evolving into a provider of eco-friendly, integrated propulsion solutions for shipping. We can count on customers coming to us in the future with their application specifications and asking for an integral solution – that means a complete propulsion solution including on-board power, automation and guaranteed availability optimally tailored to their wishes and needs. And that's what they're already starting to do. We're providing solutions across a whole spectrum of technologies – so the propulsion system we come up with might be based on a diesel or gas engine, but might also include batteries to cater for electric-only operation. Our business now is to provide the solution as a whole, and not just sell an engine. In the future, the focus of our business will be on the solution as a whole rather than just selling engines.

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