



Anyone with information on this stamp from 1980, please contact the editor.



Mann In Space

Sea Launch has strong Isle of Man connections through its Assembly and Command Ship, the **SEA LAUNCH COMMANDER**. Beginning with its first mission in 1999, it has become the most reliable heavy lift commercial launch services provider in the industry today. As its name suggests, from a floating launch pad, Sea Launch is able to place into orbit payloads of up to 6000 kg.

Geographically, the ideal launch position is the equator since such a site requires no plane changes and so provides maximum lift capability thereby enabling heavier payloads or extended spacecraft life on orbit. Since it is the only commercial provider with an equatorial launch site capability, Sea Launch offers the most direct and cost-effective route to Geostationary Orbit.

ODYSSEY (launch platform)

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1982 - Sea Launch ACS Ltd. (Barber Kvaerner Marine Management AS), Monrovia, Liberia; Kvaerner Rosenberg, Stavanger, Norway and Kvaerner Vyborg Shipyard, Vyborg, Russia (originally built in Japan); Displ. 30,000 tons light, submerged draft 50,600 tons, at launch, 27,400 tones light; 133m (oa) at the pontoons, launch deck 78m x 66.8m, height from keel to helicopter pad 58m, overall height 80m, draught 7.5m (436' x 220'), max. 22,5m; self propelled, 12kn; crew: 68.

The **ODYSSEY** is a self-propelled, semi-submersible launch platform. She was originally modified from the Northern Sea offshore drilling rig, **OCEAN ODYSSEY**, which was built in Japan in 1982. In 1989, the platform was damaged by fire and one person was killed. Some time later, **ODYSSEY** was partially dismantled, and in 1991-1992, she was modernized at the Vyborg Shipyard. Later, the decision was made to convert **ODYSSEY** into the launch platform.

The conversion project was carried out in two phases. The first phase, from late 1995 to May 1997, Kvaerner Rosenberg of Stavanger, Norway, extended the length of the platform and added a pair of support columns and additional propulsions. A superstructure was erected on the upper deck to accommodate the launch pad and LV service

hangar. Life-support facilities and LV service equipment were put in place. All of the vessel's systems were installed, including a powerful electricity generating station, living quarters, and various service rooms.

In May 1997, the **ODYSSEY** arrived at Kvaerner Vyborg Shipyard and the second phase of the project began: the installation of LV-related segment equipment. The following are just some examples of more than 3,000 tons of structures and automated rocket handling equipment installed by the shipyard:

- a launch table,
- a fueling system with storage facilities for fuel and oxidizer,



- a thermostatic system,
- an automammmmmpic system of launch preparation sequence control,
- a transporter-erector designed to carry an LV to the launch table and erect it; and
- a flame deflector assembled under

the launch pad.

On June 23, 1998, **ODYSSEY** left Vyborg and arrived at the port of Long Beach, California on Oct. 4, 1988. After the platform passed autonomous tests and integrated trials, the first Zenit-3SL launch from **ODYSSEY**, controlled from the Sea Launch command ship, was successfully made on March 28, 1999.

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