

LD Armateurs' World's Largest Wind-Propelled Cargo Vessel fitted with Norsepower Rotor Sails™



The Spirit of Toulouse, owned and operated by LD Armateurs, now carries six Norsepower Rotor Sails™ — the highest number fitted to any RoRo vessel— working alongside dual-fuel methanol engines to cut fuel consumption.

October 15th, 2026, Suresnes (France) - LD Armateurs and Norsepower are proud to announce the completed installation of six Norsepower Rotor Sails™ on board Spirit of Toulouse, the lead vessel in a new fleet of three low-emission RoRo ships built for LD Armateurs (LDA) to support transport operations for Airbus. The installation, carried out by the project team of the shipyard, Wuchang Shipbuilding Industry Group Co. Ltd., at a coastal outfitting site in Shanghai, makes Spirit of Toulouse not only the largest RoRo vessel in the world to be equipped with wind-propulsion but also the vessel with the largest number of mechanical sails in the world.

The six rotor sails, each measuring 35m x 5m, are paired with two dual-fuel main engines complemented by two dual-fuel generator sets, capable of running on e-methanol, bio-methanol or marine diesel oil. Norsepower's wind propulsion is designed to work in synergy with the vessel's methanol propulsion system, reducing fuel consumption and improving efficiency across the voyage rather than acting as a stand-alone add-on.

Spirit of Toulouse is the first of three sister ships — alongside Spirit of Mobile and Spirit of Mirabel — under charter to Airbus to move large aircraft sub-assemblies between the manufacturer's production sites in Europe and North America.

Norsepower and LDA first announced their collaboration in early 2024. Construction began at the shipyard by October of that year, and the lead vessel was launched in February 2026. Rotor sail installation has now been completed ahead of sea trials.

Samira Draoua, CEO of LD Armateurs, said: " Spirit of Toulouse is much more than a new vessel. It is a tangible demonstration of how the maritime industry can accelerate its transition by combining innovation, operational expertise, and strong industrial partnerships. Bringing together six rotor sails and dual-fuel methanol propulsion on a ship of this scale is a world first that illustrates LD Armateurs' commitment to pioneering tangible solutions for lower-carbon shipping."

Heikki Pöntynen, CEO of Norsepower, said: "Completing installation of six Norsepower Rotor Sails on Spirit of Toulouse is a significant milestone for wind propulsion in the RoRo segment. Working in synergy with the vessel's dual-fuel methanol engines, the rotor sails give LD Armateurs a vessel designed to cut fuel consumption and emissions from her first voyage. We're proud of how smoothly this project has moved from agreement to installation, and we look forward to seeing the technology proven out on the transatlantic route."

Fitting six rotor sails to a single hull is a demanding undertaking, and the shipyard project team built a dedicated construction plan for the job, refined through expert review and clearly defined roles before work began on site.

Commissioning activities commenced immediately following the installation of the first rotor sail. With all sails installed, the rotor sails will undergo comprehensive testing during the vessel's upcoming sea trials to confirm their performance and seamless integration with onboard systems. Further optimization and fine-tuning will continue during the maiden voyage from China to France, ensuring the technology delivers its full operational potential.

Jean-Baptiste Boutillier, Chief Operating Officer, LD Armateurs, added: "The collaboration with Norsepower on this project has been very smooth, setting a strong benchmark for the next two vessels. The installation site was a demanding one, on the coast and with real limitations on working conditions, but through careful planning and efficient execution we safely and accurately completed installation of the impressive 35m-high, 5m-diameter Norsepower Rotor Sails. We look forward to continuing this cooperation on the two vessels that will be equipped in the future."

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About LD Armateurs

With more than 175 years of maritime expertise, LD ARMATEURS Group (LDA) designs and delivers tailored, high value-added industrial maritime solutions. The Group offers fully integrated services, spanning ship design, fleet management, and complex maritime operations, across four core business lines: Transport & Logistics, Submarine Telecommunications Cables, Offshore Wind and Subsea.

LDA has a strong global presence, with 1,800 employees and a fleet of around 40 vessels. Since July 2025, the Group has been supported in its growth by InfraVia, through its InfraVia European Fund VI.

For more information, visit: www.lda.fr

About Norsepower

Norsepower is the global market leader in mechanical sails for large ships. The award-winning company can help decarbonize 30,000 ships afloat today. Norsepower Rotor Sail™ harnesses the power of the wind to drive down the fuel consumption and CO2 emissions by 5–25% – or even more in good conditions. The product has been used by customers for more than 10 years.

Since its establishment in 2012, Norsepower has raised about €60 million in funding to support its fast growth. More than 50 Norsepower Rotor Sails™ have been installed onboard 20+ vessels so far, with 34 additional sails to be installed in the upcoming months. Over 760,000 running hours and 100,000+ hours of Norsepower Rotor Sail performance data have been verified by independent third-parties such as ABB, NAPA, RISE and Lloyd's Register.

For more information, please visit: www.norsepower.com

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