Flying the flag: *Mare Internum* will be the fourth Hansa Mare ship to fly the black, red and gold of Germany's national flag.

Hansa Mare reflags vessel to Germany's ship register

BREMEN-based shipowner Hansa Mare has switched a containership to the German register as part of a company strategy to strengthen the Germany-flagged fleet, *writes Roger Hailey*.

The 3,000 teu *Mare Internum*, registered in Antigua since 1998, will be the fourth Hansa Mare ship to fly the black, red and gold of Germany's national flag when it makes the official transfer on December 20.

Two sisterships — *Mare Africum* and *Mare Ionium* — have been flagged in Germany since 2004. In November 2008, the 1,000 teu *Mare Doricum* was also reflagged.

Hansa Mare is a 50-50 joint venture between Hanseatic Lloyd and Schlüssel.

In a management statement, Hansa Mare directors Thorsten Mackenthun and Andreas Opatz said: "We feel committed to implementing the reflagging agreement with the Federal German government and we are making our contribution to this by our conviction of exceeding the agreed number of ships sailing under the German flag."

In the wake of the economic crisis, the number of ships sailing under the country's flag has decreased to around 440 ships, although German shipping companies are making efforts at both national and regional level to bring the number back to 500 vessels.

Bremen shipowners have made their contribution to reflagging on a pro-rata basis. ∎