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NORDIC AMERICAN TANKER SHIPPING LTD
Form 6-K
October 15, 2003

FORM 6-K

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D. C. 20549

Report of Foreign Private Issuer
Pursuant to Rule 13a-16 or 15d-16 of
the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

For the month of October 2003

NORDIC AMERICAN TANKER SHIPPING LIMITED
(Translation of registrant's name into English)

Cedar House
41 Cedar Avenue
Hamilton HMEX
Bermuda
(Address of principal executive offices)

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant files or will file annual reports under cover Form 20-F or Form 40-F.

Form 20-F X Form 40-F

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant by furnishing the information contained in this Form is also thereby furnishing the information to the commission pursuant to Rule 12g3-2(b) under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

Yes No X

INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS FORM 6-K REPORT

Attached hereto is a copy of an earnings release issued by Nordic American Tanker Shipping Limited (the "Company") issued on October 15, 2003, announcing its Third Quarter dividend payment.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

BP Plc files annual reports on Form 20-F (File No. 1-6262) and periodic reports on Form 6-K with the Securities and Exchange Commission pursuant to the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended.

Nordic American
Tanker Shipping Limited

Nordic American Tanker Shipping Ltd. (NAT) - (AMEX: NAT) (OSE: NAT) announces

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results for 3rd quarter 2003 .

As of 09/30/03 (three quarters 2003) NAT had an operating profit of \$19.9 m as against \$5.5 m during the same period last year. The net profit for the first nine months of 2003 was \$18.5 m as against \$4.2 m in the same period last year. The 3rd quarter 2003 net profit was \$1.8 m as against \$1.4 m in 2002. The increase in the earnings in the first nine months of 2003 compared to the same period in year 2002 is a result of tanker rates being stronger in 2003.

The results for the 3rd quarter of 2003 enable the Company to pay a 4th quarter 2003 dividend of \$0.37 per share. Including the dividend for the 4th quarter of 2003, the total dividend paid in 2003 will be \$3.05 per share. The total dividend paid in 2002 and 2001 were \$1.35 and \$3.87 per share, respectively. The 4th quarter 2003 dividend of \$0.37 will be paid on or about November 17th to shareholders of record as of October 29th 2003. The next dividend payment from NAT will be declared in January 2004.

Under the contracts with BP Shipping, NAT achieves rates that correspond to the spot market for modern Suezmax tankers, but not below \$ 22,000 per day (T/C equivalent), which is the agreed minimum rate with BP Shipping. The spot market for modern Suezmax tankers in the 3rd quarter of 2003 was slightly above the agreed minimum rate the NAT vessels have with the charterer BP Shipping. The 3rd quarter 2003 time charter (T/C) equivalent for the NAT vessels was \$23,243 per day compared to \$38,291 in the 2nd quarter of 2003 and \$57,756 in the 1st quarter of 2003.

The existing contracts for the NAT vessels are drawn up in a way that secures income 365 days a year for the vessels and no off-hire. The contracts with BP Shipping commenced on October 1, 1997 and will terminate on 1 October 2004 (see below).

The quarterly \$ per day T/C equivalent for the NAT vessels has since 1999 been as follows:

Period	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
1st Quarter	22,000	26,079	51,607	22,000	57,756
2nd Quarter	22,000	33,701	35,088	22,000	38,291
3rd Quarter	22,000	48,153	28,668	22,000	23,243
4th Quarter	22,000	59,059	22,617	33,868	

NAT has 9,706,606 shares in issue.

The results for the 3rd quarter of 2003 and YTD 2003 compared to the same periods last year, are as follows:

INCOME STATEMENT INFORMATION All figures in USD

	01.01 - 09.30 2003	01.01 - 09.30 2002	3rd Qtr. 2003	3rd Qtr. 2002
Revenue	25,502,450	11,056,500	4,070,322	3,726,000
Ship Broker Commissions	(138,206)	(138,206)	(46,575)	(46,575)

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Management Fee Expense	(187,500)	(187,500)	(62,500)	(62,500)
Insurance Expense	(75,000)	(63,000)	(25,000)	(21,000)
Other Expenses	(111,119)	(33,381)	(26,118)	(15,024)
Depreciation	(5,123,280)	(5,123,280)	(1,707,760)	(1,707,760)
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Net Operating Income	19,867,345	5,511,133	2,202,369	1,873,141
	19,975	16,836	8,280	5,368
Financial Income				
Financial Expenses	(1,351,496)	(1,327,121)	(444,447)	(444,773)
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Net Financial Items	(1,331,521)	(1,310,285)	(436,167)	(439,405)
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Net Profit	18,535,824	4,200,848	1,766,202	1,433,736
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Earnings per Share	1.91	0.43	0.18	0.15
Cash Flow per Share	2.44	0.96	0.36	0.32

The quarterly dividend paid since the commencement in 1997 has been as follows:

Period	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
1st Quarter		0.40	0.32	0.34	1.41	0.36	0.63
2nd Quarter		0.41	0.32	0.45	1.19	0.34	1.27
3rd Quarter		0.32	0.35	0.67	0.72	0.33	0.78
4th Quarter	0.30	0.30	0.36	1.10	0.55	0.32	0.37
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Total USD	0.30	1.43	1.35	2.56	3.87	1.35	3.05

Balance sheet for Nordic American Tanker Shipping Ltd as of 30 September, 2003 and 31 December, 2002 (Figures in USD)

	09/30/03	12/31/02
Vessels	129,789,685	134,912,965
Current assets	370,749	3,388,811
Cash deposits	760,505	277,783
	-----	-----
Total assets	130,920,939	138,579,559
	-----	-----
Shareholder's equity	100,885,047	108,363,097
Long term debt	30,000,000	30,000,000
Current liabilities	35,892	216,462
	-----	-----
Total liabilities & equity	130,920,939	138,579,559
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As previously announced by the Company, BP Shipping the charterer of the Company's 3 Suezmax tankers, has not delivered notice of exercise of its options to extend the charters. Accordingly, the existing charters will terminate on October 1, 2004, subject to a redelivery window for the vessels of between

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September 1, 2004 and November 1, 2004.

Under the Company's Bye-Laws, the Company is obligated to call a special meeting of shareholders no later than April 1, 2004, to consider a proposal to sell the vessels and distribute the net proceeds to shareholders or to assess other alternatives. The proposal is to be accompanied by the recommendation of the Company's Board of Directors as to whether it believes that the sale of the vessels is in the Company's best interests, or whether an alternative plan, such as attempting to arrange replacement charters, might be of greater benefit.

In the absence of the renewal by BP Shipping of its option for all 3 vessels, the following alternatives are possible:

- o The renegotiation by the Company and BP Shipping of the charters.
- o The employment by the Company of the vessels in the spot market as from October 1, 2004.
- o The long-term charter of the vessels to other end-users than BP Shipping.
- o The sale of the vessels and the distribution of the proceeds to the company's shareholders.
- o Any combination of these alternatives.

In connection with the special shareholders' meeting, the Board is expected to consider whether the alternatives other than the sale of all of the vessels as outlined above, might be of greater benefit to shareholders.

October 15, 2003

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CAUTIONARY STATEMENT REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

Matters discussed in this press release may constitute forward-looking statements. The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 provides safe harbor protections for forward-looking statements in order to encourage companies to provide prospective information about their business. Forward-looking statements include statements concerning plans, objectives, goals, strategies, future events or performance, and underlying assumptions and other statements, which are other than statements of historical facts.

The Company desires to take advantage of the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 and is including this

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cautionary statement in connection with this safe harbor legislation. The words "believe," "except," "anticipate," "intends," "estimate," "forecast," "project," "plan," "potential," "will," "may," "should," "expect" "pending and similar expressions identify forward-looking statements.

The forward-looking statements in this press release are based upon various assumptions, many of which are based, in turn, upon further assumptions, including without limitation, our management's examination of historical operating trends, data contained in our records and other data available from third parties. Although we believe that these assumptions were reasonable when made, because these assumptions are inherently subject to significant uncertainties and contingencies which are difficult or impossible to predict and are beyond our control, we cannot assure you that we will achieve or accomplish these expectations, beliefs or projections.

In addition to these important factors, important factors that, in our view, could cause actual results to differ materially from those discussed in the forward-looking statements include the strength of world economies and currencies, general market conditions, including fluctuations in charterhire rates and vessel values, changes in demand in the tanker market, as a result of changes in OPEC's petroleum production levels and world wide oil consumption and storage, changes in the Company's operating expenses, including bunker prices, drydocking and insurance costs, the market for the Company's vessels, availability of financing and refinancing, changes in governmental rules and regulations or actions taken by regulatory authorities, potential liability from pending or future litigation, general domestic and international political conditions, potential disruption of shipping routes due to accidents or political events, and other important factors described from time to time in the reports filed by the Company with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

NORDIC AMERICAN TANKER SHIPPING LIMITED
(registrant)

Dated: October 15, 2003

By: /s/ Herbjorn Hansson

Herbjorn Hansson
President and
Chief Executive Officer

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