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Interview p32

Arnaldo Calbucci: *"In 2003, a PSV with 1,500 deadweight capacity was a very big PSV. Nowadays... the design companies are starting projects for 6,000."*

■ Includes offshore news and underwater services ■

Fast response for on-the-spot solutions

Drydocking to carry out vessel repairs is an expensive and time-consuming procedure. US-based Hydrex's answer to the problem is a comprehensive range of in-situ underwater maintenance and repair services, which save a significant amount of time, energy and money.

An extensive range of state-of-the-art equipment enables Hydrex US to mobilise diver/technician teams immediately.

The ability to carry out highly technical major repairs or replacements of a ship's external underwater equipment and machinery in-situ and therefore eliminating the need to drydock, is at the heart of all work undertaken by Florida-based company Hydrex.

Thrusters, propellers, rudders, stern tube seals, damaged or corroded hulls and all other underwater services are carried out by professional teams trained and qualified to undertake complex tasks underwater. They are able to effect both simple and complex jobs even in the harshest of circumstances.

The Hydrex office in Clearwater has a fast-response centre equipped with an extensive range of state-of-the-art trucks, tools and diving support equipment needed to carry out underwater operations at short notice. This enables the company to efficiently service vessels and offshore units calling on ports in Canada, North, Central and South America as well as the Caribbean.

Because of the nature of repair work, it is often necessary for solutions to difficult problems to be worked out in a short time period, sometimes even while an operation is already in progress. This can only be done successfully by technical experts who have the relevant know-how to resolve such technical difficulties. All staff undergo stringent training at the Hydrex headquarters in Antwerp, after which they are skilled to perform a wide range of operations.

In the second half of 2010, Hydrex diver/technician teams carried out a full inspection and removed all fouling from three drilling vessels in the Gulf of Mexico owned by Transocean, the world's largest offshore drilling company. This was done to reduce the weight and drag of the vessels and increase their available deck load.

The scope of work consisted of a comprehensive UWILD inspection of the three vessels, particularly the weld seams, and cleaning of the underwater parts of the units. Replacement of anodes was performed wherever needed and all overboard lines were blanked in order to enable inspection from the inside. The teams also assisted with the removal of one of the vessels' thrusters so that they could be overhauled.

Hydrex is also capable of carrying out fast, high quality underwater inspection and cleaning operations or any other maintenance and repair work on offshore units located in the Gulf of Mexico. A diver/technician team can be on location and ready to service offshore units or offshore-related vessels within days.

Making use of the company's in-house designed range of cleaning units, all types of fouling can be removed from any type of offshore structure. This offers owners big savings in fuel when moving their unit from one location to another, which also means reduced GHG and other emissions.

By performing repair and maintenance work underwater, hire time is minimalised.