



Press release – 18 June 2014

IHC Merwede launches innovative Hi-Traq trencher

IHC Merwede has officially introduced the world's first four-tracked subsea trencher, specifically developed for shallow water operations and targeted towards cable burial in offshore wind farms. The Hi-Traq was presented at a special event at the Stadium of Light in Sunderland, which was attended by offshore wind industry professionals from the UK, Europe and the USA.

This new remotely operated vehicle has been developed to be the most efficient tracked trencher, capable of tackling the full range of challenges typically faced in this application. High wave loadings and strong currents at the seabed meant the vehicle had to have a minimum weight to guarantee safe, accurate working and efficient trenching operations, for example. Varied seabed soil conditions were also considered in the Hi-Traq's design.

Chris Jones, Product Manager of the Subsea Vehicle Team at IHC Engineering Business, part of IHC Merwede, explained how the Hi-Traq differed from existing trenching assets: "Features such as the independent four-track undercarriage and a flexible tooling arrangement were engineered as integral parts of the design, and have remained the main focus of the project throughout."

A high level of manoeuvrability also sets the Hi-Traq apart from the competition. The four-track undercarriage design enables it to climb slopes with gradients of up to 20 degrees. This high traction functionality gives the vehicle its name.

Hi-Traq has been successfully tested and demonstrated at IHC's the Port of Tyne facility in South Shields, where a special terrain was created to mimic subsea conditions. "The test programme has confirmed that the Hi-Traq trencher is capable of fulfilling all of our functional requirements," said Chris.

Company profile IHC Merwede

IHC Merwede is focussed on the continuous development of design and construction activities for the specialist maritime sector. It is the global market leader for efficient dredging and mining vessels and equipment – with vast experience accumulated over decades – and a reliable supplier of innovative ships and supplies for offshore construction.

IHC Merwede has in-house expertise for engineering and manufacturing integrated standard and custom-built vessels, advanced equipment and also providing life-cycle support. This integrated systematic approach has helped to develop optimum product performance and long-term business partnerships. The company's broad customer base includes dredging operators, oil and gas corporations, offshore contractors and government authorities.

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IHC Merwede has over 3,000 employees based at various locations in The Netherlands, Brazil, China, Croatia, France, India, Malaysia, the Middle East, Nigeria, Singapore, Slovakia, South Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Technological innovation will remain the company's underlying strength through its continuous investment in research and development. Moreover, it helps to safeguard a sustainable environment.

Note for the editors, not for publication:

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The press release and picture will be available on our website, www.ihcmerwede.com

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