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First wind service operation vessels ready for charter

ESVAGT opens a new chapter in the shipping company history with the HST 118.

When ESVAGT sends its first newly built wind Service Operation Vessel (SOV) into charter for Siemens Wind Power at the Baltic 2 wind farm at the beginning of 2015, it will mark the opening of a new market for ESVAGT.

Even though the 'Esvagt Supporter' has successfully serviced the Belwind wind farm at Bligh Bank, the HST 118 is ESVAGT's first purpose-built SOV designed for the wind energy market.

Both the HST 118 and its sister ship, the HST 119, due for delivery in April, raise the bar in technology, operating economy and not least on board comfort.

”We can safely say that the SOVs are the most advanced vessels to date that have been built for wind farms,” says Kristian Ole Jakobsen, Chief Operating Officer for ESVAGT.

The vessels will be used to transfer service technicians from vessel to wind turbine. Both vessels have been equipped with a gyroscopic gangway system that makes it possible to walk from the vessel to the wind turbine – a so-called Walk to Work concept. The gyroscopic gangway system can also function in heavy weather conditions and ESVAGT has also equipped the vessels with an active roll damping system, which further optimises the possible applications of the vessels.

High on board comfort level

The active roll damping system also makes a difference for on board comfort and, together with the ship’s design and layout, unites the vessel’s excellent technical qualities with a comfortable working day. The roll damping system minimises the vessel’s sideways movements and the sensation of wave movement. The vessel is designed to meet the requirements of the Nordforsk standard, which stipulates seaworthiness in relation to comfort for those on board. It also reduces the risk of sea-sickness.

“Comfort on a vessel is very important to those on board – not only when working but in particular during rest periods. That is why we have prioritised the limiting of effect from waves, wind and weather as well as noise and vibration from the diesel engines as much as possible for those on board,” explains Kristian Ole Jakobsen.

The vessels are equipped with Siemens Blue Drive Plus system; an entirely new and innovative fuel saving DC direct current system. The system ensures that the vessel’s diesel system delivers power at a load-dependent number of revolutions (in contrast to a constant number of revolutions), which, according to Kristian Ole Jakobsen, reduces fuel consumption, noise and vibrations on board the vessel. The method also results in a much-improved redundancy ratio and longer maintenance intervals for the diesel motors.

Seaworthy and dependable

Both the HST 118 and the HST 119 were built by Havyard Ship Technology at Cemre Shipyard in Tyrkey, which builds the vessel hulls, and Leirvik Shipyard in Norway, that fits the vessels with all the equipment and conducts the commissioning and tests of the systems and vessels prior to delivery.

“The design is absolutely top shelf. The vessels are seaworthy in almost all types of weather, as you would expect from an ESVAGT vessel, and there is a high level of operational reliability built into the vessel’s propulsion system. The vessels’ performance in terms of manoeuvrability and ability to keep a set position in DP mode (Station Keeping Capability) is excellent.

We have, of course, also introduced our latest development in water mist systems, which ensures ultra-quick and effective fire extinguishing, which is an important safety factor on board vessels carrying so many people,” says Kristian Ole Jakobsen.

The vessels will function as sailing workstations in the wind farms. Large parts of the stern have therefore been fitted with workshops and with room for spare parts, gantry cranes and other handling equipment. Office facilities have also been included for the technicians.

Facts

First wind energy contract

HST 118 will provide service for the wind turbines in the Baltic 2 wind farm that lies between Møn and Bornholm. The HST 119 will operate in the Butendiek wind farm, situated in the North German sector off the island of Rømø.

The contracts are for 5 and 10 years respectively with further options. They mark both ESVAGT’s first wind energy contract with the tailor made SOV vessels and their largest single contract.

ESVAGT is a dedicated provider of safety and support at sea, founded on an experienced and well-trained offshore crew and unmatched rescue capabilities.

We support the offshore Oil & Gas industries with a wide range of specialized services: Standby, Emergency Response and Rescue Vessels (ERRV), Oil spill response, Firefighting, Tanker assists, Rig moves, Supply services and Interfield transfer of cargo and personnel.

In 2010, ESVAGT brought the dedicated offshore wind Service Operation Vessels (SOV) to the market. The SOVs provide accommodation for up to 40 technicians, storage for small turbine parts and a workshop, plus personnel and equipment transfer capabilities by either Walk-to-Work gangway system or Safe Transfer Boats.

ESVAGT was founded in 1981 and has a fleet of more than 40 vessels and more than 900 employees on- and offshore.

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