



Ole Ditlev Nielsen turns 60 on the 11th of May and has been with ESVAGT for almost 25 years.

May 10, 2017 10:29 CEST

My ESVAGT: “I can’t imagine anything more positive than saving lives for a living”

“I can’t imagine anything more positive than saving lives for a living”

Ole Ditlev Nielsen turns 60 on the 11th May 2017. He joined ESVAGT almost 25 years ago as the company’s first safety and quality coordinator. He will now work with the future development of the company.

In 1993, ESVAGT was a relatively young shipping company in an exciting development phase – but it was also a shipping company facing challenges.

One of those challenges was that in the space of just one year, there had been four LTIs (Lost Time Incident). With a staff of 120, it was equivalent to 1 employee in 30 getting so badly hurt at work that they needed to be signed off sick.

Something needed to be done and that was first on the list of priorities for Ole Ditlev Nielsen when he joined ESVAGT on the 1st of January 1993 as the shipping company's first safety and quality coordinator.

“Customers were not satisfied with our performance – and when you compare it to today, it certainly wasn't our best,” says Ole Ditlev Nielsen.

He joined the company from the Offshore School on the island of Fanø where he had, amongst other things, taught safety, first aid and sailing to ESVAGT employees. One of the first initiatives at ESVAGT was to help compose a safety manual that could be used by people in their everyday work.

“Ole Andersen, our director, was very focussed on safety and understood how important safety and quality were for both employees and for the entire company,” says Ole Ditlev Nielsen.

The good old days are right now!

Taking a look back at the safety statistics for 1993 and comparing them to ESVAGT in 2017 is very telling for the development of both ESVAGT and the offshore industry as a whole.

“We had had four LTIs in one year back in 1992 – and with a staff of 120 men. In comparison, in 2016 we achieved an entire year without any LTIs in ESVAGT with a staff of almost 1,000 employees. That speaks volumes about how much we and the industry have learnt,” explains Ole Ditlev Nielsen.

A stronger safety and performance culture and the constant learning that this has entailed have been some of the drivers for the growth that ESVAGT has experienced, assesses Ole Ditlev Nielsen:

“The old tune that everything was better back in the good old days isn't true

– at least when we talk safety. I expect that in 10-15 years, we will look back on some of the things that we do at ESVAGT today and consider them insufficient. If not, then we will not have developed at all for 10-15 years, which would be very disappointing,” he says.

Development is key for ESVAGT. The constant development in boat building materials is an example of how it is driven by the need for safety. The materials must be reliable and safe to work with – even in the sea conditions that ESVAGT works in.

This development is the reason why ESVAGT now works with more than just standby and rescue. The development of Safe Transfer Boats (STB7 and STB12), which are used for work in offshore wind farms, are the fifth generation of ESVAGT vessels and are direct descendants to the first:

“ESVAGT is a learning organisation that is driven to constantly improve and develop. That is what led us into the offshore wind industry – a desire to develop, be the best and sell a quality product,” says Ole Ditlev Nielsen.

25 years – 73 rescues

Ole Ditlev Nielsen turns 60 on the 11th of May and has been with ESVAGT since its beginnings on Havnegade 62, Adgangsvejen 1 in the old seaman’s home and now at its modern facilities on Dokvej that ESVAGT opened in 2014.

He has been with ESVAGT throughout its intense growth, but although development lies within the DNA of the shipping company, it has been important to ensure that the values were upheld and could keep pace.

“There was a time when we had four new builds a year and the company grew significantly. At one time, we had almost a 50 percent share of the Norwegian market. It was absolutely critical that we held onto our values and the competences that we have. ESVAGT’s development must always have its root in these,” says Ole Ditlev Nielsen.

Ole Ditlev Nielsen has also developed during his 25 years at the shipping company. He now leaves his post as Chief Commercial Officer to Søren Karas, while Ole Ditlev Nielsen as Business Development Manager will focus in particular on developing ESVAGT’s wind activities:

“I am looking forward to working with fellow ESVAGT employees on vessel solutions that will help to make wind energy more profitable,” says Ole Ditlev Nielsen.

Over the 25 years that he has been part of the company, ESVAGT has rescued 73 people. On average, he has been part of making the ultimate difference to a crew and a family three times a year.

“It is immensely motivating to work with what we do. It is the rescues and the chance to make a difference on the large scale that makes us train and practise. We have saved everyone we set out to save every time. That heightens our morale and that of those we are rescuing. I can’t imagine anything more positive than saving lives for a living,” says Ole Ditlev Nielsen.

CV:

1993-1997: Safety/Quality Coordinator, ESVAGT

1997-2013: Operations Manager, ESVAGT

2013-2017: Chief Commercial & Safety Officer, ESVAGT

2017- :Business Development Manager, ESVAGT

Lives in Esbjerg with Irma in a house built in 1928.

Father to three grown up children; two daughters following the designer path and a son who, after time in the armed forces, is about to start studying to be a mechanical engineer.

Søren Nørgaard Thomsen: “Ole is the guarantor for the ESVAGT standard”

When ESVAGT’s former director, Ole Andersen, employed Ole Ditlev Nielsen, he told him: “You are Ditlev. There is only one Ole in this house”.

And just as Ole Andersen was the only Ole and was the absolute Mr. ESVAGT, his legacy lives on through Ole Ditlev Nielsen: He is now the only Ole and Mr. ESVAGT.

Ole Ditlev Nielsen is a bearer of culture and an ambassador. He, more than any other, is the guarantor for the ESVAGT standard that we work to every day. Ole is a large part of ESVAGT's strong safety culture.

Ole is competent, engaged and passionate, and he has an in depth understanding for and knowledge of our customers' businesses. It is that knowledge and understanding that he uses when he, together with his colleagues at ESVAGT, develops new, innovative solutions and concepts that benefit and develop both our customers and ESVAGT.

About ESVAGT

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 approximately 900 employees on- and offshore.

Contacts



Heidi Boddum

Press Contact

Marketing & Communications Coordinator

hbo@esvagt.com

+45 78 730 772