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My ESVAGT: Lars was attracted to the sea

As a 16-year old boy Lars Dahl stood out to sea – and that is where he has felt at home ever since.

For Lars Dahl there was not a shred of doubt as to what time was going to be spent on after nine years at school: he was to set out on a long voyage.

- My father was engaged in overseas trade, and I was quite certain that that was what I wanted to do myself as well, says Lars Dahl.

Like father, like son – and Lars became a seaman by training and sailed on European and African destinations – mostly on coasters and mostly for small

and medium-sized shipping companies where a shipping assistant who wanted to go for it would be able to see most of the world.

After a few years with long voyages, a few of his friends at home at Esbjerg talked warmly about changing over to the fisheries.

- We are talking of the very good years for the fisheries and I was persuaded by all the temptations. It was trawling for herring and mackerel for consumption and trash fish for the industry, and I actually liked being a fisherman. Financially it was attractive and were entertaining years. But then restrictions began to hit the fisheries and suddenly the annual salary was halved, says Lars Dahl.

One of many

In 1991 he joined the expanding ESVAGT together with a number of other colleagues, who are still in the shipping company.

- There were a lot of fishermen who left the trade at the beginning of the 90's. Just in my group at ESVAGT there were Viggo Hvidberg, Jørgen Heide and Christian Christensen, who all left the fisheries to join ESVAGT all those years ago. And we are all still here, says Lars Dahl. To him it was the fixed term of work, guaranteed salary and the full knowledge of when one would be at home that mattered.

- I had just become a father for the first time, and I needed some more peace and tranquillity. I had also grown tired of the instability that I saw in the fisheries, says Lars Dahl.

Since then, it was the culture and the workplace that kept him and others employees. Very good proof of this is the fact that the team Lars Dahl began together with in ESVAGT are still in the company. Apart from the three fishermen mentioned, Stig Holmkvist and Steen Møller were also in that team – and they are still with the shipping company.

- From my team there are only four people who are no longer at ESVAGT. Two pensioners and two who have died, says Lars Dahl.

- ESVAGT has turned out to be a very interesting workplace to get to. There were 90 of us when I came here, and today there are 600. It was more like a

family then. But it is still an open company where all doors have been open since the days of Ole Andersen. One will always be heard; and even if it is a very large company today, ESVAGT is still very good at informing and communicating with all of us. That is very important when there are so many, says Lars Dahl.

Seaman and handyman

Through the years he has been on many of the ESVAGT vessels. He began on "Esvagt Protector" and came later to "Esvagt Preventer" and sailed on group-3 vessels. He also managed to be on "Esvagt Gamma" before he came on to his first new vessel "Esvagt Observer" – and later the sister vessel "Esvagt Connector" - in Klaipeda in Latvia.

For the last three or four years Lars Dahl has been on "Esvagt Beta". For quite some time, the vessel has been a transfer vessel and been used for the training of new colleagues. These are work tasks that suit Lars Dahl well.

- We have a very fine working day where there is a high level of activity and a lot of different people to talk to. I have been in the shipping company since 1991, and part of my job is to pass the experience I have gained on to my colleagues. We have had many colleagues through their first training drills for the company with us here, and I thoroughly enjoy passing the culture on, says Lars Dahl.

The turns of being on duty for four weeks out and four weeks at home suits Lars Dahl's other interests fine. The house in Kirkegade has been renovated from top to bottom – without a single visit by a craftsman. All of it has been done from 'Daddy's workshop' in the basement.

- I have no training as a craftsman, but I am not afraid of giving it a try – and I always get good advice from my craftsmen friends. Having four weeks at home, I can do many things. And then Helle is very good at making new proposals, so there is always something for me to do, says Lars Dahl with a smile.

Besides, he is an active cyclist in the ESVAGT bicycle team, and in winter it is spinning that keeps him fit.

In private:

Lars Dahl is married to Helle, and father of the daughter Christina (22) and

the son Christian (19). Christina is studying to become a nurse in Copenhagen and Christian still lives at home and is an electrician apprentice.

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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