

Underwater repairs

New mobdock reduces docking costs

The introduction of a new design of underwater habitat for rudder repairs can save shipowners thousands of dollars in emergency drydocking costs, according to Hydrex Underwater Technologies. Until recently, permanent in-water rudder repairs were not possible as vessels had to drydock in case major defects were found. A new version of Hydrex's proven mobdock concept, however, is gaining ground as a viable, cost effective rudder repair alternative.

The equipment, a completely new and redesigned model of the company's original mobdock, introduced in 2002, to facilitate the underwater repair of damaged stern tube seals, is already finding favour with shipowners. Recently, the new system was used in the Port of Antwerp to effect repairs to the rudder of a 200m pure car/truck carrier (PCTC) after shipboard engineers found it to be incorrectly balanced.

Hydrex recently assisted a vessel that was leaking oil from a stern tube seal entangled with steel wire, thereby allowing it to pass safely through the Panama Canal. The 156m long, Dutch-owned vessel was unable to make the canal transit until the propeller shaft seal had been repaired, potentially delaying operations and resulting in financial penalty for the owner.

Antwerp-headquartered Hydrex, however, repaired the leaky seal allowing the vessel to continue without disruption to its schedule. After removing the damaged

components, which had already taken in water, the dive team set up a flexible mobdock around the stern tube to create a dry environment in which to repair the equipment.

The damage to this vessel's propeller shaft seal was extensive but Hydrex was able to complete repairs in the same time frame as a regular stern tube seal replacement, despite the larger scope of work. Working together with its local support base, Hydrex teams worked in shifts to keep vessel down time to the absolute minimum.

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Wastewater management

ACO wins Bibby retrofit deal

ACO Marine has been awarded a contract to supply a Clarimar MF-10 wastewater treatment plant to the 8234t Dive Support Vessel (DSV) *Bibby Polaris*. The vessel's current wastewater management arrangement will be converted to the Clarimar system during a planned refit later this year at an undisclosed European shipyard.

In what marks a first for its wastewater treatment system refits, the Clarimar unit will be supplied flat packed.

Changing the vessel's current wastewater management system to one capable of meeting new MEPC 227(64) requirements was a challenge given the limited space available, so ACO has decided to deliver the system as an 'IKEA-style' flat pack for erection and welding onboard

Hydrex's newly redesigned mobdock in use

