

Diving Companies Add Side Scan



More commercial diving companies are adding side-scan surveys to the mix of services they offer. Some are purchasing sonars to provide them with the capability of finding lost objects, to track pipelines, or just to save on the amount of time divers spend in the water searching. Others are using the sonar to produce detailed maps of the underwater terrain before beginning a construction project, or to inspect underwater structures such as bridge supports, piers, and seawalls.

One of these new sonar operators is Hydro Marine Construction in New Jersey, part of the WJ Castle Group. Mr. Castle decided the SSS-100K/600K dual-frequency sonar with optional Map Coverage software would best meet Hydro Marine's requirements. The Map Coverage software would allow them to perform large-scale survey operations and see the

path of the boat, and width of scan coverage, as the sonar is towed over the search area. Two members of Castle's team were sent to Fishers factory to take part in a free factory training course. Newly certified side-scan operators Rick Parisi and Greg McGrath found the sonar system easy to learn and simple to operate.

When American Marine Construction in Florida needed to survey a underwater site littered with material from a demolition job, it chose the SSS-100K/600K dual-frequency side scan. Coast Guard regulations dictated a maximum height of debris on the bottom. American didn't want to spend time pulling up any more than was necessary. The side scan allowed them to see exactly what was on the bottom, and where the height limitation was exceeded. This allowed the company to focus directly on the problem areas, saving time and money.

Some of the other firms using their Fisher side scans to perform successful search operations are Diver Dan Diving Services in Texas, Three Rivers Diving in Missouri, and West Coast Diving in Ireland. Diver Dan is surveying waterways so they can be cleared of junk. Three Rivers is using their system to scan the face of dams and determine how much trash has accumulated at the base. West Coast is putting their sonar to work mapping the many shipwrecks that surround the Emerald Isle.