

HighWire Taut Wire System Upgrade for Boskalis



On behalf of its client Boskalis, Dutch subsea technology company Seatools has completed the upgrade of a HighWire survey grade taut wire system. The upgraded position reference system will be deployed to determine the position of a subsea cable plough during a subsea cable installation project executed by Boskalis.

Initially delivered in 2001, the HighWire system served Boskalis during the installation of submerged sewage outfall pipes in challenging conditions. Because of their positive experience using the HighWire system, Boskalis decided to rely on the system again. This time, however, the wire orientation needed to be changed from nearly vertical to nearly horizontal. Although the update required fundamental modifications of both the system's mechanical design and its software, alterations were made in as little as three weeks.

The upgraded system performed excellently during factory testing – it even outstripped the 2001 accuracy level of 1 centimetre, measured across significant distances. The system's high level of accuracy will provide significant value for subsea cable owners, facilitating easy identification and recovery of a buried cable when in need of repair.

Jan Frumau, managing director at Seatools, was pleased to learn that Boskalis chose the Highwire system again. He stated that in the industry, taut wire systems are mostly commonly deployed as DP position reference systems. However, the technology can be used for all types of offshore operations that require accurate and real-time measurement of submerged objects, such as uninterrupted pile driving, mudmat or caisson installation, and marine civil engineering projects. Particularly owing to their robustness, ability to cope with ambient noise, and mixed zone applicability, taut wires make an ideal choice for a wide variety of underwater operations.

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