

IADC Safety Award 2009 for DEC



The Board of the International Association of Dredging Contractors (IADC) has presented the Safety Award 2009 to DEME Environmental Contractors (DEC), the environmental specialist company of the DEME Group, for its exemplary safety performance during a challenging acid tar lagoon remediation project in Belgium.

Each year IADC seeks to honour one of its member companies that has shown an outstanding achievement in the area of safety. The IADC Safety Award is intended to encourage the development of safety skills on the job and to reward those people and companies demonstrating special diligence in safety awareness in their profession. The operation that DEC performed in the remediation of the toxic and dangerous acid tar lagoons in Rieme demonstrates that the expertise developed by dredging and maritime

construction companies such as DEME is applicable in the most challenging circumstances.

On its premises in Rieme, Total Belgium has three old lagoons containing acid tar, a residual product from the former production method of white oils. About 200,000 tonnes of lagoon material was present. DEC was awarded the design and build contract for the remediation of the acid tar lagoons. There are not many available solutions for the treatment of acid tar and the client Total wanted to be certain that the proposed techniques would work. DEC proposed a treatment technique in which the acid tar is stabilised using CalDEC (a neutralising additive developed by DEC) and then disposed of on-site in an engineered cell. An additional problem was the emission of sulphur dioxide and the accompanying odour. DEC also developed an alternative excavation technique to eliminate this for all those on and near the site.

DEME and its environmental subsidiary DEC are both ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 certified companies, an indicator that these companies impose high-level environmental and safety awareness conduct, attitude and operations. The DEME group has made a commitment to its own personnel and to the outside world to consider safety an absolute priority in all circumstances and to ensure that DEME is an incident and injury-free place to work. A new cultural and behavioural training programme was launched this year to create and maintain a culture of zero accidents and zero harm to the environment.

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