Research Consortium For Enhanced Metocean Services

BMT ARGOSS, a subsidiary of BMT Group, has announced its latest research project in partnership with Reading University, UK, and OceanExpert Ltd. The 18-month project which is co-funded by the Technology Strategy Board, the UK's national innovation agency, will look at developing, trialling and implementing commercial decision support systems for offshore operations. Such systems will help to increase the reliability of present, operational metocean information services for the oil and gas and renewables industries.

Existing services tend to provide either standalone forecasting, real-time measurements or historical statistics. With the objective of making practical and innovative use of very large and disparate data sources, BMT ARGOSS hopes to improve the understanding and forecasting of the offshore environment.

Through this research project, BMT ARGOSS and its partners are developing techniques which will allow a much more 'end-to-end' service provision, with large scale environmental datasets being combined and assessed against local in-situ, real-time and historical measurements. This will allow decision support services to reflect both environmental and engineering constraints within offshore operations.

Robin Stephens, manager of the metocean group at BMT ARGOSS, comments that planning offshore installation and maintenance operations can be extremely challenging due to the continuously changing nature of ocean environmental conditions, i.e wind, waves and currents – an issue which is exacerbated in deeper water provinces and more hostile environments. Both the oil and gas and renewables industries therefore rely on operational metocean information services in order to plan for such work to take place safely and effectively.

He expects that this project will allow BMT ARGOSS to bring together and optimise large and disparate data sources that are now available to us and therefore provide much more detailed and validated information and further support the decision-making of critical offshore operations.

The research is being carried out with the Reading e-Science Centre, which has expertise in Met and Ocean modelling, data assimilation methods, storm track ensemble forecasting and advanced visualisation tools for model-data evaluation, and has previously collaborated with BMT companies. OceanExpert Ltd will provide internal project review and guidance on services and performance expectations, particularly from an end-user perspective.

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