

# ROV Workshops With Positive Outcomes

Oceanology International 2010, held in London last month, proved to be the ideal place for the International Marine Contractors Association (IMCA) to hold a dedicated workshop on remotely operated vehicle (ROV) umbilical and handling systems, the first being at IMCA's Annual Seminar in November 2009 in Rio de Janeiro.

Jim Mann of Fugro opened the session, with Magne Andersen and Espen Ingebretsen of Oceaneering speaking about 'Challenges of ROV installation on newbuild rigs and vessels' and Andreas Gabrielsen of Nexans covering 'Deepwater umbilicals'. The delegates then split into groups to discuss new guidelines; competence and training; feedback from users to manufacturers; heave compensation; and design.

The guidelines workshop resulted in the decision that IMCA should produce an additional guideline covering what vessel designers should consider on new vessels if they are to feature a ROV spread. This "spread mobilisation plan" will also be put to good use when considering existing vessels and how to improve efficiency and operability.

There is an existing competence assurance and assessment guidance document and competence tables for IMCA's Remote Systems & ROV Division members. The workshop discussions enabled everyone involved to realise that two relevant groups were not covered by the existing documentation - the ship's engineering crew and the project management team. Both will now be addressed, and companies encouraged to use the framework to provide competence schemes encompassing these two groups.

"The workshop designed to encourage feedback from users to manufacturers most certainly achieved its objective," says Hugh Williams. "we have tried, unsuccessfully, to involve university research teams on studies on umbilicals - in particular into the root causes of ROV umbilical corrosion. Thanks to the workshop, we have leapfrogged over the need for this. The umbilical manufacturer and contractors sat down together and had incredibly frank and useful dialogue and were able to devise suggestions for measurement in real time; determine that there should be more research into failures; and to request that IMCA establish feedback via the existing 'anonymised' incident reporting system so issues can be fully understood. What's more, it was agreed that more R&D and testing was vital. This workshop alone proved the worth of the event."

IMCA has an active heave compensation work group, which recently held a well attended workshop in Amsterdam, so the group that met together at Oceanology International was briefed on the activity of that particular workgroup. "This undoubtedly led to helping them understand that heave compensation is not a universal panacea and can at times be counter productive," explains Hugh Williams.

The final workshop of the afternoon looked at key elements of umbilical design - issues such as Z-kinking and damage through contact because of tight radii came into focus, and resulted in greater understanding by both users and manufacturers. This group's output sits alongside that of the feedback workshop.