

Go global, grow local

As BW Offshore expands its reach around the world, the emphasis is on building up quality manpower locally.

As part of the BW Group, BW Offshore sees a great advantage in recruiting its personnel through the group manning offices in the Philippines, India, and Latvia/Russia. The company also has a separate BW Offshore manning office in Oslo and in 2008 will open one in Ciudad del Carmen, Mexico. Close relationships with the various manning offices are critical to recruitment and retention success. External manning agents such as Gulf Agency Manning Services (GMS) in Nigeria and MKT in Mauritania provide another alternative for sourcing personnel.

INVESTING IN PEOPLE

BW Offshore has a long term commitment to the offshore business and this has resulted in a focused investment in strengthening relationships with, and building the capability of, offshore personnel. As in any relationship however, success will require a commitment from both sides, the employer and the employee.

The company and the various manning offices work in tandem to look after the relationship with each offshore employee when onboard and in vacation mode respectively.

In order to equip staff for the 'onboard mode', BW Offshore welcomes all offshore personnel with a familiarisation program and provides appropriate training and professional development opportunities throughout the employment period.

LOCAL MANNING REQUIREMENTS

Due to the requirements for local manpower, BW Offshore focuses strongly on building up relations with external manning providers in the various countries of operation.

The GMS is the external manning agent in Nigeria. There are two units in place outside Nigeria at present, the FPSO Sendje Berge and the FPSO Berge Okoloba Toru. A third unit, the FPSO BW Endeavour (to be renamed BW Peace), is scheduled to arrive at the Bilabri field in the fourth quarter of this year.

BW Offshore started early to put in place a program for practical training onboard the two units. Several of the Nigerian trainees are presently in line to enter into fixed positions onboard, but a rather bureaucratic process to get the appropriate certificates and necessary documents has slowed down the promotion process. As of October 2006, Nigeria got its 'IMO white list' ranking, which makes it easier for companies who require/need international recognition of their local Nigerian employees' certificates.



ABOVE and BACKGROUND Mauritanian trainees from Berge Helene conducting safety training in Malta.



For the new unit BW Endeavour, a new recruiter system on the BW Offshore website has been implemented to attract Nigerian personnel. By prioritising recruitment of already certified Nigerian personnel, in addition to the established training program, the company expects to quickly reach the Nigerian 70 per cent requirement for local staffing.

The external manning agent in Mauritania, MKT, is used for FPSO Berge Helene in operation at the Chinguetti field off Nouakchott.

In Mauritania, BW Offshore became engaged at an early stage in a two year custom-made training program for two groups of Mauritians (20+20). Since Mauritania does not have the IMO white list ranking, the theoretical training takes place in Tunisia and Malta. The practical training is conducted onboard the Berge Helene with dedicated trainers. From May 2007, the first group of trainees enters into fixed

positions onboard the Berge Helene. The plan is to steadily build up to the Mauritanian 70 per cent requirement.

Both in Nigeria and Mauritania, the company faces challenges regarding the availability of qualified individuals. However, where Nigeria already has a developed maritime/offshore personnel infrastructure, Mauritania does not yet have such a structure.

NEW MANNING OFFICE IN MEXICO

The FPSO YÙUM K'AK'NÁAB (YKN) starting up operation at the KMZ field in the Gulf of Mexico opens up a new geographical focus area. This is likely to have an impact on manning procedures. A rotation system of '6-8 weeks on' + '6-8 weeks off' combined with the hard work onboard and the long distance back and forth for Asian based personnel can cause fatigue. Such a scheme is effective in the start up phase and short

term, but is not a long term solution. There are already several alternatives to address this. One way will be to replace some of the personnel in accordance with plans for local manpower.

As with the other locations where BW Offshore operates FPSOs, the plan is to build up local content with a long term workforce of Mexican offshore personnel. In addition to the YKN, a possible market for Mexican personnel for other BW projects in this part of the world is also foreseen. BW Offshore is consequently in the process of developing a BW manning office in Ciudad del Carmen, as part of the operation for the YKN. The office is planned to be in operation at the beginning of 2008. ●