



UNDERCURRENTS

Issue 3, April 2005

Welcome to the 3rd issue of our newsletter, In the 7 months since our last issue, there have been some exciting changes at MSI. These include the full time appointment of another senior oceanographic engineer and a move to larger premises. Details on these, some of the projects we've been awarded and training courses in which we are involved, are included below.

For more information on these articles or any other aspect of our business, please see our contact details at the end of the newsletter.

Current Measurement Project off Yemen achieves 100% data return

In November 2004, Metocean Services International (MSI) installed a current measurement mooring as part of a larger survey project in the Riyan prospect offshore Yemen for Oil Search Yemen Limited.



The scope of work called for current measurements at a single location in the centre of the Riyan prospect in water depth of $\pm 660\text{m}$ for a period of up to 180 days. The mooring comprises a combination of 75kHz and 300kHz acoustic doppler current profilers (ADCPs) so as to be able to obtain a current profile through the entire water column.

In addition to the ADCPs, the mooring (pictured left) is also fitted with a satellite tracking beacon.

All equipment was loaded onto the vessel MV Seabulk Hawaii in the UAE and the mooring was assembled while the vessel steamed to Al Mukalla Port in Yemen to clear customs.

Prior to and after deployment of the mooring, the MSI oceanographic engineer assisted with the survey components of the project, which included side scan sonar and bathymetric surveys, as well as core sampling. At the end of the survey, the vessel once again cleared customs in Al Mukalla before

the vessel steamed back to Ajman in the UAE.

In the second week of February 2005, MSI conducted the first service visit on the mooring. The operations were conducted out of Al Mukalla from the MV Carlson Tide with its Fast Rescue Craft (FRC) being deployed to assist with the recovery and redeployment (pictured on right).

During the service visit all mooring consumables were replaced and the data downloaded. Data return of 100% was achieved. The preliminary results indicate some interesting flow patterns which will require further analysis once data from the next measurement period becomes available.



MSI appoints new engineer



MSI is pleased to welcome aboard Alan Kemp in a position of Senior Oceanographic Engineer.

Alan brings with him a wealth of experience gained over 20 years in the industry, most recently as an Oceanographic Engineer at Thales GeoSolutions. In this position, Alan conducted numerous field campaigns for projects throughout Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

Prior to working for Thales, Alan worked for 5 years as an Environmental Technician for the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources of Namibia and for 12 years as a Chief Oceanographic Technician at the Sea Fisheries Research Institute in South Africa.

Current measurements for seismic programme

Towards the end of 2004, MSI conducted an interesting project for Orogenic Thales GeoSolutions Sdn. Bhd. (OTG), on behalf of WesternGeco Seismic Sdn. Bhd., offshore Malaysia.

Western Geco recently carried out seismic surveys in Block PM307/12 offshore Terengganu, Malaysia, for Petronas Carigali Sdn Bhd. Due to the proximity of the survey lines to existing platforms, Western Geco required real-time monitoring of the currents so that the surveys could be planned to minimise the possibility of streamers making contact with the structures.



MSI installed a Nortek Aquadopp current meter on the seismic support vessel MV Laut Barat with real-time data transmission via radio link to the seismic vessel MV Western Trident (pictured left). Following a period of training, the system was manned by an OTG survey engineer for the duration of the work.

The current data received in real-time allowed the seismic vessel to modify the survey according to the prevailing currents. A spare system was also supplied to ensure that any malfunctions in the operational system did not result in delays to the seismic data acquisition programme. The current meter, installed on an over-the-side mount, is pictured above.



MSI moves offices

Due to continued expansion, MSI moved offices on 1 December 2004. Shortly afterwards, an office launch party was held, attended by local clients.

Seen at the launch party were, from left, Ted Mills (SRK Consulting Engineers), Aubrey Price (C&C Technologies), Craig Matthyssen (Lwandle Technologies) and Marius Rossouw (CSIR).



Also at the party and pictured here with Craig Matthyssen was Ephan Potgieter, Managing Director of Reson South Africa.



Our new contact details are given at the end of this newsletter.

MSI joins Hydrographic Society of South Africa

At the end of 2004, MSI joined the Hydrographic Society of South Africa as a corporate member. Pictured below is Stefan Stimson (back row, 2nd from right), accepting the certificate of membership on behalf of MSI.



MSI trains local marine scientists & surveyors

As part of its commitment to training, MSI is involved in a number of training courses with local educational institutions.



For the University of Cape Town's (UCT) Masters Degree in Applied Marine Science, MSI is responsible for the Project Management Module. Each year the module is adapted to suit the students' backgrounds and involves introducing the students to formal project management techniques. The module comprises both lectures and group / individual assignments with examples which are relevant to commercial projects.

This is the second year that the course has been run by MSI and was presented this year by Sidney Bilski who has a long association with UCT.

Staying with lecturing, Stefan Stimson is presently lecturing the Hydrographic Surveying component of the Bachelor of Technology in Surveying at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. The course is run over three modules with the final module including practical fieldwork onboard a survey vessel equipped with positioning, side scan sonar and both single and multi beam echo sounders. The course syllabus includes an overview of traditional and radio positioning as well as modern day GPS systems (including RTK, RTG, DGPS, etc.) and underwater positioning. The students are also introduced to seafloor mapping (side scan sonar, echo sounding, etc.), ROV's, AUV's, oceanography, tidal theory and basic geodesy.



MSI agreed to design and present this course as it believes there is a need to increase the education of Hydrography locally. Stefan, a 'category A' certified surveyor, adds "I believe that it is a failure in the industry as a whole that no formal qualification is required by an individual to be employed as a Hydrographic Surveyor. For example, it is amazing to think that an oil company allows personnel with no formal hydrographic training to move their oil rigs where millions of dollars may be at risk."

The first module was presented in February and was attended by 36 students, the majority from industry all over South Africa.



Also involved in training is Bruce Spolander who is delivering a software suite to the Hydrographic and Navigation Agency for Mozambique (Inahina) The software will assist with the quality control and processing of the oceanographic data that Inahina collects.

A critical element of the training is in the use of the software at Inahina's offices in Maputo. This involves hands-on training using tidal and current data collected by Inahina. Other activities include training Inahina staff in data collection in the field, with a program to determine current and hydrographic conditions in Maputo Bay.

Technical Awareness Seminar 2005

Following on from the success of the 2003 Technical Awareness Seminar (TAS), MSI are proud to have representation on the organising committee for 2005.

The aim of this 3 day event, scheduled for May 2005, is to present the latest technology in oceanographic / hydrographic / survey equipment to a range of users. The event will comprise a number of lectures from major international equipment suppliers, as well as afternoon equipment demonstrations in the South African naval dockyard.

As in 2003, TAS will again be hosted by the Institute for Maritime Technology in Cape Town.

Visit www.hydrosa.co.za for more details.

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