

NEWS ITEM

Tideland warning systems for Saipem's Angolan FPSO

Tideland Signal's SeaBeacon radar beacon (racon) has been chosen to mark the new Gimboa FPSO currently being converted by Saipem for Sonangol P&P of Angola.

Tideland's contract was awarded by the Genoa-based company Eltag Datamat, part of the Finmeccanica Group, which is responsible for electrical systems on the FPSO. The SeaBeacon 2 System 6 dual-band racon offers exceptional dynamic range, sensitivity, and output, together with extremely economical power consumption, making it suitable for remote, solar-powered installations as well as offshore and mains-powered installations. The design incorporates major advances in operating range, sidelobe suppression at short range and power consumption, which is now significantly lower than any other racon on the market.

The Tideland racon can respond simultaneously and with a unique level of frequency accuracy to the radars, both X and S-band, of any number of vessels within line-of-sight range, even those with very narrow receiver bandwidths. The design gives operators an exceptionally clear indication of its identity and location and proportional scaling ensures that the racon trace remains clearly visible on radar displays regardless of the range scale selected.

Compatible with an input power range of 9 to 36 VDC, SeaBeacon 2 System 6 features an intelligent power management system that allows users to programme precise quiescent and active periods as required to match performance with power consumption. In addition, it will automatically return to quiescent mode after a four-second active period, if there is no local radar activity.

SeaBeacon 2 System 6 is available in two versions: GMU for general marine use and certified for use in Zone 1 or Zone 2 hazardous areas. The version

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supplied for the Gimboa is for use in a Zone 2 area, protected by inert gas pressurization, monitored by a two-stage warning system which first alerts the user and then closes down the racon in the event of pressure loss.

Originally a 337 metre OA oil tanker known as T/T Magdelaine, the new FPSO was built in 1977 by IHI in Japan. It is being converted in Dubai Dry Docks and, when completed in 2008, will be deployed in the Gimboa field, about 85 km off the Angolan coast and in waters 700m deep. It will have a storage capacity of 1,800,000 barrels and will be able to produce 60,000 barrels a day.

Saipem S.p.A has a six-year contract worth approximately US \$570 million for the supply and management of the FPSO and Sonangol has the option to extend for a further five years. Gimboa is one of a number of important new deep-water sites that are expected to bring production up to two million barrels a day by 2008, about the same level as Nigeria, the largest oil producer in sub-Saharan Africa.

Approved to ISO 9001:2000, Tideland Signal Limited is a British-based member of the Tideland group of companies, which specializes in the design and manufacture of aids to marine navigation. The Tideland group is independently owned and has its headquarters in Houston, Texas.

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