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Keppel Verolme Track record

Saipem 7000





Front page: SAIPEM 7000 complete with J-lay tower (length 135m, weight 4500 tonnes).

- 1 One of the five J-lay hinge sections.
- 2 Installation of the A-frame.
- 3 Installation of the lower tower (length 85m, weight 2000 tonnes).
- 4 One of the new retractable thrusters.
- 5 Preparations prior to installation of a new boiler.

Saipem Luxembourg S.A. awarded the yard the modification works for pipelay operations to a water depth of 3000 metres of the world's largest semi-submersible crane vessel SAIPEM 7000. Due to this tremendous depth of water, the J-lay method was chosen, as opposed to the more traditional S-lay method.

The vessel arrived at the yard in November 1998. Thanks to intensive preparations, an immediate start could be made on the large-scale modification project.

Major items of the work scope included:

- Detailed engineering, incl weight control and "as built" drawings.
- Prefabrication and installation of five massive hinges for installation of the J-lay tower and associated A-frame. (J-lay tower -length 135m, weight 4500 tonnes-) designed and constructed by Huisman-Itrac, Rotterdam.
- Conversion of the former carpentry workshop into 2 new boiler rooms.
- Fitting out two existing compartments as new generator rooms, each equipped with two 16V32 Wartsila Vasa diesels rated 5,920 kW, plus space for a third. This brought the number of engine rooms to six.
- Conversion of two forward ballast tanks into thruster rooms.
- Renewal of the dynamic positioning system, including the fitting of the new Simrad Albatross Elsaq Bailey Power management system, plus adding two Lips retractable azimuthing thrusters, each rated 5550 kW. This brought the number of thrusters up from 10 to 12 units.
- Extension of the high voltage supply system and the construction and outfitting of a separate high voltage room in the foreship.
- Installation of new additional piping systems, including new fuel tanks and CO2 smothering systems.
- Construction of new transformer - HVAC rooms.
- Engineering, supply and installation of electrical systems for modified spaces, J-lay tower and DP system
- Allied work to the contract also included modification of the grillage systems on existing SAIPEM barges to accept the J-lay package for transportation and storage.

The SAIPEM 7000 left the yard early April 1999 for sea trials, at which time the commissioning of new systems was carried out. The semi returned early June for its J-lay package and fitting of abandonment and recovery winch, pipe section stowage racks and associated conveyors. Following final fit-out and commissioning, the vessel headed for deep waters off Norway to test the package.