

Press information

HOCHTIEF and Beluga Shipping construct jack-up vessel for offshore wind farms

COMMUNICATIONS

Dr. Bernd Pütter
Opernplatz 2
45128 Essen, Germany
Tel.: +49 201 824-2960
Fax: +49 201 824-4263
bernd.puetter@hochtief.de

Construction of offshore wind farms requires new type of vessel

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A joint venture between HOCHTIEF Construction and the project and heavy-lift carrier provider BELUGA Shipping has commissioned the construction of a special jack-up vessel for the more rapid assembly of offshore wind turbines from the Polish shipyard Crist. The vessel should go into service in 2012, in order to meet the big demand for special equipment in this booming market. It was agreed that no details of the contract value would be disclosed.

BELUGA HOCHTIEF Offshore developed an innovative concept and the design to handle these tasks and will also operate and charter the vessel once it is constructed. In addition, the jack-up vessel will be used by HOCHTIEF for offshore construction jobs. Henner Mahlstedt, Chairman of the Executive Board of HOCHTIEF Construction says, "There is huge interest from market players. We are therefore considering the construction of a second jack-up vessel." According to Mahlstedt, HOCHTIEF expects annual sales of almost half a billion euros from the Group's entire offshore business.

"With this special, state-of-the-art jack-up vessel, we will be able to significantly reduce the assembly and servicing times required for latest-generation offshore wind turbines, thus hugely increasing productivity," explains Niels Stolberg, President and CEO of Beluga Shipping. "The installation of wind turbines at sea will thus become safer, more efficient and cheaper." Every year, the jack-up vessel will be able to install more than 80 wind turbines, each with a height of over 120 meters, in water depths of up to 50 meters. The vessel's most distinctive features are its high load capacity of 8,000 tons, its high-performance 1,500-ton crane and its powerful drive. Elaborate simulations have shown that the special structure can also be deployed when the sea is rough. The jack-up vessel is also suitable for use in the oil and gas market segments.

The EU Commission estimates that investments in offshore wind farms will increase to over EUR 200 billion by 2030. The British government alone has awarded contracts worth EUR 110 billion for related project developments. According to the European Wind Energy

Association (EWEA), in the next six years installed offshore output should increase tenfold, reaching up to 15 gigawatts. Experts say that the biggest obstacle to growth is a shortage of assembly capacity for this kind of offshore power plant.

With HOCHTIEF and Beluga, two powerful partners are bringing together their core competencies in the areas of marine construction and logistics. HOCHTIEF is involved in the development of almost all German offshore wind farms and has become one of the leading providers of marine construction services. With a fleet of around 70 multipurpose heavy-lift project carriers, Beluga Shipping is the world's leading project and heavy-lift carrier provider, specializing in the sea transport of complex cargo such as plant components, factory modules, port cranes and, not least, wind turbines.

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