

# Offshore Technology

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LIFE MATTERS

## Solstad returns for further conversion work

Norway's Solstad Offshore has returned to Gibdock for the conversion and dry-docking of the 84m long, 4500 dwt platform support vessel Normand Vester. This follows on from the conversion of the Normand Trym and Normand Vibran at the Gibraltar yard, successfully completed for the same owner last year.

While the Normand Vester project is similar in scope to these earlier conversions, there are some differences. In this case the fresh



Normand Vester in Gibdock

water capacity is being increased by converting two of the stability tanks from water ballast to fresh water, while eight mud tanks are being converted for increased fuel oil capacity. Furthermore two wing tanks are being converted to void spaces due to the conversion of the stability tanks.

This work is necessary

to prepare the vessel for a new role, under a four year charter that Solstad has recently agreed with Petrobras of Brazil. This contract requires that the vessel is able to supply offshore units with 1,600m<sup>3</sup> of potable water and 1,600m<sup>3</sup> of fuel oil.

Malcolm Rosie, technical director, Solstad Offshore

(UK) says: "Gibdock was chosen to carry out this work as they offered a very positive attitude to the project, were in a good location en route to Brazil and offered competitive rates." Gibdock also delivered the Vibran and Trym conversions in 2010. ■

## Barents border deal

Russia and Norway have agreed a deal to divide up their shares of the Barents Sea. The deal follows many years of talks between the two sides over ownership and management of the region.

The accord will allow companies to explore for oil and gas in the 68,000 square mile area.

"With this treaty, Norway and Russia are also making it clear that there is no ongoing

race for resources in the Arctic, but that we – as responsible Arctic coastal states – are adhering to international law, including the international law of the sea," said Norwegian foreign minister Jonas Gahr Støre. EDIT

It splits the disputed part of the Barents Sea into two equally sized areas.

The region has become more accessible recently as global warming has caused the

ice to melt. Melting ice opens up the possibility of new, shorter, shipping routes between Russia and Norway and Asia.

State oil companies from both countries have expressed an interest in exploiting reserves in the region.

Russian owned Gazprom is already working with Norway's Statoil on the Shtokman field, 310 miles off the Russian coast. ■

## Subsea fast track

Statoil has awarded Subsea 7 a contract for marine installations and pipe-laying to help develop the Fossefall/Dompap discoveries off the coast of Helgeland, northern Norway.

The contract value is around NOK 970 million without options and extra charges due to the weather.

Discovered in early 2010, Fossefall will also make it possible to develop the earlier find

Dompap, said the company.

This is Statoil's fifth fast-track development and the largest so far.

"With all of the contracts awarded, we can already start production at the end of 2012. We're very happy about this," says Ivar Aasheim, Statoil's head of field development on the Norwegian continental shelf.

Statoil considers it vital to reduce the time from initial

discovery to production.

"We are about to reach this goal," says Aasheim. "This development will only take two and a half years, and thereby meets the fast-track principles."

The Fossefall/Dompap development will comprise three subsea templates tied back to the Norne ship in the Norwegian Sea. The distance from the field to the Norne ship is around 26 km. ■

## TGS in ice search

Seismic survey group TGS has started a multi-client 3D seismic data in the Hoop Fault Complex area of the Barents Sea, north of Norway. This survey is an extension of the previously announced Hoop Fault Complex survey and will add 1,800 km<sup>2</sup> to the existing data in the area. Approximately 500 km<sup>2</sup> of the survey are infill in the northern area of the 2009 survey and the remaining 1,300 km<sup>2</sup> are an extension to the east of the 2009 survey area.

Blocks have been awarded in the survey area during the last two rounds and with the 2011 acquisition, TGS will be able to provide extended coverage for future rounds, says the company.

The M/V Polar Duke towing 10 x 6,000 m streamers with 75 m separation will acquire the 2011 survey. Data processing will be performed by TGS and will be available to clients in late 2011. The survey is supported by industry funding. ■