

Canadian con-ro pair drydocked in Gibraltar

Gibdock has demonstrated that its strong reputation for ro-ro and container ship repair work continues to resonate around the globe, following the drydocking of two con-ro vessels operated by Canadian shipowner, Oceanex. Oceanex provides intermodal transportation services to the Canadian Atlantic provinces of Labrador and Newfoundland.

Gibraltar-based Gibdock was selected by St John's, Newfoundland-based Oceanex to carry out wide-ranging work on the 2013-built, 1300 teu *Oceanex Connaigra*, and the 1977-built, 1125 teu capacity, *Oceanex Sanderling*. The 210m long, 26,800grt *Oceanex Connaigra* - the largest con-ro vessel flying the Canadian flag - arrived in Gibraltar on 6th March this year, departing two weeks later on 20th March. The 193m long, 21,849grt *Oceanex Sanderling* was docked on 2nd April for a programme of work that lasted just over a month.

The scope of work on the *Oceanex Connaigra* included: the removal of the CPP propeller blades, the hub and tailshaft; the installation of a new hub; and the fitting of new propeller control pipework. The existing blades had to be machined in Gibdock's workshops before refitting to the new hub. The yard was also tasked with carrying out modifications to the vessel's exhaust gas scrubber system by replacing two bypass valves, each of which was 645mm in diameter. This involved cropping and modifying the exhaust trunk and modifying the fuel oil module by making adjustments to the pipework.





Gibdock carried out a very different package of work on *Oceanex Sanderling*, which is now nearly 40 years old. This required the removal of the con-ro ship's stern ramp, which is made up of three sections, the biggest of which weighs 93 tons. Paul Cano, senior ship repair manager, says: "This part of the work was an important milestone for Gibdock, involving the heaviest lift that the yard has carried out to date." Once the ramp sections were disassembled and lifted ashore, the yard carried out extensive steel repairs before refit.

Gibdock also removed *Sanderling's* tailshaft for survey, removed and refurbished the rudder blade, reinforced the weather deck and fitted new container sockets to allow loading of 53ft containers. The yard overhauled bow thrusters, repaired paintwork and carried out other works associated with a general five-year survey.

While the three-year old *Oceanex Connaigra* is a first time visitor to Gibdock, *Oceanex Sanderling* was previously docked, in 2011. Richard Beards, Managing Director of Gibdock, says: "The owner was quite clear that *Oceanex Connaigra* and *Oceanex Sanderling* were required back in service within a tight timeframe, with minimal disruption to Oceanex customers. We were delighted to be chosen for this project, and to complete two very different but equally challenging projects on time on two con-ro ships of different ages."

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