

## Gibdock momentum builds on variety

High levels of occupancy during the first two months of 2020 and strong forward bookings are sustaining momentum for Gibdock, following a strong surge in demand for the Gibraltar repair yard in the last quarter of 2019.

One standout project involving significant complexity saw Gibdock undertake extensive repairs to *Juvel* at the end of 2019, after the Aker Biomarine fishing vessel suffered extensive fire damage off South America. Over several months, the 99.5m long *Juvel* required retrofitting across four decks, including accommodation and bridge areas, and Gibdock technicians working in tight spaces.

“This was a long and challenging job and was the biggest fire damage repair contract that we have handled to date,” says Richard Beards, Managing Director, Gibdock. “It highlighted how we can project manage large and complex work over months at a time just as effectively as we handle our regular, shorter drydocking projects.”

Recent assignments include a number of ‘environmental’ retrofits, such as converting Balearia’s 154m long, 1,000-passenger capacity ro-pax ferry *Bahama Mama* to dual-fuel. In a similar project, Gibdock earlier converted *Napoli* for the same owner, although in this case LNG storage tanks were mounted on the stern deck, rather than integrated within the ship’s structure.

“With the *Bahama Mama* and *Napoli* projects we demonstrated that we are capable of major, high-end conversions to enable dual fuel capability,” says John Taylor, Operations Director. “We look forward to carrying out more work of this type in future.”



**Picture:** Bahama Mama



Gibdock has also installed a number of exhaust gas scrubbers over the past year, including a retrofit on the Compagnie Maritime Nantaise ro-ro vessel, *MN Pelican*. This project called for significant steel work and created a new pump room for the scrubber.

“We’ve proven our abilities across a range of environmental retrofits, including scrubbers, ballast water treatment systems and dual fuel engine conversions,” says Beards. “We are always flexible in our approach, whether engineering ourselves or working with specialist contractors.”

Recent weeks have also seen Gibdock benefit from a busy ferry season, with local operators returning to the yard for winter refits, while signs are also positive in the offshore vessel segment. It is a good time for 17 new apprentices to join the yard, says Taylor, as the latest cohort for a scheme run jointly with the Government of Gibraltar. “Gibdock is a pillar of the Gibraltar economy and we want to maintain the skill sets required to ensure the shipyard remains competitive. This scheme is highly effective, with many past graduates now occupying important roles at the yard.”



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