

Offshore Surveyor

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As part of its work on careers promotion, IMCA has been talking to a variety of offshore personnel about how they became involved in the offshore industry and various aspects of their work. In this article we learn from an offshore surveyor who started work in 1998 having gained a BSc in surveying and mapping science.

What attracted you to offshore surveying?

My company was one of four companies that came to my university to interview prospective employees. Of the packages offered, theirs was the most attractive and best presented.

What work experience have you gained since joining the industry?

- ◆ Pipelay support and pipeline survey
- ◆ Spoolpiece metrology
- ◆ Dive support
- ◆ Construction support
- ◆ Large structure installation
- ◆ Procedure and report preparation
- ◆ Project surveyor in Norway and the UK



What was your first role when you started in the industry?

After initial training, I started offshore as an associate surveyor/data processor, which gave me a good grounding in all aspects of data acquisition and processing, from raw data through to chart production. After approximately six months I became an online surveyor, then gradually progressed to become an offshore survey co-ordinator after approximately five years.

What did you like most about working offshore?

Individual performance is monitored and rewarded appropriately. The diverse nature of operations means that there is variety for work offshore, as well as for moving to an onshore role.



What is your role now?

After seven years with the company, I opted for an onshore role as a project surveyor within a large engineering project.

Why would you recommend offshore surveying to others?

The opportunities presented by the industry are varied and often challenging. For the motivated person there is scope for progression and the opportunity to take advantage of a broad range of projects and roles.

What opportunities have you had to travel?

The global nature of survey operations means there is ample opportunity to travel for those who want to. I have worked in Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, the USA, Trinidad, Malaysia, Angola, Abu Dhabi and, of course, the UK. The nature of offshore work also means that there is time away from work. During my offshore time, I used the time available to me to take extended trips to the French Alps, Peru and Argentina.

What have been the highlights of your career so far?

Two immediate highlights come to mind. The first was as a surveyor on a pipelay vessel assisting the laying of a pipeline through a narrow strait offshore Trinidad. The location, people and challenging nature of the work as part of a large team meant that the trip was interesting and it was an excellent opportunity to learn.

The second example contrasts with the first, as I was part of a two-person team tasked with installing equipment on a large structure at Corpus Christi, Texas. I was then involved when the structure was subsequently towed out to its installation location using three tugs. The work was challenging and, as part of a team of just two, there was a requirement to work independently and to maintain an interface with the client and the project manager.

