

Survey Engineer

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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 a survey engineer who, after gaining an MEng in electronic and electrical engineering, joined the industry in the year 2000.

What attracted you to offshore surveying?

World travel, working at sea on ships and camaraderie.

What work experience have you gained since joining the industry?

- ◆ Construction support with divers and ROVs
- ◆ Pipeline survey
- ◆ Rig moves
- ◆ Seismic survey
- ◆ Trenching/burial
- ◆ Dredging
- ◆ Route clearance
- ◆ Aerogenerator installation
- ◆ Cable survey
- ◆ Wreck survey



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

Trainee survey engineer. Training was very much on-the-job and I was able to bring my skills to bear immediately, which was rewarding. Employment with one of the smaller companies in the industry required a high degree of motivation and initiative and this was rewarded with significant responsibility at an early stage. Owing to the size and the nature of the company, formalised 'ranked' promotion was not appropriate – instead, increasing professional ability and personal reputation were valued and recognised throughout the organisation.

What is your role now?

Survey engineer. As the company has increased its staff to copy with growth, my responsibilities have also increased. I am now responsible for technical development of new hires and occasionally manage minor survey contracts as well.

What do you like most about working offshore?

The concentrated technical environment, the 'all working together' atmosphere and living at sea.

Why would you recommend survey engineering to others?

The opportunity to use the skills you have learned; the nature of the work, which teaches you important people skills; and the industry economics, which are very interesting.

What opportunities have you had to travel?

Foreign travel is very common and has always been interesting. It's also frequently 'last minute'. For me, travel is the most exciting part of the job (apart possible from storms in the Barents Sea). I have been all over Europe, to the Far East, have crossed the equator to west Africa and have been to the world's most northerly town – Hammerfest.

What have been the highlights of your career so far?

Providing survey support to the UK's first major offshore wind farms. These were high-profile projects and somewhat unusual in that they were near-shore construction, which had an impact onshore as well as offshore.

A recent extended offshore construction contract in west Africa was also particularly memorable for the excellent weather and wide variety of wildlife at the location. The work – involving deepwater ROV support – was also interesting.

