

Offshore development helping drive Optimarin growth

The recovery of the offshore shipping segment is playing a key role in driving the revenues of ballast water treatment (BWT) specialist Optimarin to new heights. The Stavanger, Norway-based business, which has focused exclusively on BWT for the last 25 years, has just signed a number of fleet agreements, including a contract with Island Offshore for 19 systems, doubling its order intake year on year.

Preferred position

“Optimarin has long held the position of the preferred supplier to the offshore segment, so the fact that the industry is recovering – with fewer vessels laid up – is a very positive development for us,” comments Tore Andersen, EVP Sales, Optimarin.

“We are naturally delighted to secure the contract to retrofit our simple, reliable and market proven UV systems throughout the remainder of the Island Offshore fleet, having delivered our first unit to this industry leader back in 2013. And this is just the tip of the iceberg. There are a number of other respected owners in the segment that have either signed, or in the final stages of negotiating, fleet agreements.”

He continues: “Offshore is a hardworking sector, with advanced vessels offering limited space for installations. Our modular, easy to install and globally compliant technology is tailor made for these demanding environments – it’s very gratifying to see how many leading shipowners and operators appreciate that fact.”

Sales catalyst

However, Andersen is keen to stress that the increased order flow is not confined to a single segment. The IMO D2 ballast water compliance deadline, coming into effect on 8 September, is, he says, pushing owners to make decisions on BWT – and pushing them faster than ever before, with the time from initial enquiries to final orders greatly decreasing.

“The market is picking up across the board,” Andersen notes. “Both in terms of segments – with recent orders arriving at Optimarin spanning everything from cruise vessels to cement carriers – but also geographically. For example, Greek owners are now contracting an increasing number of retrofits with us (with a significant fleet agreement signed in the past few weeks) while orders with Asian yards, US operators and key Northern European shipowners are very healthy.

“The IMO deadline is undoubtedly a catalyst here,” he says. “There are only a finite number of preferred manufacturers, dry docks and engineering companies for installations, so the smart owners are moving quickly to avoid potential bottlenecks. There are tens of thousands of vessels mandated for systems, so you don’t want to be the last in the queue, struggling to get the service, systems and quality your ships demand! It pays to take action now.”

Aftermarket boost

Optimarin has now sold around 850 of its USCG and IMO compliant Optimarin Ballast Systems (OBS), with over 600 installed and operational worldwide, of which almost 50% are retrofits. The firm has also doubled its aftermarket sales year on year across the first half of 2019.

In conclusion, Andersen states that 2019 will be “without question Optimarin’s best year in business.”

OBS has certification from a comprehensive range of classification organizations, including ABS, BV, DNV-GL, LR & MLIT Japan. Current Optimarin customers include names such as Royal Caribbean International, Fednav, GulfMark, Hapag Lloyd, Matson Navigation, McDermott, the Danish Navy, MOL, Seatruck, Technip, and the Royal Netherlands Navy, amongst others.

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