

News Release

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RotaBolts Extending Life of Offshore Platforms

Extending the life of offshore oil and gas platforms beyond their original design philosophy has resulted in RotaBolt® measurement technology being adopted across a number of major projects. A combination of 'permanent' repair work, upgrading existing infrastructure and the development of new and complex strengthening systems has resulted in new contracts and a significant area of business for the company.

With expectations that oil and gas fields may still be producing for another 25 to 30 years, the work has also included the straightforward re-fit of RotaBolts on existing production infrastructure, such as on heat exchangers and high pressure pipe work and flanges, but it is where new designs and engineering techniques have had to be used that the fasteners have been helping to break new ground.

Where there has been a requirement for repair work to be carried out there have been no off-the-shelf solutions. Structural strengthening programmes have varied from applying massive clamping systems to platform legs and support infrastructures, through to fitting underwater cable stays more commonly associated with bridge structures. Changes to the design and engineering details have also impacted fabrication and installation.

James Walker RotaBolt is currently supplying a range of its measurement fasteners to offshore contractors for use on clamping systems, flanges and jacket reinforcement designs. These vary from M24 bolts on clamps of less than half a metre in diameter, up to M90 bolts that are 3.5 metres long being used on cable stay clamps that are 130 tonnes.

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RotaBolts have been used in offshore applications, including subsea, since the mid 1980s. Bolting materials have changed over time in the quest for increased corrosion resistance, but the original technology that assures the correct tension is being achieved has remained unchanged.

“There are still RotaBolts in service that were fitted on underwater applications back in the mid 80s,” commented Mike Hadley, Engineering Manager, “in fact these are currently being re-checked as part of the extended life activity. I think we can safely say that no one else in the world has our depth of understanding when it comes to achieving bolted joint integrity in environments that are challenging and where the boundaries of engineering practice are being extended.”

Ends.

Photograph: The RotaBolt range.

Note

James Walker RotaBolt is a member of the James Walker Group. This global manufacturing group, with an annual turnover in excess of £170-million (Euro 200 million), operates through two strategic business units: Sealing Products & Services, and Rail Systems & Products. It has 50 production, engineering, distribution and customer support sites worldwide and sells in over 100 countries.

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