

innovations

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Survitec restructures business in the wake of increased cruise ship projects



Special Report
International Cruise Ship Industry

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Critical safety equipment now a key element in the company's portfolio

Since the purchase of Wilhelmsen's safety business in 2016, shipboard safety equipment supplier Survitec has been working to rationalise the two businesses into one organisation and expand the offering.

As part of its consolidation programme, with the increase in both the size and number of cruise ships in operation and of those on order, the company has opened a dedicated cruise ship supply headquarters in Miami, Florida.

This move is expected to deliver comprehensive benefits to the global cruise industry through a centralised, dedicated customer service, procurement, training and support hub, the company explained.

Survitec Global Cruise, as this division is now known, offers customised solutions for the cruise ship market, including at the newbuilding design stage and new product developments, involving life asset management, drydock solutions and project management, in addition to bespoke training programmes.

Using risk assessment methodology to identify weak points and prevent costly and time-delaying incidents, the company's plan to consolidate everything in-house in one place has substantial benefits, not only in reducing cruise ship maintenance costs but also minimising the management of multiple suppliers and service providers.

Paul Weber, Survitec Vice President, Americas is heading up the Miami project.

To take care of a cruise ship's SOLAS requirement, the safety equipment, procurement, training, services and support are now managed through a dedicated global cruise team, negating the need for countless individual transactions and, thus making the management of a cruise ship's safety and compliance requirements more cost effective, the company explained.

Survitec has also consolidated and optimised its complete portfolio of tailored safety and survival training programmes. These cover core areas, such as firefighting equipment



Survitec offers a whole range of LSA equipment, including self-righting liferafts

(FFE), lifesaving appliances (LSA) and marine evacuation systems (MES), all of which are delivered by approved providers; many of whom were former regulators.

Another important aspect to having a dedicated team is to better manage cruise ships' drydockings with customised solutions aimed at ensuring the whole process is achieved cost-effectively.

Once Survitec defines a cruise customers' specific vessel needs, key account managers map out a comprehensive project plan, which includes securing drydock space, purchasing equipment and spare parts, managing all resources, deliverables, KPIs and providing all documentation, such as certificates and approvals.

As a 'Recognised Organisation' (RO), Survitec is also able to provide safety services and approval certificates for other brands. This follows a Global Z17 Approval from class societies, DNV GL, RINA and ABS, among others.

In a nutshell, the company currently supplies and maintains lifeboats and tenders, davits and release systems, MES, global liferaft programmes, personal and vessel man overboard equipment, rescue boats and recovery systems, fixed and portable fire systems, personal protection equipment and emergency communication systems.

Large network

Survitec Global Cruise has direct access to over 1,000 technicians, offering coverage at 2,000 ports and 500 plus accredited service stations worldwide, especially since the takeover of Wilhelmsen's safety equipment operation with its large network of outlets worldwide.

The company is also responding to the ever-increasing size of cruise ships and passenger numbers through the continuous development of evacuation solutions that use both chute and slide access technologies.

Increasing demand for cruises, combined with technological advances, has led to larger vessels that are required to evacuate increasing numbers of passenger and crew, which presents several challenges for a safe and rapid evacuation operation.

To meet these challenges, Survitec has designed MES for the cruise and ferry sectors, consisting of chute or slide access to large capacity liferafts.

Over the last 30 years MES' have played an increasingly significant part in the passenger ship evacuation equipment mix. Lifeboats have always been required as part of SOLAS but as the ship size grows and on board people numbers increase, MES, with their easy launching mechanisms and rapid evacuation, can now be substituted for a percentage of the on board lifeboat requirement.

MES' are claimed to be easy for the crew to launch, reducing the human element required for the passengers' safe descent. They are also considered an efficient and versatile option, as they can be adapted to perform on board a broad passenger vessel designs, however, freeboard and beam will dictate whether a



The company has extended its liferaft exchange period to 30 months under SOLAS.

slide or chute based MES is more appropriate, the company explained.

As an alternative to the MES, Survitec's Marin Ark 2 helical slide combines the benefits of an enclosed evacuation chute with the natural descent of a spiral slide. All of Survitec's lifejackets are compatible with its chutes, another plus point.

Technological advances being made in evacuation solutions will see the inflatable lifeboat surpass more rigid type approvals and will be the main means of evacuation in coming years, Survitec said.

Algeciras hub

In conversation with Miguel Romero, Survitec's General Manager for Spain, Innovations was told during a recent meeting in Gibraltar, that the company had also consolidated its Southern Spanish operation at Algeciras into a new 4,000 sq m facility, which includes a warehouse.

He explained that although the Algeciras hub covers all commercial shipping in and around the Gibraltar/Algeciras region and an area covering Huelva to Almeria, cruise ships form an important part of the company's activities, as many call at both Gibraltar and nearby Cadiz, mainly for visits to Seville.

Cadiz is the home of Navantia's large shiprepair yard, which often handles the world's largest cruise ships for refurbishments, plus complex conversion and upgrade projects.

Romero explained that servicing a large cruise ship's lifeboats could take between 15-20 days. He also said that the company either deals direct with the shipyard or with the cruise ship operator when marketing for a repair and maintenance project.

Survitec now offers a full safety equipment maintenance and repair service as a package for cruise vessel drydockings and will also offer a newbuilding vessel package, which can be fed in at the design stage.

Under the pseudonym C.A.R.E (Cruise Advanced Regime for Equipment Servicing), the company offers SOLAS maintenance and servicing of MES, liferafts, lifeboats, lifejackets, rescue boats, survival suits and fire safety equipment, among other safety critical equipment, taking into account their respective

due dates, such as the liferaft exchange system explained below.

As mentioned, training is also offered on lifesaving appliances, firefighting equipment and MES.

Once a drydocking project has been agreed, the scope of work is discussed with the ship's management team and involves seven phases -

- 1) Define project scope and goals.
- 2) Outline project plans and KPIs.
- 3) Schedule resources.
- 4) Execute on deliverables.
- 5) Report on deliverables and KPIs.
- 6) Analyse KPIs.
- 7) Finally, close out project.

Survitec also uses a shiprepair yard hub approach when facing a safety equipment repair and maintenance programme.

The hubs include - Seaspan (Vancouver, BC), Victoria (BC), Vigor (Portland, Oreg), Detyens (Charleston, SC), San Giorgio del Porto (Genoa), Chantier Naval de Marseille, Navantia (Cadiz), Blohm + Voss (Hamburg), Lloyd Werft (Bremerhaven), Sembawang (Singapore) and Grand Bahama (Freeport, Bahamas).

Algeciras was the former home of the Wilhelmsen liferaft exchange hub for the area, in which out of date equipment was taken ashore for repair and re-certification under SOLAS and replaced by newly certified equipment.

Since the takeover, Survitec has extended the exchange period to 30 months under SOLAS and immediately saw an increase in orders, many of which were transferred to and from commercial ships anchored in the Bay.

An automatic warning system is activated when a liferaft needs servicing of 90, 60 and 30 days in advance of the replacement due date. Every liferaft service due date is logged into Survitec's system to enable the warning system to be effective.

Around two months ago, Survitec introduced a cruise ship lifejacket service, especially for the crew. By the end of October, more than 200 inflatable lifejackets had been supplied to cruise ships' on board personnel.

Authorising service providers

New IMO requirements for the maintenance, examination, operational testing, overhaul and repair of lifeboats and rescue boats, are due to enter into force on 1st January, 2020.

According to the IMO Resolution MSC.402(96), from the beginning of January next year, maintenance, thorough examination, operational testing overhaul and repair of the following items shall be carried out by authorised service providers:

- Lifeboats (including free-fall lifeboats), rescue boats and fast rescue boats.
- Launching appliances, as well as on-load and off-load release gear for lifeboats (including primary and secondary means of launching appliances for free-fall lifeboats), rescue boats, fast rescue boats and davit-launched liferafts.

An authorised service provider is an entity authorised by the flag administration (or its ROs) in accordance with the requirements contained in IMO Resolution MSC.402(96), section 8.

This authorisation will be limited to each make and type of equipment to be serviced. Flag administrations (or their ROs) will issue

the authorisation document and ensure that information regarding authorised service providers is made available.

Unless flag administrations instruct otherwise, OEMs, such as Survitec, are not required to be authorised when acting as service providers for their own equipment, however, their personnel need to hold a certificate.

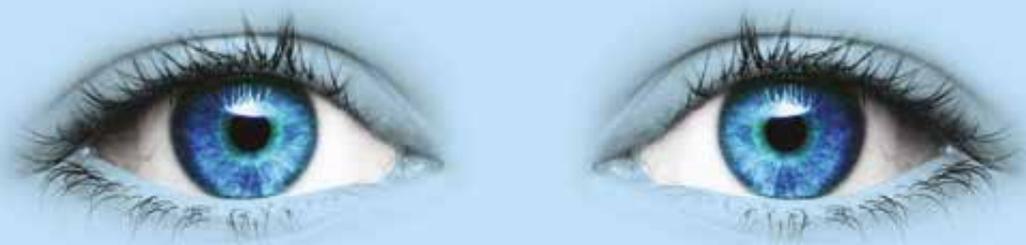
Flag administrations may also accept or recognise service providers authorised by other administrations or by their ROs.

Service personnel should also be certified by the manufacturer or by an authorised service provider for each make and type of the equipment to be worked upon. An authorised service provider can only certify its own personnel (ie employed by the same service provider).

Upon completion of personnel certification, a certificate will be issued (by the manufacturer or service provider) defining the level of qualification (annual or five-yearly) and the scope of the certification (ie equipment makes and models).

The expiry date shall clearly be stated on the certificate and shall not exceed three years from the date of issuance, the IMO regulations state.

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