

The Dutch offshore

Still going strong –

FLYING FOCUS AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Colophon

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Pioneering Spirit27

The Dutch offshore

Still going strong



The offshore oil & gas production has always been a remarkable sector to fly for. The flights themselves often represent an operational challenge requiring thorough preparation. Flights are sometimes preceded by dozens of telephone calls, to keep everyone informed and to identify the perfect moment for taking pictures.

And then comes the actual moment at which the

And then comes the actual moment at which the shutter closes and I am able to observe situations that remain unknown to so many people, from enormous transport operations far out at sea to

platform installations by massive work rigs.

It is always a challenge to record the perfect picture of this remarkable world

beyond the horizon. The level of interest in the pictures is reflected by the popularity of our photo books about the sector. Part one, 'The Dutch offshore' has sold out and there are just a few cartons of part two 'The Dutch offshore 2010-2013' in the storeroom. In other words, the time is right for compiling part three, with photographs taken over the past two years; years in which booming business gave way to a more reticent approach, given the low oil price.

Fortunately, there is still sufficient activity in the oil and gas fields of the North Sea to justify regular observation flights. After all, the Dutch contribution by ground-breaking innovative businesses is anything but modest.

Herman IJsseling, aerial photographer September 2015

The Dutch offshore, still going strong!

FLYING FOCUS AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Offshore sector holds its breath



Cranevessel Rambiz underway for an offshore installation.

Despite the worldwide economic recession, over the past few years the offshore sector has continued to operate at full capacity. In late 2014 and early 2015, however, the situation changed when oil prices on the world market started to slump. As a consequence, oil companies reduced their investments, and postponed or even cancelled new projects entirely. This photo book provides a fabulous overview of projects that were undertaken over the past few years.

In the past few years, above all Dutch companies drew attention with the design and fabrication of advanced mobile drilling units and offshore

support vessels. *GustoMSC*, for example, designed a series of four jack-up drilling rigs of the type CJ70, the largest of their kind in the world, on behalf of Maersk Drilling. Three of these rigs, the *Maersk Intrepid*, *Maersk Interceptor* and *Maersk Integrator* are already active on the North Sea. For its part, IHC Holland designed and fabricated a whole series of state-of-the-art pipelay vessels for Subsea 7 and



Accomodationvessel with Ampelmann Walk-to-Work installation.

Sapura Navegação Maritima. Also last year, Allseas launched the world's largest vessel, the *Pioneering Spirit*.

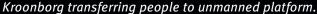
This vessel is not only capable of installing but also retrieving from the sea the very largest offshore topsides and jackets. The same vessel can be deployed for pipelay activities. Market leaders in

heavy transport, Dockwise, themselves drew attention with their new flagship the *Dockwise Vanguard*. This, the world's largest heavy load vessel, was deployed immediately following handover in a series of ground-breaking operations, including the transport of the *Goliat FPSO* and *Armada Intrepid FPSO*. Over the past few years, Vroon Offshore Services has continued unabated with its impressive new-building programme, including platform supply vessels, anchorhandling tug supply vessels, diving support vessels and emergency response and rescue vessels. Smaller Dutch operators including GloMar Shipmanagement,



Offshore sector holds its breath







Pioneering Spirit outfitting at 2e Maasvlakte,

SeaMar Subsea, Acta Marine and Rederij Groen also took the step of investing in new-building work. In the meantime, Damen Shipyards Group delivered ten supply vessels of the new Damen PSV 3300 CD type, six on behalf of the Norwegian operator World Wide Supply. Wagenborg Offshore launched its innovative Walk-to-Work (W2W) vessel the *Kroonborg*, which was immediately chartered by NAM/Shell to carry out maintenance work on small unmanned oil and gas production platforms in the southern section of the North Sea. Bluestream Offshore has continued to invest heavily in expanding its ROV fleet. Other remarkable projects were undertaken by Huisman for the development and

fabrication of a whole series of advanced pipelay systems and heavy offshore cranes, and Ampelmann which has now conquered the world with its in-house built and designed Walk-to-Work (W2W) systems. Furthermore, Dutch dredging contractors including Boskalis, Van Oord and Tideway invested in new equipment and completed a series of ground-breaking projects. The same applies for the heavy cargo transporters *Jumbo Shipping* and *BigLift Shipping*.

In the Dutch sector of the North Sea, GDF SUEZ E&P Nederland was highly active in putting gas

fields in the L5 and D18 blocks (Sierra/Orca) into production, as well as an oil field in the Q13 block (Amstel). Total E&P Nederland put the K4-Z gas field into production via a subsea installation, and Wintershall Noordzee opened a gas field in the L6-B block. NAM carried out a major seismic survey in blocks K and L, and Hanza Hydrocarbons did the same in blocks G18, H16, M3 and N1. The jack-up drilling rigs operated by Noble Drilling, that were due to be handed over to Paragon Offshore, were frequently found drilling in the Dutch sector on behalf of GDF SUEZ, Total, Wintershall, Petrogas and TAQA, and a series of new jack-ups drilling rigs joined the fleet operating in the North Sea. In addition to the already



Heavylift vessel underway with FPSO.

mentioned brand-new Maersk rigs, the Noble Sam Turner and Noble Regina Allen, as well as the ENSCO 122 carried out work in the Dutch sector of the North Sea. Chevron transferred its interests in this sector to Petrogas, and Tullow Oil passed on its fields to GDF SUEZ E&P Nederland which company continued its operations under the name ENGIE, from April 2015 onwards.

One new segment in the offshore sector that is really starting to take off is the decommissioning of old offshore installations, above all in the English sector of the North Sea. Heerema Marine Contractors (HMC) has for example been

contracted for removing the huge Murchison production platform from the North Sea. HMC had already acquired considerable experience with this type of work, in the Ekofisk gas field in the Norwegian sector. Allseas Marine Contractors are also set to become major players in this new segment. The company's brandnew *Pioneering Spirit* will be removing four enormous topsides and one jacket from Shell's Brent platforms in the English sector of the North Sea, together with the Yme platform from the Norwegian sector. Elsewhere, on behalf of HMC, the world's largest semi-submersible crane vessel is currently under construction. This vessel will be equipped with two Huisman cranes, each with a lifting capacity of 10,000 m/tonnes, and she too is expected to play an important role in this segment.

The Dutch offshore sector, in particular the engineering firms, marine contractors, heavy lift transporters, yards, shipping companies and suppliers continue to achieve successes and have managed to maintain their leading positions in their respective market segments, thanks to their innovating spirit and flexibility. The slashing of the world oil price by half has however caused all parties to hold their breath, despite the fact that in past oil crises, these companies succeeded in overcoming the prevailing difficulties, and coming back even stronger. This photographic record, at least, is yet another opportunity to enjoy the spectacular events taking place out at sea, beyond the horizon.

Paul Schaap



















































































































































































The Dutch offshore – Still going strong

Aerial photography of the Dutch offshore oil & gas industry



Flying Focus

Flying Focus' maritime aerial photographer Herman IJsseling regularly flies into the fascinating world of the offshore oil & gas industry.

This most recent selection of photos is a visualisation of this world, still unknown to a lot of people onshore. With this third photobook in this series Herman IJsseling covers most aspects of this immense industry, mainly focusing on the Dutch and their part in it.

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