

## **Imenco invests heavily in cameras for use underwater**

More light, sharper images and better communication underwater. These are the clear ambitions of Imenco that make major investments through acquisitions and product development.

The company has, for more than 25 years, developed and delivered a camera systems to the subsea industry. After the fall in oil prices in 2014, there was almost a sudden stop in demand, but the market quickly picked up and Imenco saw that the time was up for even greater investments. About a year ago, they bought their biggest competitor in subsea and underwater camera technology, the Kongsberg Group's camera division with a large customer platform and 65 employees in Scotland.

The company, that Imenco has now acquired, specializes in subsea cameras and closed-circuit television (CCTV) for use on board ships operating in harsh weather and demanding waters.

Such systems have been delivered to marine vessels in several countries.

## **Development and Freedom**

According to Geir Egil Østebøvik, Imenco, the company he owns and runs, is the largest international and technological leader when it comes to underwater cameras.

In addition to the acquisition in Scotland, Imenco has invested in extensive development of its own camera technology.

- The development has been made with a view to offering even better camera systems to the offshore and subsea industries, but also to new markets, especially for the aquaculture industry, says the CEO.

Imenco has been and still is in a development cooperation with the underwater contractor Oceaneering. Lighting equipment and cameras for the prototype of Oceaneering's new remote-controlled and electrically powered underwater robot, Freedom, comes from Imenco.

PHOTO, can be seen in the original story.

A digitized hydraulic engine is under test in the workshop at Imenco. Rune Bringedal to left here with Juan Cabrera. (Photo: Thomas Førde)

## **New acquisition in Scotland**

This summer the company made another acquisition in Scotland, this time Nautronix became part of the Imenco group. Nautronix, which has been under

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Proserv's ownership, specializes in acoustic communication and positioning equipment underwater.

- This is like an underwater GPS system and can replace the use of cables for control and communication. This will simplify subsea operations and save costs, says Østebøvik.

Imenco thus expands its product range within the offshore and subsea industries. The CEO also points to the fact that the same technology is being developed and adapted for use in other industries, such as in aquaculture and the offshore wind industry.

The acquisition of Nautronix means that Imenco now has 85 employees in Scotland distributed across Aberdeen and Wick.

## **Diving system provided**

Over several decades, Imenco has also supplied many other products to the oil and gas industry, especially to the activity that takes place on the seabed. The company, which has now collocated the entire Norwegian part of its operations in Grinde, in Tysvær municipality east of Haugesund, delivers between different types of attachment and control equipment for use in underwater operations.

Prior to the dramatic fall in oil prices in 2014, Imenco built a diving system for large, new specialized vessels for hyperbaric diving in the oil industry. The last ship they delivered was Acergy Havila (now Seven Falcon). Imenco executed this contract with the German company Dräger and the contract price was about NOK 500 million.

- In the last few years such special vessels have hardly been built. But we still delivers components and parts to the diving system, says Østebøvik.

PHOTO, can be seen in the original story.

One well-known Imenco product is helicopter refuelling systems like the one John Kåre Drange is making final adjustments on. Similar systems have recently been delivered to the Johan Sverdrup field and to Johan Castberg. (Photo: Thomas Forde)

## **Turned around after the fall in oil prices**

His company really felt the oil price drop to its core. Turnover fell from about NOK 400 million annually to half, while the number of employees had to cut from 200 to 100.

In 2015, the company launched a new strategy to get more legs to stand on. The developed a new product for the offshore wind industry as a fixing system on the seabed and anti-corrosion clamps that can be mounted underwater with the

help of ROV, remote operated vehicle. At the same time, Imenco devotes considerable resources to the development of new camera systems for the aquaculture industry.

- But the oil and gas industry is still our most important market, says CEO Østebøvik and point out: - The oil and gas industry will demand equipment for development and maintenance for many decades, but the market will fluctuate. That is why I need more legs to stand on.

## **Fuel for helicopter**

One important product from Imenco for the oil and gas industry is systems and equipment for storing, cleaning and filling of fuel to helicopters. When activity in the offshore industry was at its peak, Imenco delivered between 40 and 50 of these systems a year.

- Customers are still in demand for such equipment, says Rune Bringedal, manager for the oil and gas activities in Imenco. He shows us around the workshop halls in Tysvær, several helicopter filling facilities are under construction. Recently, they supplied such fuel handling facilities to both the Johan Sverdrup field and to the production ship going to the Johan Castberg field in the Barents Sea.

The plant under construction in the workshop hall will be delivered to various FPSOs (Floating Production, Storage and Offloading) in different parts of the world.

In another workshop, facilities for the production and distribution of hot water for the suit of divers who are at work down in the cold sea.

PHOTO, can be seen in the original story.

Imenco supplies hydraulic winches for use underwater. The winch can be operated by ROV's. (Photo: Thomas Førde)

## **Digital hydraulic motor**

Just before the fall in oil prices, Imenco bought the traditional Haugesund company, Bauer Hydraulics.

The company had for many years been known for its hydraulic motors and for hydraulic cylinders and valves. Also included in the purchase was a production company in China, which Imenco continued to operate.

The hydraulic Bauer engine is now under development at Imenco. They are among others getting along well with putting digital control system in the engine.

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- A digitalization will provide better possibilities for accurate control. Here, a development project is underway with a large supplier of cranes to the offshore industry, says Rune Bringedal. He adds that a digitized version of the hydraulic motor will use half the energy as a hydraulic motor in traditional edition.

## **Engineering and machining**

Throughout the entire companys history, Imenco's core competencies has been our engineering work, especially aimed at the subsea industry.

- We are carrying out various engineering projects and recently joined an exciting subsea job for Teekay, Bringedal says.

Machining is another core area. In the workshop there is a large park of used CNC machines, (Computer numerical control). Many of them were bought two years ago after the bankruptcy of Delta Pumpefabrikk in Haugesund. A brand new CNC machine with more automation and several digital setting options is yet to be unpacked and put into use.