

Erha: Pioneering vessel-based installation of Xmas trees

Innovative approach to Xmas tree installation leads to multi-million dollar savings

Maersk Supply Service was contracted to install all 'Xmas trees' at ExxonMobil's Erha development project off the coast of Nigeria in 2005, including installing all the subsea Xmas trees in depths of up to 1600m.

At the time, normal procedure was to install Xmas trees from a rig. In this project, however, Maersk Supply Service devised a solution that would allow installation by vessels – something that had not been done before.

The solution involved fitting an AHTS vessel with a subsea crane. The active heave-compensated crane enabled faster installation using the crane wire, rather than using a rig drillstring. This not only saved very valuable rig time, but also allowed for greater flexibility in the deployment of the Xmas trees.

The project in Nigeria ultimately led to a successful contract for ExxonMobil in Australia.

Why Maersk Supply Service?

- Due to the outstanding performance of the vessel and crew as well as careful project planning, the procedure proved highly successful.

The customer advantage

- Installation time was dramatically reduced compared with using a rig, ultimately saving the client an estimated double-digit million US dollar figure.

