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PB 261

PRESS RELEASE

13/06/2008

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GeoSea (DEME Group) orders jumbo jack-up platform

ANTWERP (13 June 2008) – GeoSea is constructing a brand-new jumbo jack-up platform for supporting major projects at sea. The company is part of the Belgian DEME group and specialises in offshore maritime contracts. By mere size and the use of the newest technology, the jack-up platform will become a unique vessel. The platform is being built by Antwerp-based company Lemants. The order confirms the very competitive position of Flemish companies in the field of high-tech structures.

The new investment illustrates GeoSea's ambition to get involved, on a worldwide scale, in the construction of farshore wind turbine farms and the building of some of the biggest bridges and other civil constructions on or along water surfaces. Jack-up platforms are the workhorse par excellence for major maritime projects. They are firmly anchored on the sea bottom by long spuds, and are able to jack up themselves high above the swell.

In many respects, the jumbo jack-up platform will become a unique piece of plant. It can sustain operations at sea, even in the most challenging environment such as a heavy storm. It offers accommodation for a full 50 people, who can eventually be flown in on the helicopter landing platform. The jack-up platform is equipped with the newest technology in the field of jack-up systems, helicopter landing platform, and rescue capabilities. It produces its own drinking water, performs its own waste treatment and is designed for a minimal energy consumption.

Spuds are almost 80 m (!) long, guaranteeing a continuous operation in water depths of up to 50 metres – which covers almost the entire North Sea area. The platform is 55 m long and 33 m wide, and has a jack-up capability of 2000 tonnes on each of the four spuds.

The new jack-up platform will be built by Antwerp-based Iemants and its subsidiary Willems. The company is specialised in steel constructions, and has frequently taken part in the building of parts for specialised ships for the oil- and gas industry. The order was given after an international tender procedure involving shipyards in Europe, China, Russia and South Africa.

The fact that the order was given to a Flemish company, confirms the very competitive position of Flemish companies in the field of high-tech structures. As for GeoSea, building close to home guarantees a high quality delivery on schedule. Even before construction has begun, several assignments for this brand-new jack-up platform have already been booked.

About GeoSea

GeoSea is a fast growing company that focuses on special offshore maritime projects. The company is part of the Belgian DEME group, a world leader in the field of dredging, hydraulic engineering and environmental projects. GeoSea is active all over the world. At Costa Azul, Mexico, GeoSea recently drilled oversized monopiles, with a diameter of 3 m, in hard rock for the construction of an LNG-terminal. Next month, GeoSea will install the 316 tonne turbines at a height of 95 m, on top of C-Power's 5 MW wind turbines at Thorntonbank, 27 km off the Belgian coast. So far, GeoSea has been involved in the installation of some 15 European offshore wind turbine parks. Ordering a seventh jack-up platform which will be even more impressive than all its other plant, GeoSea fosters the firm ambition to join the leading group of companies that build wind farms at sea. Other jack-up platforms of GeoSea include Vagant, Buzzard, Zeebouwer, Halewijn, Tijn II, and Kobe. They are assigned to projects all over the world, including on the North Sea, the Middle East and Australia. GeoSea business also includes more traditional activities, such as soil investigation, drilling of large diameter monopiles, and high-tech directional drilling (as was successfully executed under the wreck of the sunken car carrier Tricolor). Geo Sea has a highly qualified staff of 55 and realised a turnover of 20,5 million euro's over the past year. It is heading this year for a turnover of around 30 million euro.

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