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Exclusive research into North American OSV market

US Coast Guard honours tug company boss

Salvors win prestigious US Navy contract

USCG honours tug company boss

Stepping in to support the US Coast Guard (USCG) during a hurricane, a vessel fire and with ongoing training has earned Signet Maritime president and CEO, J. Barry Snyder, the USCG Meritorious Public Service Award.

The USCG praised Snyder's "proactive engagement and co-operative spirit" for his "outstanding contributions to the Port of Corpus Christi and USCG" on three separate occasions between July 2017 and January 2018.

Texas-based Signet tugs were on hand before, during and after the arrival of category four Hurricane Harvey – helping dispatch vessels from the port of Corpus Christi before the storm arrived, ensuring remaining vessels held their positions during the hurricane, and speeding up the removal of stranded and damaged vessels in the aftermath, allowing the port to reopen as quickly as possible.

Also, the company's tugs were first on scene to reports of an explosion, fire and oil spill from a barge with 140,000bbl of oil on board. By providing boundary cooling and blanketing the barge with foam, it meant the fire was extinguished within 10 minutes and the vast majority of the onboard oil did not spill into the water.

Finally, Snyder entered into a mutual training agreement with the USCG Sector/Air Station Corpus Christi designed to build knowledge and experience for USCG and Signet crews with advanced search and rescue training.

Snyder received his award from Rear Admiral Paul F Thomas, Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District. Following the ceremony, RAdm Thomas and other senior USCG officers went on board tug ***Signet Arcturus*** for a demonstration of FiFi1 fire-fighting by ***Signet Constellation*** and ***Signet Stars & Stripes*** in the La Quinta Channel near Signet's main Ingleside facility.

▶ *Signet Maritime president and CEO, J Barry Snyder*

• At The Helm, *page 74*

Technology developer successfully sea trials autonomous systems

Sea Machines Robotics – Boston, US-based developer of autonomous technology for marine vessels – has successfully completed product sea trials of its introductory line of intelligent command and control systems, developed for the demanding challenges of offshore commercial, scientific and government applications.

The company says the two new products, SM300 and SM200, transport the marine industry into a new era of task-driven, computer-guided vessel operations, bringing advanced autonomy within reach for small- and large-scale operators.

The flagship SM300 integrates with existing vessel systems and sensors to manage pre-planned and dynamically charted missions. It is an industrial-grade vessel intelligence system providing 'operator-in-the loop' autonomous command and control, plus direct remote-control operation using a wireless belt pack.

The SM200 provides fully integrated, line-of-sight and remote-vessel control for collaborative vessel operations.

Sea Machines' CEO, Michael G Johnson, said: "This is the advanced technology that mariners have long been awaiting. Our products allow operators and crew to focus on higher-value tasks while at sea, empowering a commercial vessel to do more with predictable results and lower operational costs. Missions can now be executed productively around the clock and in extreme weather conditions, with improved crew safety and efficiency."

The SM product family can be installed into existing or new-build vessels, and incorporates communication interfaces for integration with onboard digital, analogue and mechanical systems.

Critical task simplified by update

The latest release of US-based HydroComp's PropCad 2018 Premium Edition software includes a new utility to simplify the extraction of propeller features from full 3D CAD files that drastically reduces the time and effort needed to recreate an existing propeller or product model – a critical task for propeller designers and manufacturers.

A process that previously took several hours can now be completed in just a few minutes. The import CAD file utility can be used to automatically extract geometric data from a CAD file. The user selects a CAD file in either STL or OBJ formats.

The CAD models require the shaft axis to be positioned at the origin, but there are tools in the utility to rotate and translate the CAD data into the proper position with the integrated 3D preview window.

After selecting which radial sections to sample from the CAD data, the 3D intersections are calculated. PropCad's mathematics calculate the 2D section shapes and the associated parameters for chord length, thickness, pitch, rake, and skew from the intersections.

The user has an opportunity to review the derived distributions within the utility. The reference line representing the pitch plane can be manipulated to yield the proper frame of reference for the propeller's design data. The face and back offsets will automatically be calculated from the extents of the 2D section.

Meanwhile, as of this year, all editions of PropCad also include several inspection documents that summarise the design data and inspection locations for propeller technicians.

Vessel stability firm adds to product line

US-headquartered vessel stability provider Seakeeper has unveiled the latest addition to its HD product line for commercial vessels, the Seakeeper 5 HD.

Specifically for commercial and military vessels of between approximately 11m and 13.5m in length, the Seakeeper 5 HD uses gyro-stabilisation technology and is designed to eliminate up to 95 per cent of all boat roll.

Like other Seakeeper units, it is completely internal, requires only modest electrical power and can be installed virtually anywhere on board.

The company, which has its head office in Maryland, says its HD line is intended for rigorous offshore use – more than 1,000 hours per year – on vessels that are often out for several days at a time in harsh conditions. Seakeeper adds that its product increases crew comfort and safety and lessens crew fatigue.

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