IADC ballast control and stability program launched

IADC HAS OFFICIALLY launched its newest accreditation offering designed for providers of marine ballast control and stability training. The system establishes training provider specifications and course curriculum guidelines based on the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Assembly Resolution A.891(21).

The system includes an individual IADC Ballast Control Operator (BCO) Certification that combines course work with documented offshore rig performance.

The course curriculum is intended to fulfill international flag state training requirements for Ballast Control Operator (BCO), Barge Supervisor (BS) and Offshore Installation Manager (OIM) licenses serving aboard a mobile offshore drilling unit (MODU).

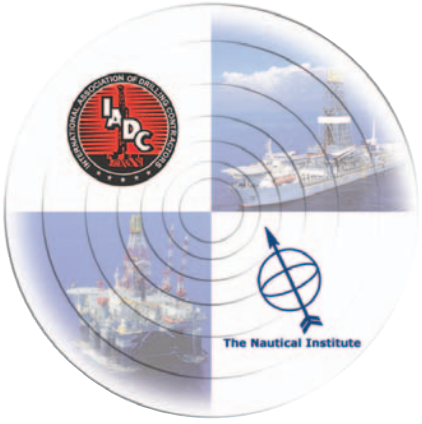
The system has been officially approved for individuals seeking those licenses on vessels registered in the Marshall Islands and Vanuatu.

IADC will operate the program in conjunction with the international Nautical Institute in London, which operates a similar training and certification system for dynamic positioning (DP) operators.

PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

Maritime documentation specialists from the US Coast Guard and the flag states of the Marshall Islands, Vanuatu and Liberia were introduced to the program in Arlington, Virginia last November.

The IADC presentation was conducted by **Steve Kropla**, IADC Director of Accreditation & Certification; **Alan Spackman**, IADC Director of Offshore Regulatory & Technical Affairs; and **Dado Matkins** of **Transocean**, Chairman of the IADC Training Committee. The meeting resulted in pre-launch approval of the program by Marshall Islands and Vanuatu.



IADC, in conjunction with the international Nautical Institute, recently launched a ballast control and stability accreditation program. The logo for the new program, which meets IMO standards, is shown above.

Also as a result of the meeting, IADC is currently in the process of seeking USCG approval as a Quality Standards Systems (QSS) organization. This designation would enable IADC to provide accredited organizations with USCG approval.

Currently, training providers must make separate submissions for USCG course approval. Liberia has advised IADC it will accept the program once IADC achieves QSS status.

Transocean Inc's ballast control simulator in Aberdeen is used primarily to train its own personnel. However, the simulator was used to provide a course for inspectors for the UK Health & Safety Executive.

Under the system, training providers can be accredited to teach approved stability courses upon demonstrating that they meet established criteria for curriculum, instructor qualifications, test construction, course composition and general administration.

IADC will utilize the technical resources of the Nautical Institute to perform program review and onsite course assessment.

Approved courses must be of at least 40 hours duration with no more than 15 students. Students who complete courses that utilize full-motion simulators to replicate extreme wind and sea conditions and emergency situations would be eligible to receive a Class A certificate, which would satisfy USCG and flag state requirements as well as regulations specific to the United Kingdom and Canada.

Students completing courses not utilizing full-motion simulation equipment would be eligible to receive a Class B certificate, which would satisfy USCG and flag state training requirements.

Individuals employed as BCOs will be eligible to qualify for IADC BCO Certification. Upon completion of an accredited course, they would receive a logbook that could then be used to document six months of shipboard ballast control activities and verified completion of key ballast control tasks by a licensed supervisor. Upon completion of the logbook, IADC will award BCO Certification. Certification will be valid for five years, at which time requalification would be available through a number of options, including retaking a course or recompleting the logbook.

IADC developed the accreditation and certification system following a joint survey in 2003 with the Nautical Institute to identify ballast control and stability training resources and industry needs.

A working draft of the program was released for industry comment in 2004. Numerous changes and clarifications were made as a result of comments received and subsequent meetings between IADC, the Nautical Institute and the UK Health & Safety Executive (HSE).

The project development team consisted of Mr. Matkins, **Rene Rodrigues**, **Ken Chapman** and **Jim Finlay** of Transocean; **Jeff Mashburn** and **Tom Payne** of **Diamond Offshore**; **Mike Koenig** of **Atwood Oceanics**; and **Bill Waldroop** of the Alliance Maritime Training division of **Randy Smith Training Solutions**.

Additional project review and guidance was provided by **Capt Dick McVeigh** and the staff of **Aberdeen Skills Enterprise Training (ASET)**, the vocational training unit of Aberdeen College.

Additional information and downloadable reference and application forms are available on the IADC web site at http://www.iadc.org/stability/. For more information, contact Mr. Kropla at steve.kropla@iadc.org.