

Malta becoming logistical jump-off point for Libya

LIBYA IS SEEKING foreign investment of about \$30 billion in order to double its crude oil productive capacity from 1.5 million b/d presently to 3 million b/d by 2010. Part of that effort includes offering exploration acreage and licenses to international E&P companies.

The country's first licensing round since 1986 was held last February. This offering also saw participation by US companies for the first time since the US imposed economic and political sanctions against the country.

Fifteen exploration licenses were offered in the first round, including nine onshore and six offshore areas. Three US companies, **Occidental**, **ChevronTexaco** and **Amerada Hess** won varying interests in 11 of the 15 total permit areas.

Additional exploration licenses are expected to be offered later this year, both onshore and offshore.

Offshore areas from the first licensing round were won by Woodside and Brazil's Petrobras.

Woodside will operate four offshore permit areas, blocks 35, 36, 52 and 53, in the Sirte Basin. The company plans to spend



The facility's 30 ton and 70 ton cranes can provide heavy lifts required for the offshore industry. The company also has a 500-ton crane, claimed to be the largest crane in the Mediterranean for construction services.



Malta-based Medserv operates and manages a stretch of private quay extending 200 m with a 25 m depth of working area. The area is used as a marshalling area for supply vessels, and could be a jumping off point for Western operating companies returning to Libya.

more than \$50 million for exploration, which will include seismic and four wells. The blocks are in water depths ranging from approximately 325-4,900 ft.

Petrobras will operate Area 18 offshore Libya in the Mediterranean Sea, which includes four blocks in water depths ranging from about 650-2,300 ft.

SUPPORTING E&P

One company has been serving the region's offshore energy industry for more than 30 years, well before the US imposed sanctions on Libya and Western companies were barred from operating in the country, which owns Africa's largest oil reserves.

Malta-based **Medserv**, an IADC member, is a privately owned company that supports offshore E&P in the Mediterranean region. The company says Libya is considered to be one of the most active areas for the E&P industry now that sanctions have been lifted.

Additionally, the Libya to Sicily natural gas pipeline has reinvigorated interest in the area.

Medserv's logistics base includes a private quay with multipurpose warehouses and covered storage space as well as open storage. The facility also includes office space.

The company also runs a bulk plant facility for cement, barite and bentonite, with

oil- or water-base mud processed to industry standards.

Pipe testing and inspection is also carried out by certified engineers. Bunkering and potable water is provided. Waste oil collection, nontoxic and radio active garbage collection is handled.

Mud tank and vessel silo cleaning services are also provided.

The facility also has the largest crane in the Mediterranean, according to the company, a 500 ton unit for oil service construction projects and activities.

The facility also has 30 ton and 70 ton telescoping mobile cranes.

Additionally, the company has access to other cranes ranging up to a 450 ton Manitowic 4600 via a partnership with an equipment company.

The company has the exclusive use of a stretch of private quay extending to 200 m at the Malta Freeport with a 25 m depth of working area should additional space be required.

The quay itself has an area of 5,000 sq m. The quay has a minimum draft of 10 m and is lighted to provide 24 hour operations. It is also suitable for ro-ro activities.

Cranes and the quay as well as skilled personnel are available at short notice to facilitate quick turnaround of supply vessels if necessary.

An area of 40,000 sq m is allocated for open storage space and is supported by the necessary vehicles and cranes.

The company has a fully-equipped quay-side bulk plant consisting of two separate units, one for cement and one for barite and bentonite. The cement silo has a capacity of 250 tons while the barite and bentonite capacity is 350 tons.

The company also operates two completely independent mud plants capable of mixing and storing 400 cu m of oil-base or water-base mud. Plants can also be used to manufacture brine. Tanks are cleaned after each operation.

The plant is operated by experienced personnel with responsibility for all phases, from cutting bags to loading on supply vessels. Mixing of the mud to the client's specifications is also carried out by the plant's personnel.

Bunkers can be delivered to the quay by road or barge from a number of bunkering companies available in Malta.

Potable water is available from hydrants at the quayside at an average flow of 20 cu m per hour.

Drilling and potable water can also be

delivered on a 24-hour basis by road trailer.

The company can also recruit personnel for different work categories and nationalities on a customer's behalf, either for direct employment by the customer or on a contract basis, including tool pushers, floormen, roustabouts engineers and catering personnel. Medserv expects to be ISO 9001 certified in 2005.

A multi-purpose warehouse provide a total of 6,500 sq m of covered storage and an office facility is also available for the company's clients, which numerous companies have already leased.

The shipping and freight clearance department provides full customs clearance and freight collecting services.

The company is a fully licensed Freeport company, so customs formalities are min-



Equipment can be stored at the facility's 40,000-sq m open area that includes cranes for handling equipment.

imal and simplified, an advantage when critical or emergency items need to be cleared and shipped out. The company also performs all vessel clearance formalities, customs and immigration for both arrivals and departures. ■

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