



Dynamic positioning

Energy experts project that Brazil – until recently an oil importer – will in the next decade have one of the world’s biggest oil reserves. This poses a major challenge to Petrobras, Brazil’s state-controlled energy company, and to foreign oil companies attempting to develop newly discovered deep-sea oil fields that are more than 300 kilometres out in the Atlantic and under more than 2,000 metres of water. There is a rush to provide platforms, rigs, support vessels and drilling systems to develop tens of billions of barrels of oil. A rush that has opened a wide window of opportunity for the J. Lauritzen Group’s specialised dynamically positioned (DP) support vessels.

The Group has in record time built a strong foundation for growth within the offshore sector in Brazil. Apart from three shuttle tankers on long-term contracts with Petrobras and Transpetro, the J. Lauritzen Group has recently taken delivery of the dynamically positioned accommodation unit *Dan Swift*, which

went straight into its first contract for Statoil in Brazil to assist with hook-up and commissioning of two well-head platforms in the Campos Basin (see article, page 8). Involvement with DP support vessels all began as a single shuttle tanker project that gained momentum and snowballed into more projects. It quickly became apparent not only that there are major opportunities for growth in Brazil, but also that it is an area – unlike other shipping-related segments – that is far less affected by the financial crisis, due to strong demand for identifying new oil reserves in deeper waters.

Pioneering experience

In these projects, the J. Lauritzen Group is building on organisational experience gained by pioneering the first shuttle tanker, the *Campos Transporter*, which served Brazil’s Campos Basin from 1998 to 2005. This experience was instrumental in deciding to re-enter the business in 2008 with the *Dan Eagle*, a DP shuttle tanker that was converted from a former

product tanker and outfitted with state-of-the-art DP and bow-loading systems. The *Dan Eagle* is now under long-term contract with Petrobras, as are two purpose-built shuttle tanker newbuildings, which are to be delivered in 2011.

The new and converted shuttle tankers feature advanced DP-2 systems that enable them to maintain position and heading automatically using their special propellers and thrusters while they load oil safely from floating production,





The J. Lauritzen Group is set to be a strong supporting player in the race to develop deep-sea Brazilian oil fields.

storage, and offloading platforms (FPSOs) for transport to shore. In effect, a DP shuttle tanker becomes a “floating pipeline”, an arrangement that offers many competitive advantages for development of deepwater fields far from shore, where pipelines are neither economically attractive nor physically practical. Additionally, DP shuttle tankers and the FPSOs they serve can be redeployed as flexible units between fields according to production planning requirements.

Competitive strength

The *Dan Swift* is so far the only high-end monohull accommodation and support vessel of its kind, and there are not many competitors in the shuttle tanker segment. The J. Lauritzen Group’s offshore strategy is to remain focused on Brazil in the foreseeable future. In addition to Petrobras and Statoil, a number of foreign companies are operating in Brazil, which are all potential customers.

The J. Lauritzen Group has recently opened an office in Rio de Janeiro to position itself in this business and to provide full-time local presence under the direction of Lauritzen Offshore Services vice president Michael Kristensen, who has valuable experience from his previous posting in Brazil, where he was involved in J. Lauritzen’s reefer operations.



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