

MEST: READY FOR MORE INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMERS

REPRESENTING about half of the country's entire export value in 2016 figures, fish farming has grown to become the single most important industry in the Faroe Islands as measured in revenues from foreign trade. With recent developments in world markets generally favorable for the Faroese seafood industry, the current economic upturn in the fish farming business is also underpinned by constant streamlining and modernization of production facilities, equipment and machinery.

The industry's drive towards perpetual improvement and higher performance has raised the bar for all suppliers of equipment, including the Faroe Islands' leading shipyard and engineering group MEST. With many decades of experience in shipbuilding and repairs including marine engineering and design, MEST since 2016 has delivered newbuilds for the aquaculture industry—two catamaran workboats for fish farming major Bakkafrost. The catamarans are built in a new design with all the work undertaken in the Faroe Islands. According to information, Bakkafrost has now asked MEST Shipyard to build two more catamarans, to be delivered later this year (2017).

With its vast experience in the fishing industry combined with its extensive experience with offshore support vessels and domestic ferries, the yard's entry into the aquaculture segment is seen as a natural step forward. Deep know-how in specialist areas such as hydrodynamics has added unrivaled advantages to MEST's offerings in the way of workboats for the aquaculture business, said the company's marketing officer, Richard M. Mortensen.

Working with the fish farming industry has long been part of MEST's regular business, notably when it comes to its Runavík-based stainless steel workshop, which for a long time has supplied the seafood industry with processing lines, equipment and accessories.

"Over the years we have become a major supplier to Faroese fish farmers,"



Following successful deliveries of catamaran workboats and more equipment to aquaculture majors in the Faroe Islands, MEST Shipyard considers a wider international context—while a covered dry dock promises to boost repairs and maintenance.

CEO Mouritz Mohr noted. "Building workboats for them in a way was long overdue as it fits with our core business. We have made an effort to understand every relevant aspect of the aquaculture business, which means we are able to design and manufacture top quality workboats. We have the knowledge and skills required, and a highly competent workforce."

Mr. Mohr pointed out that the likes of Bakkafrost demand the highest standards of quality for their operating equipment, relying on the durability, versatility and robust characteristics of the vessels they use every day.

"The catamaran workboats delivered to Bakkafrost have proven to meet and, in some instances, exceed expectations,"

Mr. Mohr said. "Feedback from captains and crews has been highly encouraging and the vessels perform well, even in rough seas with waves as high as eight meters."

COVERED DOCK, NEW TUG

MEST was also contracted to convert fish carrier vessel 'Hans á Bakka' and



support vessels 'Róland' and 'Martin' for Bakkafrost, three sophisticated vessels used for transit of salmon in connection with parasite control and disease prevention.

With favorable endorsements from the aquaculture industry, MEST now has its eyes on new export opportunities.

"As we have fine-tuned our skills over the years, potential customers abroad have shown some curiosity, including fish farming companies in Scotland, Ireland, Iceland and elsewhere," Mr. Mortensen said. "We are looking to develop these export markets further."

Meanwhile, the windy and rainy climate of the Faroe Islands has always been a challenge in the day-to-day operations at MEST, often hampering

Left to right, CEO Mouritz Mohr with marketing officer Richard M. Mortensen; New tugboat 'Samson' (right); Barge 'Krossafelli' (bottom left); The Skála shipyard (bottom right); Catamaran 'Miðvík' (opposite bottom).

repairs and maintenance of fishing or merchant vessels. The old issue is about to be resolved, however.

"Plans to cover the yard's dry dock at Skála have advanced to a point where we now expect construction to start in the imminent future," Mr. Mohr said. "A covered dry dock will open up a host of possibilities with greatly improved working conditions, and the possibility to carry out repairs and maintenance every month of the year".

Apart from reducing the need for Faroese customers to take their vessels abroad mainly for surface treatment, the covered dry dock also has the potential to attract foreign vessels.

Construction, repairs and maintenance of maritime vessels are considered the cornerstones of MEST's business. But there's more—towing services have also been a part of the regular business activities since the 1970s, and recently the company invested in a new tugboat, 'Samson,' which is promising a great leap for the towing service.

The Samson arrived in the summer of 2016 and has a bollard pull of around 40 tonnes. This means berthing of considerably larger vessels is now possible at Faroese ports. MEST's new Damen-built tugboat, which has a considerably larger pull force than the current one, will be able to meet the demand of most larger ships.



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MEST is the Faore Islands' leading shipyard and engineering group. Shipbuilding, conversions, repairs, maintenance, related services. Technical consulting. Advanced tools for e.g. vibration analyses, stability calculation, laser alignment. Comprehensive spares department, general agents for leading brands in marine and food industry equipment and accessories.

Tórshavn: Berth length 200 m,
Two slipways 2500 + 1000 tonnes,
Two construction halls,
Mobile cranes.

Skála: Berth length 400 m,
Dry dock 115 m,
Slipway 1100 tonnes,
Construction hall, Mobile cranes.

Runavík: Design and manufacturing of stainless steel equipment and processing lines. Specially designed hygiene conveyor used in food industry. Fishfarming equipment.

PAM Offshore Service

Specialists in providing skilled manpower for oilfield services companies.

