

# Port

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# Project Partners' Heavy Lift Click

LATE LAST YEAR THE PARTNERSHIP OF VERBRUGGE-SARENS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THE LOAD-OUT OF FIVE TRIPODS FOR THE OFFSHORE WIND FARM GLOBAL TECH I AT THE PORT OF VLISSINGEN. This was just one of a number of offshore wind related projects the two companies have worked together on at the port in recent years.

WORDS BY BEN LITTLER

Discussing the decision to form a partnership with Sarens, Erik van der Ham, Commercial Manager Project Cargo at Verbrugge, says, "There was simply a good 'click.' It's a partnership that works very well. What we needed for such a relationship was a company of the right size and with a suitable range of equipment. We also needed to ensure risk mitigation for our clients. Sarens fit the profile exactly. Of course, they also have an excellent engineering department. It's a good match." Under the partnership arrangement Verbrugge-Sarens provide logistical support for such projects. Verbrugge Terminals provide the right infrastructure and adequate space, Sarens the heavy lifting equipment. Both companies employ highly experienced people. The two then work together according to the stowage plans provided by the vessel operators – in the case of Global Tech I this was Hochtief operating under contract from Global Tech I – to facilitate the lifting of equipment. The consortium Lemants N.V. and Eiffage Construction Metallique S.A.S were responsible for stability engineering of the tripods and engineering of the transport support structures.

## A Winning Formula

Mr van der Ham is very clear about what he sees as being the successful formula of the partnership. He points out that together, Verbrugge-Sarens has the infrastructure, space, perfect locations, equipment and, crucially he says, the experience. Space is certainly something which the partners have access to, with two of Verbrugge's terminals located in Vlissingen and a new one in Zeebrugge altogether adding up to an over 200ha capacity with over 3,400m of heavy duty quay side. Vlissingen is a strong location for the sector generally, the port having handled more than 20 offshore wind projects over the years. >>

Photo courtesy of Verbrugge Sarens

Load-out of the tripods for Global Tech I at Vlissingen.



Photo courtesy of Verbrugge Sarens

## Close to the Action

The two Verbrugge terminals in Vlissingen, as well as the Zeebrugge terminal, offer a sheltered location close to the North Sea and proposed offshore wind activity not only in Dutch, Belgian and UK waters, but also German projects. Moreover, Verbrugge-Sarens, additionally enjoys excellent hinterland connections. A pan-European rail network runs direct to the terminal and there is access to a network of inland waterways.

The terminal's location is also boosted by the presence of other key players from the offshore wind supply chain.

With regards to equipment, this is something Sarens have got covered. With more than 1,100 telescopic cranes, over 400 crawler cranes and more than 1,400 axle lines SPMTs the partnership is able to handle the largest of offshore wind components and is well positioned to take on the increasingly large and heavy pieces that are the trend of the industry at present.

## A Strong Network

Verbrugge-Sarens forms part of the network of companies offering offshore wind solutions located at Zeeland Seaports. These businesses have recently started to

cooperate in the promotion of services to the industry offered at the port generally. Verbrugge has been a part of this, taking part in, for example, October's Offshore Energy in Amsterdam and EWEA in Frankfurt in November, at the stand of Zeeland Seaports (for more information see pg 32). Verbrugge joined the likes of BOW Terminals, VDS Offshore Construction and Conservation and Multiship, under the Zeeland Seaports flag, to advocate the port's offerings.

## A Bright Future

With a number of large scale projects being proposed or already confirmed throughout the North Sea and English Channel areas, there is every opportunity for the partnership to continue going from strength to strength. In this the Verbrugge-Sarens partnership is aided by the fact that the Vlissingen sites offer unlimited extension opportunities in terms of size, weight and storage quantities and capacities.

[i. www.verbrugge.nl](http://www.verbrugge.nl)

[i. www.sarens.com](http://www.sarens.com)

## Partnership Track Record

As for experience, both companies have a proud track record in offshore wind related operations and in heavy lifting generally. As Mr van der Ham points out, Verbrugge has provided offshore wind solutions for some time now. "We have been gaining experience in the sector since 2009 as a result of which the people working for us know what they are doing. We have a proven track record." Verbrugge has long made the best of its strong geographical location in relation to offshore wind project activity to develop an extensive track record in service provision to the sector. Prior to forming the partnership with Sarens in 2011 Verbrugge was already involved in a number of offshore wind projects, including Greater Gabbard, Sheringham Shoal and Thanet. Since teaming up with Belgium-based Sarens this relationship with the industry has continued to blossom, seeing involvement in London Array, Riffgat, Alstom and, of course, Global Tech I.