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Former Forces personnel bring military knowhow to Galloper

- ***Offshore wind energy provides second career for ex-Forces personnel***
- ***Skill sets transferable and provide sound foundation for new roles***
- ***British Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force all represented on-site***
- ***Reservist policy gives time off for training (Reserves Day, 26 June 2019)***

British Armed Forces personnel transitioning into civilian life have found an ideal fit in the offshore wind sector, with all three branches of the forces represented at Harwich-based Galloper Wind Farm.

Four members of the offshore team working at the 56 turbine wind farm, located 30 kilometres off the Suffolk coast, have made their way through either the British Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force (RAF) before joining the growing offshore wind industry.

Boasting two former marine engineers, an aircraft technician and company commander, Galloper benefits from their former working experience which often required them to perform in difficult situations under pressure and in challenging environments.

Both Offshore Supervisor Mark Annis and Offshore Technician Richard Holmes joined the sector from the Royal Navy where they were marine engineers working on board vessels involved with overseas operations.

“I was a chief petty officer where team work was crucial and likewise it is also a big part of the offshore wind industry,” Mark said. “The ability to work safely and to ensure that you look out for the other members in your team is vital to the success of the wind farm.”

Richard added that: “Being offshore, working in unpredictable environments and with the fact that both the renewables industry and the armed forces stand for making a better world for our children, I haven’t looked back. Both the offshore experience and engineering background that I had helped make the transition a smooth one.”

Former aircraft technician with the RAF, James Weller was attracted to the offshore wind industry because of its challenges, growth as a sector and the fact it meant working with new and evolving technologies.

“I worked with various squadrons including the C-130 Hercules, GR4 Tornado and Aircraft Crash Recovery and mechanically, the hydraulic and rotating systems and aerofoils on wind turbine are very similar those used on the aircraft I was used to so transferring over was quite familiar.”

Galloper’s Production Manager, Kieron Drew came to the sector after having served in the British Army commanding force protection, logistical and maintenance operations in Afghanistan and serving in Iraq, Bosnia and Northern Ireland. Supported by Galloper operator, innogy, he has continued to serve as an Army Reservist, where he has been promoted to Major.

“The transferable technical, logistics and engineering skills from the army to offshore wind are important but just as relevant are personal skills such as leadership, physical fitness, and positive attitude. You need the ability to work under pressure in a hostile environment, be a team player and to maintain high standards, particularly ensuring you properly care for your personal protective equipment.”

“But I also feel renewable energy is vital for our future and chose the sector because I wanted to make a difference to the world outside the army.”

As a reservist, he is able to take advantage of the assistance provided by innogy, which has a commitment to supporting paid time off for training and ensuring a smooth transition for reservists who are mobilised into full time service.

Galloper’s four ex-Forces personnel are part of a team of 60 working out of Harwich International Port, where crew transfer vessels take technicians out daily to work on the wind farm’s turbines and ensure they operate with maximum efficiency.

ENDS

Photo: *Galloper’s ex-Forces team heading to work offshore (from left): Richard Holmes, James Weller, Kieron Drew and Mark Annis.*

For more about the Galloper visit: www.galloperwindfarm.com

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Notes to editors:

Galloper Offshore Wind Farm is a 353MW project located 27km off the coast of Suffolk. The wind farm represents an investment of around £1.5 billion. It is estimated that the

average annual generation expected at the site will be equivalent to the approximate domestic needs of more than 380,000 average UK households.¹

Gallopier is owned by innogy SE (25%), Siemens Financial Services (25%), Sumitomo Corporation (12.5%), ESB (12.5%) and a consortium managed by Green Investment Group and Macquarie Infrastructure and Real Assets (25%). innogy SE led the development and construction of Gallopier Offshore Wind Farm and operates the wind farm on behalf of the project partners.

1 - Energy predicted to be generated is derived using wind speeds monitored in the local area and correlating to historical weather data providing longer term data. The calculations are based on an installed capacity of 353 MW. The energy capture predicted and hence derived homes equivalent or emissions savings figures may change as operational data are gathered. Equivalent homes supplied is based on an annual electricity consumption per home of 4100 kWh. This figure is supported by recent domestic electricity consumption data available from The Digest of UK Energy Statistics and household figures from the UK National Statistics Authority.

