

Intelligent de-icing for winterisation needs

Finnish companies Aker Arctic and Pistesarjat have jointly founded a new company that provides intelligent de-icing systems for winterisation needs. Ilkka Rantanen from Aker Arctic is stepping in to lead the new company Starkice Oy.

Winterisation is a general term for solutions needed in vessels, platforms and equipment to function efficiently in freezing conditions. Examples are passages and stairs, which need heating in order not to become slippery, or doors, handles, hatches and machinery that need de-icing to function properly, and decks, which need to be kept ice-free for cargo space.

"Many modern Arctic vessels and offshore structures have a system in place for de-icing, because it is needed to be able to work properly when temperatures go below freezing point," Ilkka Rantanen explains. "However, until now these systems have been manually controlled, which means they are either turned on or turned off, and can easily be in the wrong mode."

"The idea with our new Intelligent De-Icing System (IDS) is that in addition to the heating element intelligent software is included. This controls the de-icing function based on actual physical ice-accumulation, not only temperature or humidity," Rantanen says. "This brings significant cost savings, because heating is only activated when it is really needed. It also means increased safety because walking areas are not slippery, and it frees people from control functions and manual de-icing work."

Remote supervision

The de-icing system is set to work automatically, but all the details are available on the control system, which works even on a tablet. This remote control system allows supervision of the system even from the other side of the world if needed. Fully automated cargo loading constructions can in the future work on their own, because no people are required on site to make sure the system is ready to operate.

Development work has been ongoing for nearly two years. The first pilots are now underway, where information and practical experience about the system in a harsh environment is gathered. It is ready to use for interested customers immediately.

Rantanen visualises other potential areas for Starkice Oy in addition to safety and cargo handling. "Think of



Winterisation is needed in many areas on a vessel or platform in order to keep areas ice-free and functioning properly in freezing conditions.

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e.g. cruise ships with heated paths to the pool where people can walk barefoot in winter. There is obvious market potential."

"Two world-leading companies in their own fields have joined forces and created a much-needed contractor for winterisation services. Now all components and a fully functional system delivery can be ordered from one location."



Ilkka Rantanen from Aker Arctic is head of the new company Starkice.

Read more from www.starkice.com