ABB sets up global Azipod® marine propulsion system manufacturing base in Shanghai

Supporting the shipbuilding industry with advanced green propulsion technology worldwide

Supporting global customers' needs from China

Shanghai, August 18, 2011 – ABB, the leading power and automation technology group, inaugurated here today a global manufacturing base producing its advanced green marine propulsion system Azipod® C, which can help reduce vessels' fuel consumption by 25% while improving their maneuvering capabilities.

Located in Lingang New Development Zone, the new base is one of ABB's four global marine propulsion system manufacturing and service facilities. Some key components of the propulsion system, such as permanent magnetic motors, struts, and propellers will be provided by local ABB factories and suppliers in China.

Claudio Facchin, president of ABB North Asia and China

"ABB is a key supplier to many industries such as power, chemical, oil and gas, railway, minerals, auto manufacturing and shipbuilding. As the largest shipbuilding country, China has been going through a shipbuilding process from simple

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vessels like basic bulkers and tankers to the most sophisticated types. And Shanghai, being the largest harbor with a strong shipbuilding foundation plays an important role in this process," said Claudio Facchin, president of ABB North Asia and China.

"It is also a further demonstration of ABB's commitment to China and another example of ABB's 'In China, for China and the world' strategy," said Facchin.

ABB has supplied electric power and propulsion systems to ships for over 60 years, and has the longest experience and highest number of deliveries. One of its key innovations was the world's first AC electric propulsion system in 1983, which remains the leading technology of today. In 1990, ABB delivered the world's first electric podded propulsion system Azipod, which keeping renovating afterwards. The compact type electric propulsion system Azipod C, which is now produced in Shanghai, is a member of the Azipod product family.

ABB's offering covers Azipod propulsion, electric propulsion, power generation and distribution, drilling drives, and onboard drives. Over 400 vessels and floating structures have been equipped with ABB's variable speed electric propulsion systems. More than 100 vessels have been equipped with Azipod units, which have accumulated over 7 million's operating hours in some of the most demanding marine applications – icebreakers, luxury cruise ships, research vessels and offshore supply vessels, as well as drilling rigs, ferries and megayachts.

"The new base will apply advanced technology and top quality management standards. It will help us meet the fast-growing demand of the Chinese shipyards for high-end vessels as they shift their focus towards this direction, at the same time, allowing us to get closer to customers of other key shipbuilding markets like Japan and South Korea," said Heikki Soljama, global head of ABB's Marine and Cranes Business Unit.

Soljama said, the new base will dedicate to manufacturing the compact propulsion system Azipod C and will support customers' needs worldwide, yet the large size Azipod units will remain to be delivered from their Finland manufacturing base.


Heikki Soljama, global head of ABB's Marine and Cranes Business Unit

"As the leading provider of electric power and propulsion systems, ABB provides about 50% of the electric propulsion power in vessels worldwide and 80% of electric podded propulsion systems", he said.

Azipod is a podded electric propulsion unit where the variable speed electric motor driving the fixed pitch propeller is in a submerged pod outside the ship hull, and the pod can be rotated around its vertical axis to give the propulsion thrust freely to any direction. Thus the ship does not need rudders, stern transversal thrusters or long shaft-lines inside the ship hull.

The system is a major propulsion system for luxury cruise liners and ice going tonnage. It not only reduces fuel consumption and improves their maneuverability, but also saves space inside the vessel hull and giving a lot of freedom for ship design. Especially in ice going vessels the system improves the performance in ice operation. The elimination of noise and vibrations is also a big comfort to passengers, especially on luxury cruise liners.

Azipod C is a member of the Azipod family with compact size that covers the power range up to 4.5 MW, from where the larger size Azipod starts. Azipod C complements ABB's solution on a wide range of vessel types, such as work boat, drilling vessels, yachts & ferries with remarkable fuel efficiency, better maneuverability, increased environmental savings, high reliability and short installation and commissioning time.

In China, Azipod C has been installed in a variety of vessels, including the ferry line between Yantai-Dalian, reducing fuel consumption by 20% to 30%. It has been also used in China's first survey vessels, Zhong Guo Hai Jian Research Vessel I & II, delivered in 2005 and 2011 respectively.

ABB Crane Business is a dedicated, experienced global supplier of crane systems. It helps customers to optimize their transport of containers and steel products, offering electrical and automation equipment for controlling the motions of container cranes, ship un-loaders and industrial cranes. It has been market leaders in the field of automation systems for grab cranes since 1983 and in the leading position in container crane automation.

ABB (www.abb.com) is a leader in power and automation technologies that enable utility and industry customers to improve their performance while lowering environmental impact. The ABB Group of companies operates in around 100 countries and employs about 124,000 people. ABB has a full range of business activities in China, including R&D, manufacturing, sales and services, with 16,300 employees, 31 local companies, and an extensive sales and service network across 80 cities.