

Catch the breeze

The British Wind Energy Association (BWEA) has released data showing that the UK wind industry is on course to deliver a record year of new generating capacity in 2004.

Wind turbine manufacturing is a focus much attention as it is seen as an opportunity for engineering firms (see *Machinery* 6 February, page 8).

BWEA anticipates that just under 350 MW will go live by the end of the year, representing some 270 individual turbines.

Onshore construction is also scheduled to start this year on a minimum of 300 new MW for completion in 2005.

There are now 981.6 MW of onshore projects with consents awaiting construction, excluding those earmarked for completion in 2004, while offshore installations – the big growth area – has now got into its stride, says BWEA.

By the end of 2004, Scroby Sands off the coast of Great Yarmouth, the second of the UK's large-scale offshore projects, will be fully operational. As of today, 25 turbines have been installed and all 30 are due to be in place before the end of the month. Offshore elsewhere, 300 MW should be built and fully operational by the end of 2005.

Warship productivity up with modern methods

VT Group's new shipyard at Portsmouth (see *Machinery* 5/19 December, 2003, page 8) is achieving 20 per cent productivity gains as compared to the previous Woolston, Southampton yard, reports the company in preliminary results to 31 March 2004.

The yard incorporates a highly automated production line for the production of panel stiffeners and the panel/stiffener assemblies that go to make up the large modules used to make the Type 45 Destroyer (pictured).

VT has an order for the first six Destroyers, a further six were originally scheduled, and currently VT expects its order for six to rise to eight.

The report says that the UK warship building market will see a period of sustained growth as a result of the Type

45 Destroyer and the Future Aircraft Carrier programmes. Additional programmes include the UK Military Afloat Reach and Sustainability (MARS) project. All this will provide a solid home market background for the next 10 years, says VT, but adds it is clear that UK warship production capacity consolidation is likely.

But the Portsmouth set-up "will give VT Shipbuilding a significant advantage in the worldwide market for warship design and manufacture". Apart from manufacturing, the Group says that it will "become more involved in technology transfer to those countries who wish to develop their own warship building capabilities, this increasingly being the nature of warship export opportunities."



Damstahl becomes Vargus Tooling UK in ownership reshuffle

Damstahl Tooling, Telford has become Vargus Tooling UK Ltd, following recent restructuring within the Germany-based Ehrenberg group of companies.

Vargus Tooling UK parent company Vargus, Nahariya in Israel, is the

manufacturer of Vardex tooling systems for thread turning and thread milling and also Shaviv hand de-burring tools.

The UK company expects to build on the considerable growth achieved over recent years, consolidating and

increasing its presence in the tooling market.

As well as Vargus group products, the company will continue to market tooling systems from manufacturers in Europe and the Far East.

Productivity performance

Trade and Industry Secretary Patricia Hewitt has announced a new £500,000 project to help 50 small- and medium-sized enterprises in Scotland boost their productivity and performance. Three quarters or more of the firms will be from the manufacturing and engineering sectors. A typical company will receive 10 days of hands-on practical help on how to improve their business through developing stronger relationships with their employees, but companies must put some of their own resources into projects.

Turning revolution

Fredk Pollard is holding an open house from 21 to 24 June at its Leicester showroom, to launch the new Mori Seiki NL series lathes. There are over 30 models in the complete range (see page 16).

Clean purchase

Blast finish equipment maker Guyson International has acquired ultrasonic cleaning unit maker Kerry Ultrasonics, Hitchin, Herts. Guyson, a privately owned family company, has manufacturing sites in Skipton, North Yorkshire and Saratoga, NY, USA.

Tool monitoring

DQR Precision, Colchester is now the UK agent for Middex tool monitoring systems. Over 50,000 systems have been sold worldwide.

Financial assistance

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