Saab builds BP relationship

Amongst the current customers of Saab TankRadar STaR level gauges is BP Shipping. The oil major is seeking to increase the extent it controls the tanker fleet used to carry its oil by building up the number of ships it owns and time charters. Until recently, the company relied on the spot market for approximately 75 per cent of its carryings. Over the last 18 months BP Shipping has specified Saab TankRadar STaR level gauges for 20 tanker newbuildings.
BP agreed to embark on a fleet renewal programme in 2001. The delivery schedule is entailing the handover of 16 double-hull vessels by the end of 2003 and a further 19 ships to be completed during 2004-2005. To put the scale of the newbuilding programme into context, at the end of 2002 the internationally traded BP fleet numbered 17 oil tankers and six gas ships.

STaRs in their eyes
The decision to opt for Saab TankRadar STaR gauges reflects the welcome afforded to the innovative three-in-one tank gauging solution by the tanker industry in general following the introduction of the device by the Saab Rosemount Marine Group early last year.
STaR gauges represent the first time that the level gauging, high level and overfill alarm functions have been combined in a single tank gauge unit for handling by the radar technique. The major classification societies have approved the gauging system, which is suitable for all types of tankers.
Saab TankRadar STaR takes advantage of a new sensor technology, with each of the three functions designed as independent measuring channels, galvanically separated and intrinsically safe. The intelligent radar tank unit transmits ready-processed signals.

"The new sensor technology is designed to improve gauging performance and read-out reliability," explains Ann Lövdahl, marketing manager for Saab Marine Electronics AB, part of the Saab Rosemount Marine Group.
"The frequent gauging intervals inherent in STaR gauges mean fast response to level changes, making it easy to act and react in fast processes for safer, more reliable loading and discharging. Also, because all functions are integrated in the same unit, the need for fewer deck installations, fewer tank penetrations and less cabling means cost savings across the board."
The system includes temperature measurement with up to five different sensors. A digital, high-accuracy pressure sensor can also be built into the tank gauge unit, and the gauge can be serviced during operation, under closed loading conditions, for maximum safety and convenience.

Building on success
"Since the introduction of the Saab TankRadar STaR unit, we have sold over 200 systems," confirms Ann Lövdahl. "The new device won one of the three runners-up prizes for innovation at this year's Seatrade Awards and helped us retain our 56 per cent share of the tank gauging market. With the current high level of tanker newbuilding activity, that market is expanding, as reflected in the increased number of systems we have sold so far this year compared to the equivalent period last year."
Although radar tank gauges account for a little over 50 per cent of the company's total sales, Saab Rosemount Marine Group is promoting itself as a supplier of a full range of equipment, including tank cleaning machines, ballast measuring devices and automation systems.

Like the group's radar gauges, Scanjet cleaning machines also hold a leading market position in their sector. Saab Rosemount Marine has also cooperated with Scanjet in the development of its Scanjet-WashTrac tank wash tracking system.
An affiliate company, Emerson Process Management, is currently gearing up to be able to offer a similar portfolio of total solutions to the the offshore industry. Many of the applications will utilise the measuring and gauging technologies developed by the group over the past three decades. In much the same way, radar gauging has recently been adapted for use on LNG carriers.

Service network
Saab Rosemount Marine Group maintains a fully integrated operation, from equipment manufacture and research and development through to global stock control and sales and manufacturing.
"By manufacturing the equipment at our own facility, we retain full control over the development of our technologies as well as quality aspects," concludes Ann Lövdahl. "This is backed up by a global network of sales and service representatives, many of which are group subsidiaries, a string of locations holding spare parts and related inventory."