

# The importance of a workforce in the booming wind industry

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*Credit: MHI Vestas Offshore Wind A/S*

With the world engaged in the energy transition and the environmental sustainability high on business agendas, scientists and governments are working to identify alternative technologies that will generate enough energy to meet the growing demand while reducing greenhouse emissions.

## **The wind sector and the energy transition**

Within the transition trend, there is a wide portfolio of alternative energy sources available, from a large-scale development of hydrogen as a clean fuel, to renewable energy such as solar or wind power.

Offshore wind is considered as one of the fastest growing energy industries, with 2019 being the biggest growth year to date, and has the potential to create as many as 77,000 jobs within the industry on a global scale.

## **The importance of a workforce**

According to the recent Global Wind Organisation (GWO) and Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC) report, as the offshore wind industry continues to thrive despite the impacts of COVID-19, we will see not only a





### The local training on a global scale

Since its inception, Maersk Training has been actively committed to support GWO in the development and implementation of the new training standards whilst helping the customers to improve the safety and operational performance, operating on a global scale, in both mature and emerging markets. Being a global training provider, the company combines its advanced training facilities with over 500 vendor agreements in order to deliver clients' specific training requirements, regardless of location.

Having identified lack of an industry knowledge and subsequently the deficit of a skilled workforce as some of the key challenges facing the wind industry when entering new markets, Maersk Training actively works to assist local community colleges, universities, unions and other institutions around the world with the establishment of the new training centres, taking its 40 years of experience and expertise in delivering training to the onshore and offshore industries.

Maersk has a drive to provide, not only a high quality of GWO approved training, but to ensure that its training imperatively improves the competencies of the participants.

As safety and training requirements vary across the world, the training providers are required to showcase the ability to offer a flexible approach by working closely with the local stakeholders as well as the wind industry bodies, in order to develop and deliver effective and targeted training.

With a development of local supply chains and training centres in the emerging markets, the training providers, both well-established and newly created, must be able to deliver a wide portfolio of services covering areas including safety and survival, human factors and team-based skills development at a competitive price.

In connection with that, Maersk Training's goal is to combine the technical knowledge with the human factors and data analysis in order to provide a flexible and all-round training experience, improving safety and operational performance of its clients.

Having worked closely with the Metal Industries Research and Development Centre (MIRDC) in Taiwan supporting the establishment of a new training and research centre, and in addition to its Denmark-based first training centre in the world to receive a GWO accreditation, Maersk Training supports the wind industry by training the local workforce, providing them with skills and competencies which comply with the local policies as well as the sector's requirements.

In addition to being able to utilise a range of platforms such as digital and on-site training,

substantial growth of the industry, but also the emergence of new markets, offering further opportunities in the sector.

In order to secure a healthy long-term growth and the necessary degree of sustainability of the sector, it is crucial that there is a skilled workforce available, able to support the industry's ambitions and successfully implement policies.

As the new and emerging markets, including the USA, China, Taiwan, Japan, Brazil and the South Korea, will be looking to develop their own supply chains to support this booming industry focusing on local investment and job creation, a coherent roadmap outlining

where and what training should take place is vital in order to support the establishment of the workforce and the successful growth of the sector.

As the GWO and GWEC aim to provide a means of forecasting workforce training demand for GWO standard training, particularly within the new markets, there is a lack of familiarity with the standards like GWO and the barriers of market entry including lack of available instructors, insufficient numbers of certified auditors, or even the struggle to establish training centres may hinder the acceleration and safety of the new developments.





Fig 1. Maersk Training - Mobile Training Facility

or even a mobile training facility, the training providers must have the resources to deliver and explore new trends in order to stand out in the saturated market and be able to penetrate the new markets.

Delivering the complete GWO Basic Safety Training (BST) and GWO Basic Technology Training (BTT) portfolio with the means to

utilise its GWO accredited Mobile Training Facility (MTF), Maersk Training is able to not only provide a training at a clients' base, revoking the need for delegate travel and reducing customers' training costs, but also supply a world class training facility and training standards, regardless of the clients' location around the world.

#### The significance of the knowledge transfer

Using the mature European wind market as a best practice example, the emerging sectors are offered a significant opportunity to gain the knowledge and create strong foundations for the future. Similarly, it is a great possibility for the well-established training providers to cooperate with the local stakeholders in order to provide industry relevant skills, supporting local job creation and investment.

With the USA being one of the pivotal markets experiencing a substantial growth in the offshore wind projects, Maersk Training has signed a partnership agreement with Bristol Community College with the intent to offer its specialised expertise and establish a new training centre in New Bedford, MA, USA.

The partnership will connect the college's faculty and staff with Maersk Training's expertise, elevating the college's capabilities and leadership in training a skilled and competent workforce whilst strengthening and developing employment opportunities for its students within the wind supply chain.

#### The future of the offshore training

With the continuous development of the established markets and a rapid expansion of



Fig 2. - Maersk Training - Mobile Training Facility

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the emerging locations, the expected growth of the wind sector, both onshore and offshore, represents a significant opportunity for the industry's manufacturers, operators as well as the training providers.

Having a workforce with a strong level of competencies, technical skills and the drive to maintain the highest standards of the operational and safety performance is crucial for the future of this booming industry.

With the wind sector being a key driver of the global energy transition over the next decades, the local training providers operating within the emerging markets

should take the opportunity to learn from the industry experts, with the European sector bringing experience to the new markets whilst blending it with a local content.

Moreover, bringing innovation into the training industry can allow the owners, OEMs, subcontractors and other stakeholders tackle the challenge of a growing training demand by providing a more efficient and timely training.

The digitalisation of the training delivery may have a significant impact on the industry where the software, such as Maersk Training's Training Management Solution (TMS), can offer all-round training

management anywhere in the world at any time, giving the delegates the ownership of their development and the employers a total overview of their training needs whilst saving their time, money and resources.

With a substantial growth of the wind industry, there is a great opportunity for cooperation and a development of a standardised training in the target markets, and for the established and the new training providers to grow their businesses by expanding to accommodate the potential demand.

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