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Liberian scholarship to WMU

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Port weighbridge systems



GEC Avery's weighbridge system installed at Sealink's terminal, Holyhead.

Over 75 per cent of the weighbridge systems installed as a result of new ferry safety legislation which came into operation at the beginning of February have been designed and manufactured by GEC Avery, West Midlands, claimed to be the world's largest weighing machine company.

The new legislation to eliminate information 'blind spots' gave rise to a need for accurate weighbridge systems to be installed in ports around the UK in the minimum of time.

GEC Avery, a specialist in computer linked weighbridge systems, met the demanding specification required and received orders for over 30 weighbridge systems from the major ferry companies, P&O and Sealink, and from numerous port authorities around the UK, including Medway Ports, Portsmouth City Council and Port Ramsgate Limited.

The systems are designed to meet the specific requirements of individual customers and vary from standard computer linked weighbridges to the most technologically advanced unmanned systems.

For example, at Folkestone Harbour, Sealink's weighbridge system incorporates an identification and information system using a unique

contactless 'smart tag' that has been developed by GEC and contains a microprocessor and memory. At the gatehouse, lorry drivers place a 'smart tag' on a reader, while the operator enters information into a computer. The data, which includes vehicle registration and trailer number, is automatically transferred and stored in the driver's tag.

When he reaches the weighbridge, the driver simply drops the tag onto a reader in the control console which automatically generates a weigh ticket which he must produce at the freight office before being accepted for shipment. This system is much simpler to use than the driver operated keyboards that it replaces, particularly for overseas drivers, provides more information and offers greater security.

The weighbridges installed also have several decisive advantages, not least in that the pre-stressed, pre-cast concrete construction eradicates the common problem of steel corrosion caused by exposure to the harsh conditions of the quayside. The weighbridges installed will enable all lorries over 7.5 tonnes to be weighed before shipment and help to ensure ferry safety.

● Reply Card No. 67

Racon marks Eurotunnel site

A SeaBeacon 1 Mark III racon from Tideland Signal of Redhill, Surrey, has been used to mark drilling operations and safeguard shipping in the Channel.

As the drilling complex had to operate in one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world, special requirements were laid down by the British and French maritime authorities to safeguard navigation. These included the provision of guardships, cardinal buoys and 'marking' the drilling complex so as to give clear warning of its presence to mariners, both in clear visibility and in conditions of restricted visibility or dense fog, not uncommon in that area at certain times of the year.

Coe Metcalf Shipping Ltd of Liverpool was contracted by Geoocean of Marseilles to provide the components of the 'security spread'. A vital part of this equipment was the SeaBeacon 1 Mark III frequency agile racon, supplied to Coe Metcalf by Tideland. Installed on the drilling vessel and jack-up drilling rigs, the racon was set to operate with Morse Code D and service ships operating in both the X-band and S-band range of frequencies.

The racon's signal was available to vessels with radar, 24 hours a day, in all weathers, at ranges of 10 to over 20 nautical miles. Despite the volume of shipping in the area, SeaBeacon's advanced side lobe suppression, with its dual token signature identification, guaranteed clear transmission in all conditions. Another unique safety and operational feature of the SeaBeacon is its remote control and monitoring facility, which allows the racon's performance to be monitored from the bridge.

● Reply Card No. 68

Liberian scholarship to WMU

On the occasion of the 40th Anniversary of the Liberian Maritime Programme, the Liberian Shipowners' Council (LSC) has presented to the Liberian Government a scholarship to the World Maritime University at Malmö, Sweden.

Speaking at the celebrations in Monrovia marking the occasion, Mr Hans A Proeller, Chairman of the Council, said: "This is an auspicious occasion for Liberia and, to recognise its landmark status, the LSC is pleased to present a fellowship for a Liberian to attend the World Maritime University. The WMU has achieved an impressive record since it was founded

in 1983 and we can think of no better way to express our support for Liberia and its Maritime Programme than to provide an opportunity for a Liberian to obtain further education in the maritime field. We naturally expect the candidates to return from Sweden after the 2-year course well versed in maritime affairs and able to play a full part in the Programme."

Mr Proeller also took the opportunity to congratulate the Programme on its achievements over the past 40 years. He noted that despite the growth of many open registry competitors in the past few years, Liberia still held the number one position. "This is a credit

to the Liberian policy of maintaining high standards, of ensuring that the wishes of owners and operators are met and of taking a high profile position in the international forums where shipping problems and issues are debated." Mr Proeller commented that the next 40 years would be very different from the last 40 and said he felt that the Programme was well placed to meet the challenges of the future. "The combination of committed Liberians at a policy level and an experienced Administration in the United States provides the necessary ingredients for the continuation of a mutually satisfactory relationship for many years to come. Almost serendipity," he concluded.