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PORTSMOUTH, UNITED KINGDOM, FEBRUARY 28, 2024

ABB to supply shore connection solution to Portsmouth International Port

- ABB wins order to deliver a shoreside shore connection installation as part of the Portsmouth ports' Sea Change project
- The Sea Change project will design, build and operate a shore power project across its three busiest berths. It is funded by UK Government through the 'ZEVI' competition, delivered in partnership with Innovate UK
- Shore connection allows visiting ferries and cruise ships to avoid emissions by connecting to the shoreside electrical grid while in port, supporting the port's aim to be the first in the UK to be zero emissions by 2030

ABB has won an order with Portsmouth International Port to supply a shore connection solution for visiting ferries and cruise ships. Part of the UK port's Sea Change project to design, build and operate a shore power system across its three busiest berths, the installation will serve two ferry berths – each with five connection points – and an additional berth shared by ferries and cruise ships. The order was signed in January 2024, with the system due for installation in the fourth quarter of 2024 and expected to be operational by the second quarter of 2025.

ABB's shore connection allows vessels to turn off their engines while at berth, avoiding annual carbon dioxide emissions for the vessels calling at the Portsmouth International Port by an estimated 20,000 metric tons from 2027. This will significantly improve air quality in the harbor area while helping the port to realize its long-term environmental ambitions.

As the UK's largest and best-connected municipal port, we are committed to meeting the highest environmental standards and have set ourselves the target of reaching net-zero by 2030 and becoming the country's first zero-emissions port by 2050," said Stephen Watkyns, Technical Director at Portsmouth International Port. "ABB's shore connection solution will help support these ambitions. Crucially, for the people of Portsmouth, it will have a hugely positive impact on air quality in the port and surrounding areas."

ABB's full scope of supply for the shore connection system comprises a 16-MVA ACS6080 drive with shunt filter, MV switchgear, power-factor compensation, transformers, e-houses, cable management systems, and automation. In addition, ABB will provide installation, cabling and commissioning services, while Portsmouth International Port will also benefit from a three-year maintenance agreement.

“Through its Sea Change project and ambitious emissions-reduction targets, Portsmouth International Port is taking a proactive approach to environmental sustainability,” said Marcus Martelin, Head of Decarbonization Services, ABB Marine & Ports. “To be selected as technology provider for this UK Government-funded project is a privilege and reflects our reputation as a trusted provider of shore connection capabilities for cleaner port operations.”

As part of the project, the port’s biggest customer, Brittany Ferries, will be introducing two new LNG-electric hybrid ferries from 2025 which will be the largest vessels of this type in the world. Alongside Portsmouth International Port and Brittany Ferries, ABB will join a consortium of academics, marine specialists and some of the UK’s most exciting technology SMEs have been brought together to deliver the project. The University of Portsmouth, MSE International, B4T, IOTICS and Swanbarton will all contribute technologies and expertise that will support Sea Change, making this an attractive and scalable solution which can be used by ports in the UK and abroad.

Sea Change is part of the Zero Emissions Vessels and Infrastructure (ZEVI) competition, which was announced in February 2023, funded by UK Government, and delivered in partnership with Innovate UK. As part of ZEVI, the Department for Transport allocated over £80 million to 10 flagship projects supported by 52 organizations from across the UK to deliver real-world demonstration R&D projects in clean maritime solutions. Projects will take place in multiple locations from the Orkney Isles to the southwest of England.

ZEVI is part of the UK Shipping Office for Reducing Emissions (UK SHORE), which focuses on clean maritime technologies that can be scaled rapidly to decarbonize the UK’s domestic maritime sector. In March 2022, the Department announced the biggest government investment ever in the UK commercial maritime sector, allocating £206 million to UK SHORE, a new division within the Department for Transport focused on decarbonizing the maritime sector. UK SHORE is delivering a suite of interventions throughout 2022–2025 aimed at accelerating the design, manufacture, and operation of UK-made clean maritime technologies and unlocking an industry-led transition to Net Zero.

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