

OFFSHORE CRANE LOADOUT A FIRST FOR SOUTH DOCKS

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A massive offshore crane shipped from the Port of Sunderland on June 23 has created a record by becoming the first Liebherr crane to be exported from the city's enclosed dock system.

Constructed by Liebherr Sunderland Works Ltd, component parts of the Liebherr 150 30 LIT crane were transported to Hendon Dock's East Quay by road, with the 43.8 metre boom arriving during the early hours to minimise traffic disruption.

Although the port's deepwater Corporation Quay is used regularly to ship crane parts manufactured by the Deptford-based crane maker, the presence of the warship HMS Westminster and barge AMT Explorer on the riverside quay meant that an alternative berth had to be found.

In a meticulously planned operation, the 32-tonne boom and other sections were lifted on board the Indian-registered platform supply vessel, Malaviya Nineteen, using the port's own Liebherr harbour mobile crane.

Port of Sunderland Director, Matthew Hunt, said: "This is the first time that a Liebherr crane has been loaded from one of our dock berths. Accommodating this 44-metre piece around our internal road structure at short notice demonstrates just how the port can react quickly to customer demand, in this case that of the offshore oil industry.

"I am pleased to say that the cargo was loaded onboard using our own Liebherr crane, allowing the ship to sail to meet a very tight delivery schedule offshore."

The crane is destined for the Forties oil field Charlie platform, situated about 110 miles East of Aberdeen and has been built for the field's operator, Apache North Sea Ltd.

Geoff Husband, Logistics Manager at Liebherr Sunderland Works, said: "Due to the length of the crane's solid boom, detailed planning was necessary to ensure its safe transit from our works to the port.

"Since being established at Deptford in 1989, Liebherr has worked in close partnership with the Port of Sunderland, from where many Sunderland built cranes have been exported to all parts of the world.

"This was another example of how such cooperation has lead to a successful outcome for all parties involved."