

IHC Piping makes major investment in robot technology



Arie Kranendonk (left) and IHC Piping Director Paul Dits sign the contract for the flange welding machine

IHC Piping B.V. has announced that it has placed a major order for a flange welding system. This is a pioneering robotic production solution for welding bespoke pipe constructions for the offshore, shipbuilding and petrochemical industries. The system has been developed to incorporate four ABB simultaneously operating robots and the latest vision technology to position, tack and weld a wide range of flanges and welding sockets.

“IHC Piping will take delivery of the first robotic flange welding system in the Benelux countries and Germany,” says Paul Dits, Director of IHC Piping. “It will help to improve the weld quality, the flexibility of production, and the cycle and delivery times for the pipe sections. These benefits will be passed on directly to our expanding customer base and provide us with a distinct competitive advantage.”

Twenty-five years ago, IHC Piping was inspired by the principles of Lean Manufacturing (LM) and Just-in-time (JIT) processes. These tried-and-tested Japanese production philosophies are utilised by IHC Piping in its 2,250 m² workshop to help boost efficiency and reduce wastage.

A unique feature of production is that flanges can be put on the pipes before they are bent to size. Therefore, each individual pipe can be produced in a single uninterrupted process, making intermediate stocks a thing of the past. The most economical nesting is also calculated before the work is programmed and scheduled to keep residual waste to an absolute minimum.

As a relatively new and versatile company, IHC Piping, a business unit of the IHC Merwede Group, specialises in CNC (computer numerical control) production and assembly of piping systems for the maritime, dredging and offshore markets.



IHC Merwede Profile

IHC Merwede is focused on the continuous development of its design and construction activities for the specialised shipbuilding sector, in particular the dredging and offshore industries. IHC Merwede is the world market leader in the construction of specialist dredging equipment. IHC Merwede is also recognised as an outstanding builder of complex, custom-built vessels for offshore construction. The clients of IHC Merwede include major dredging companies, oil and gas groups, offshore contractors and government authorities.

IHC Merwede has a staff of approximately 2,800 at its locations in the Netherlands. There are also branches in China, India, the Middle East, Nigeria, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Note for the editing desk/not for publication

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Press release