



Commercial Diving

ROV Pilot Technician Training

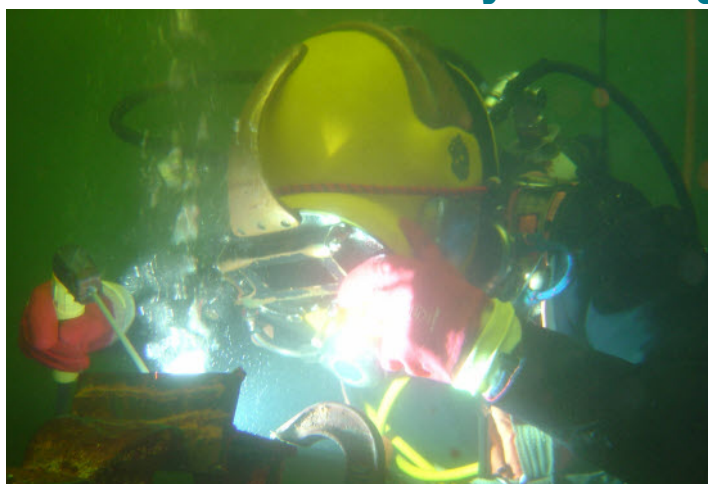
ALST Training

Sea Trials

Inside this issue

Industry boom	1
Rescue sub on trial	1
Spotlight on...	2
Consider a new career	2
Subsea7 in Fort William	3
Leading trials location	3
Pier facelift	3
Jobs at TUC	4
ROV pilot case study	4

Construction industry booming... underwater



Demand is high for construction workers underwater

It's all doom and gloom for the land based construction industry as a number of house builders announce job losses, and the battle against plunging home sales and property values intensifies.

However, under the sea the construction industry is booming.

With a shortage of subsea workers to service the growing demand, The Underwater Centre in Fort William is leading the way in solving this skills gap

crisis, and is calling upon those workers with traditional construction trades to step forward and use their transferable skills for a job offshore.

The Centre is a world leader in the provision of residential HSE accredited professional diving courses, from SCUBA to advanced mixed gas diving, as well as everything in between from first aid to the use of tools underwater and underwater inspection. The Underwater Centre also boasts one of the best Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) courses in the world.

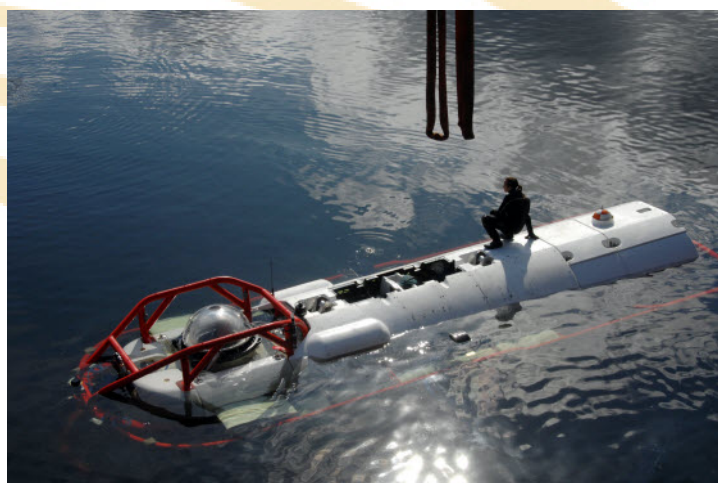
According to the International Marine Contractors Association (IMCA) over 40 more floating drilling rigs will be commissioned over the next two years, creating a demand for 5000 more support roles, of which commercial divers

(continued on page 4)

INSTRUCTORS WANTED

For details of positions available visit:
www.theunderwatercentre.co.uk/jobs.asp

World's most advanced rescue submarine takes final test at The Underwater Centre



Rescue submarine 'LR7' on trial in Loch Linnhe at Fort William's Underwater Centre

The world's most advanced rescue sub, commissioned by the Chinese Navy, recently underwent final trials at The Underwater Centre in Fort William.

The Underwater Centre's unique environment means that it is able to offer highly realistic and industry relevant conditions for the testing of diving and submersible equipment.

The Centre is based on the shores of Loch Linnhe where water depths plummet to 150metres, deeper than most parts of the North Sea. Located at the foot of Ben Nevis, its sheltered position means testing can be carried out 12 months of

the year, even in the most extreme weather conditions.

Steve Ham of The Underwater Centre says that the trial of the rescue submarine is a highly significant and prestigious contract.

'Our Centre offers unique testing conditions second to none across the world,' he said. 'We also have a team of instructors which comprise some of the world's most experienced divers and ROV pilots. We were delighted to get involved with the testing of the LR7 as it is currently the world's most advanced submarine rescue vehicle.'

For more news coverage visit:
www.theunderwatercentre.co.uk/inthepress.asp

Spotlight on... Air Diving Manager Ali MacLeod

After growing up on the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides, I now work as Air Diving Manager at The Underwater Centre, Fort William. I moved on to this position from being the senior instructor on the diving courses. I was introduced to diving through aquaculture on Lewis. I qualified at 21 years of age and it's been a big part of my life for the last 17 years. The great thing for me about working at the Centre is the people you get to meet here who come from all over the world to train. I also have the pleasure of working as part of a great team which certainly makes my current job easier.

Diving will always be a rewarding and fulfilling job for



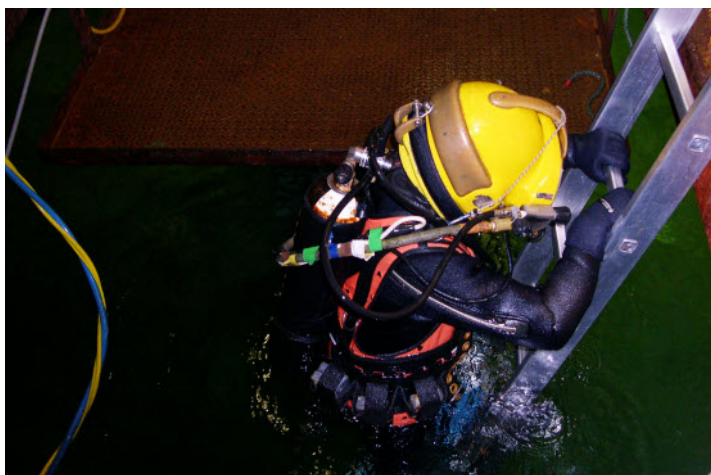
Air Diving Manager, Ali MacLeod (far left) with one of his air diving classes

me. It's fascinating to think of the support systems and the team effort that goes into getting just one or two people at a time working on the seabed. Having the privilege of teaching students at the centre has been a great pleasure for me and

something I still enjoy doing when I get the chance.

One other thing that makes me very happy is travelling and diving has allowed me to fly round the world many times. As a young boy on Lewis I'd watch the jet airliners

heading across the Atlantic and I'd dream of being up there. I'll never forget the clear autumn morning I looked down on the house I grew up in from 30,000 feet on my way to work. I couldn't have wished for a more rewarding career.



Above: Kitted up and heading in at the deep end. Below: Trying out some tools with an ROV keeping an eye on the action



Considering embarking on a career in commercial diving?

The Underwater Centre runs familiarisation days where prospective students can visit the Centre, take a tour of the facilities and have a go at diving in full, commercial diving, surface supplied kit in the Centre's purpose built 1.5million litre tank.

This is a great opportunity for potential students to 'get the feel' of commercial diving equipment, ask any questions still unanswered about commercial diving, have a look round the facilities and also to meet and have a chat with the instructors and staff. Visiting the Centre for a familiarisation day gives a close up view of what to expect whilst training and working in your new career as a commercial diver. There are a number of familiarisation days scheduled for this and next year - to find out more about familiarisation days, call the Centre on **01397 703768** to talk through what's involved.

Tristan Rowntree recently attended a familiarisation day at The Underwater Centre, and had this to say about his day in Fort William, 'I had very high expectations when I arrived, as the Centre has a world renowned reputation. I can

'I had very high expectations, as the Centre has a world renowned reputation. I can honestly say that all my expectations were surpassed'

honestly say that all my expectations were surpassed in every way. I found the staff at the Centre to be very polite, helpful and of a happy nature which created an atmosphere I am very much looking forward to returning to in the future. The day certainly confirmed to me that commercial diving is the career I want to follow, with a passion, and The Underwater Centre is the place I wish to start that career.'

For more information on familiarisation days visit:
www.theunderwatercentre.co.uk/famdives.asp
Or give us a call on:
+44 (0)1397 703786



The Subsea7 class with some of the Centre's ROV instructors and fleet of ROVs

Subsea7 comes to Fort William

The Underwater Centre has extended the depth of its relationship with offshore contractor Subsea7 by providing training for 11 of its inspection engineers in commercial diving and ROV usage.

The team of 11 have undergone an intensive training programme to familiarise themselves with the work that divers and ROV pilots get involved in, marking a hat-trick of training deals secured by the Centre from Subsea7.

'What makes our Centre so special,' says Steve Ham, the Centre manager, 'is the

realistic industry-relevant environment that students encounter for training. With water-depths down to 150m and several subsea structures to practice on, conditions divers can expect in the North Sea are replicated. Also the Centre provides a purpose built diver training pool with underwater welding bays for further training.'

And Subsea7 inspection manager Lloyd Duncan, said the facilities provided are 'first class' adding, 'inspection engineers are required to work closely with divers, subsea engineers and ROV pilots, so it is vital that they understand the particulars of these disciplines.'

Top location for subsea trials

The Underwater Centre is the ideal location for subsea trials, thanks to its loch-side location, private pier and purpose built 1.5million litre indoor tank, and the Centre has certainly been busy recently with a range of trials taking place.

WFS, the world leader in underwater and underground RF technology, used the indoor tank at The Underwater Centre along with one of the Centre's remotely operated vehicles (ROV) to trial

the latest technology for underwater sensing equipment. An intruder crossing the system would instantly be detected and its size, movement and direction would trigger closer investigation to determine the nature of the threat.

The Centre's private pier was used by Nautronix as part of their continued investment into the research and development of their subsea acoustic communication and positioning technology.

Not only is The Underwater Centre busy with students training to become commercial divers and ROV pilot/ technicians, it is also popular with some of the world's leading subsea companies, testing and trialing equipment.



WFS trialing underwater sensing equipment at the Centre's indoor facility

For more information on trials or to arrange a tour of the facilities, contact Steve Ham on:

+44 (0)1397 703786

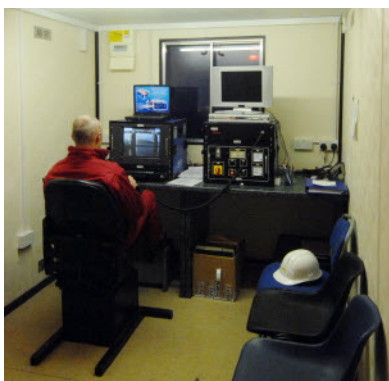
Or visit us at:

www.theunderwatercentre.co.uk/sea-trials.asp

The Underwater Centre's pier undergoes a facelift



October saw new purpose built control and training units installed on The Underwater Centre's pier, providing improved training facilities for diving and ROV students



Some of the new facilities on the pier (from left to right); inside one of the new ROV control units; outside the new training and control units; and the new two-storey diver training units

Opportunities at The Underwater Centre

If you are interested in a career with one of the world's top subsea training centres, there are full-time positions available now at The Underwater Centre. A dynamic company with extensive facilities and a superb training site, and an experienced, positive team who are committed to delivering high quality of training in a great location. Perfect for those looking for onshore work.

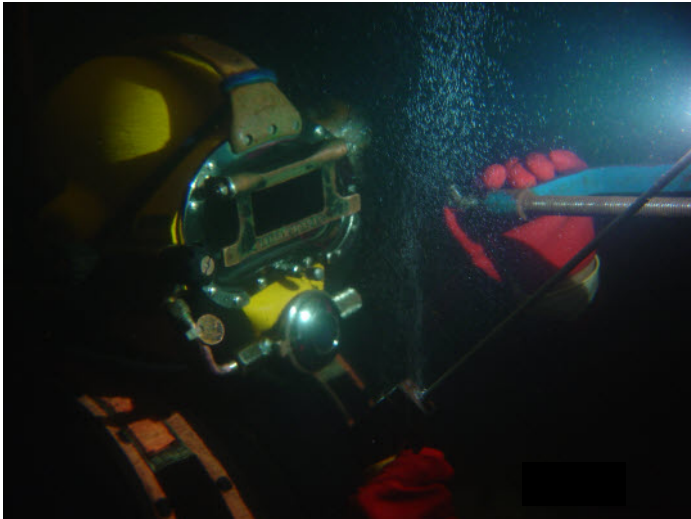
For more information or to apply, visit our website www.theunderwatercentre.co.uk/jobs.asp

The Underwater Centre was founded in the 1970s by the British Government who selected it as the ideal location for a commercial diver training and underwater trials facility.

Located on the shores of Loch Linnhe - one of the deepest Scottish lochs - the large private pier gives unrestricted sea access, with water depths of 50 metres nearby and 150 metres within half a mile. The site provides conditions similar to those experienced offshore, and has a range of underwater structures and wrecks. Unlike most seawater sites the sheltered waters allow operations to continue all year round in almost all weather.

The Underwater Centre is the only Health & Safety Executive approved training centre to offer a full range of HSE Commercial Diving Courses from Scuba to Closed Bell. And the Career Packages include additional skills training preparing divers for the real experience of commercial diving.

Construction industry booming... underwater (continued from page 1)



Workers with traditional construction skills are being encouraged to use their transferable skills in a career offshore

and ROV operators make up a significant proportion.

In addition, figures released recently by the UK Offshore Operators' Association (UKOOA) show that investment in Britain's oil and gas industry will increase substantially this year and beyond due to renewed oil exploration. In the North Sea alone, a £150 million, seven-well development project is planned. Additionally, in the recent North Sea licensing round a record number of oil and gas licenses were granted, generating increased investment and exploration.

Another recent report predicts that work class ROV usage will rise by 76% over the next 3 years.

This estimate is supported by the large number of dive support vessels (DSVs) currently under construction. In addition, the number of operational subsea wells is forecast to double by 2011.

The Underwater Centre Manager, Steve Ham said, 'The oil industry is clearly more buoyant and with renewed investment in oil exploration, we are seeing a really strong demand for divers and ROV operators. With the continued high price of oil and the rising interest in offshore renewable energy, this demand is set to continue for many years'.

Case Study... ROV Pilot Dave Vaughan

After ten years underwater, Dave was looking for a new and lucrative challenge. Following an intense period of internet research and scouring of the MOD resettlement magazines to assess the best opportunities available, Dave enrolled on the Premium ROV pilot/technician programme at The Underwater Centre, completing his studies in June 2008.

The course included a four week electronics module and three weeks working 'hands on' with The Underwater Centre's fleet of ROVs. Armed with his new skills, Dave went

in search of his first position in his new career.

His efforts were rewarded and several months into his career, he has this to say about his new profession. 'I love the diversity of the jobs we conduct with the ROV, the different people you meet from all walks of life, the traveling, oh, and the money! I'm not so keen on the amount of time I have to spend away from the family, but that is comforted by the time off I get. I'd encourage anyone to get into working in the offshore industry, it's a good life with great financial rewards, but I'd make sure they were aware of the problems that being away from friends and family can bring, I'm lucky,



Dave Vaughan (front row, 2nd from right) and the rest of his class, including his instructor, Rob Carswell (back row, far left)

having spent ten years in submarines, I'm used to this kind of lifestyle.'

For more information on
ROV courses call:

+44 (0)1397 703786

Or visit:

www.theunderwatercentre.co.uk

**THE
UNDERWATER CENTRE**

The Underwater Centre

An Aird, Fort William, Inverness-shire, PH33 6AN

T. +44 (0)1397 703786

F. +44 (0)1397 704969

E. info@theunderwatercentre.co.uk

W. www.theunderwatercentre.co.uk