

Ableman Drilling Careers Academy holds first graduation ceremony

The Floorhand Workforce Certificate completed under the WADI (The Workforce Attraction Development Initiative) Programme, has come to a successful conclusion with a graduation ceremony, held at Verdala Palace, Buskett, on 30 March, 2015. This is the first certificate programme to be offered by the Ableman Drilling Careers Academy (ADCA) in Malta.

The 24 trainees attended an intensive seven-week course, developed and delivered by Lone Star College of Houston, Texas, in the United States, at the Academy's, purpose-built training facilities in San Gwann.

Speaking at the graduation, Paul Abela, Chairman of the Ablecare Oilfield Services Group, the parent company of the Academy, announced that the students who attended the programme in Malta were the first in the world to receive this type of accredited certification that is recognised globally by the International Association of Drilling Contractors.

He paid tribute to the Academy's partners, Lone Star College, and to the IADC for recognising the ADCA's vision to create a centre of excellence on training for the oil and gas industry in the Mediterranean, which is the result of two years of preparatory work.

He further announced that by the fourth quarter of this year the Academy will have invested in a state-of-the-art Drilling and Well Control Simulator Suite, equipped to train 12 candidates per course, and an Offshore Crane Operator Training Simulator with integrated banksmen and slinger training modules.

The Floorhand Workforce Certificate course, being part of the WADI Programme, is designed to provide trainees with 70 per cent of practical learning and 30 per cent of the theory. It consists of seven modules comprising 288 contact hours, including two industry-specific certificates: IADC Rig Pass and IADC Introduction to WellCap.

Three lecturers from Lone Star College were in Malta to deliver the programme: James R. Ward, lead instructor for the Oil & Gas Drilling Roustabout/Floorhand Programme, and two specialists, Michael D. Branch and Dan P. Hernandez.



Other speakers at the graduation ceremony were Lone Star College Chancellor Stephen Head and Vice-Chancellor Linda Head, IADC Vice-President Operational Integrity Mark Denkowski, and one of the students, Donovan Saliba.

Earlier in the day Dr Head, accompanied by Linda Head, Associate Vice-Chancellor of Lone Star College, and Mr Denkowski, accompanied by Jens Hoffmark, IADC Regional VP European Operations, along with Mr Abela and the Director of the Academy, Mrs Angelique Maggi, had meetings with the President of Malta Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca at San Anton Palace, Attard, and with Prime Minister Joseph Muscat at Castille. They also visited the Academy in San Gwann and the former Malta Shipbuilding site in Marsa.

In earlier comments, Mr Denkowski explained that the IADC launched the Workforce Attraction Development Initiative in 2013 to ensure that training is standardised worldwide. In time, WADI aims to comprise a series of courses for anyone who, throughout the entire arc of their career, wishes to further their learning in anything related to the oil and gas industry. The Floorhand Workforce Certificate Programme is part of WADI and is an entry level course for people coming into the industry.

Following his visit to the Ableman Drilling Careers Academy, Mr Denkowski said: “I am very impressed with the facility and the equipment (acquired) to be able to thoroughly teach its students everything they need to know and more. The commitment to do it properly is very obvious.

“Malta is perfectly placed. It is a secure location, and it is easy to get to from northern Africa, the Middle East and even Europe. A lot of people come to the industry from Romania and Croatia, and I can easily see them coming to the Academy as well. The potential is very high.”

The IADC represents more than 1,650 drilling contractor companies worldwide and is the authoritative body in the drilling industry. It provides a forum for all oil and gas drilling industry stakeholders to connect, share knowledge, tackle common problems, and develop solutions to critical issues. The IADC is headquartered in Houston and is one of the city’s largest trade and professional associations. IADC also has offices in Washington DC, the Netherlands, Thailand and the United Arab Emirates, as well as chapters in the UK, Venezuela, Brazil, Australasia, South Central Asia, Southeast Asia, West Africa, the Middle East and across the United States.

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Captions:



Ablecare Oilfield Services Group Chairman Paul Abela



Graduation Group



Lecture hall at Ableman Drilling Careers Academy in San Gwann



Group photo of the students at ADCA in San Gwann