

A photograph of a male worker in a high-visibility yellow and grey safety vest with 'EIFFAGE SMULDERS' on the chest. He is wearing a silver safety helmet with a visor and safety glasses. He is smiling and standing in front of a large, yellow industrial structure, possibly a wind turbine component, in a factory setting.

passion

# Content



## News

04 News

## Expertise

05 Theme

12 My job, my passion

## Projects

14 Civil & Industry

16 Offshore Wind

## Culture

20 QHSE

21 Sustainability

22 Young talent

# passion

Magazine of Smulders

## Smulders

Hoge Mauw 200  
2370 Arendonk, België  
Tel: +32 14 408 102

**Publication Manager** Raf Iemants

**Coordinator** Britt Weckx

**Editorial staff** Katrien De Vocht,  
Britt Weckx

## With the cooperation of:

Pascal Van Gucht, Tessa Van  
Goethem, Kajetan Mrzyglod, Mark  
De Bruyn, Krzysztof Piotrowski,  
Dieter Vandenberk, Remco Marcus,  
Jan Teuwen

## Photos

Eiffage Métal, Rhode PhotoMedia,  
BOU Media

## Design

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Drukkerij Gewa



# Ambitious together

Ambitions are there to be accomplished with expertise, common sense and hard work. The fact that we are all committed to this has again been demonstrated in recent months. You are sure to read more about the different activities in this Passion.

The market situation also gives us perspective. We had the honour of attending the European Summit, where eight countries expressed their towering ambition to make the North Sea the powerhouse of Europe. This proves that there will be plenty to do in the coming years in the offshore wind industry. The efforts to position ourselves in the civil market are bearing fruits. Quite possibly we will be building very large bridges in the Netherlands.

Current projects are on schedule, always according to the requested quality and within the predetermined budget. Where necessary, we can move up a gear. Projects at our Belgian sites are going well. In Hoboken and Balen, we see that the investment in painting capacity is paying off. In Poland, in addition to their traditional work, the colleagues are also managing a pop-up yard to make internal cages in Szczecin. We also partially paint our secondary steel in Niemodlin. In Newcastle, our new shop is in full operation - we still have to get rid of some teething problems if we want to produce 6 foundations with transition pieces (TPs) a week. In Fos-sur-Mer, our first floaters or floating foundations were launched. Since January, Vlissingen has again given us a truly Dutch branch. We will primarily assemble our substations here, although the site offers potential to build very

large projects. The challenge for Vlissingen is to find additional systems experts, such as electromechanical engineers. If you know someone within your network, be sure to let HR know.

In parallel with the above activities, we are seeking and finding our way in the HVDC market. We are finalising arrangements to start building the giant converter stations with partners. We are also making our mark in the United States with like-minded companies. We are working together on 5 wind farms there. For the next orders, we can almost sign the contracts.

Finally, our safety ambition is not diminishing either. Working together on safety pays off. Just take a look at Hoboken, where numbers are clearly improving by creating more awareness. This is not to say that the other branches are not doing a good job. We will have to work on the safety culture ladder, but our people are fully committed to this.

Enjoy the summer!

On behalf of the entire management,

Raf Iemants,  
Managing Director Smulders





News

Smulders sports for charity

For the past few months, Smulders employees have been exercising for charity, raising a whopping €10,000 for the Polish Red Cross.

Early April we launched the Smulders Sports for Charity app. By entering their favourite sports activities in the app, our colleagues collected points and together they completed the 10,000 km (virtual) course along all Smulders branches.

Swimming, cycling, horse riding... Our colleagues gave it their best in the last 3 months! Their efforts were rewarded as we reached the finish line at the end of June. As a result, Smulders will donate €10,000 to the Polish Red Cross.

The Eiffage Fondation doubled our donation which means an additional €10,000 will be donated to the Polish Red Cross!

Our donation will allow the Polish Red Cross to provide all kinds of assistance to Ukrainian refugees in Poland. This includes Polish language courses, after-school activities for children, provision of psychologists and translators to help refugees prepare all kinds of documents to find work...



Additional financial support for Turkey and Syria

Heavy earthquakes hit parts of Turkey and Syria on 6 February. In total, more than 20 million people were affected.

Smulders set up several campaigns to raise money for the victims. Following the initiative of our colleague Ercan, colleagues in Arendonk were treated to simit, a typical Turkish bread. For each colleague, €5 went to the aid organisation AHBAP.

We also encouraged our colleagues to support one of the many aid organisations. Together, they donated €10,000! Smulders decided to increase this amount by €30,000.

Theme



Welcome to the family: Smulders Projects Netherlands

Smulders Projects Netherlands

- **Location:** Port of Vlissingen
- **Surface area:** 31,540 m²
- **Investments:**
  - Construction of a new quay
  - Refurbishment of existing production hall 7
  - Construction of blasting and spraying hall
  - Option on plot for port facility

Smulders’ latest acquisition is in the port of Vlissingen. In early 2023, we acquired a site from Hillebrand ASK Romein with the intention of setting up a permanent production site to create a base of operations in the Netherlands. At this strategic location, we are going to assemble bridges, as well as substations and their jacket foundations. This waterfront site offers plenty of potential to realise our further growth ambitions.





Following the purchase, an investment plan was immediately drawn up to make the site future-proof. Because the markets and projects we have in mind require a “sea of space”. The day-to-day management of Smulders Projects Netherlands is in the hands of our colleague Pascal Van Gucht.

Pascal Van Gucht,  
Director Smulders Projects Netherlands

**“Smulders Projects Netherlands gives new impetus to our high ambitions and pioneering role in the energy transition.”**



#### Central base of operations

Vlissingen is the perfect base to e.g. further develop our offshore activities. We operate in European waters and this new yard is very centrally located, with good accessibility for our manufacturing and supplying companies in the hinterland, while contributing to our sustainability ambition to minimise transport.

Pascal Van Gucht: “The purchase is still very recent, and yet we are already running at full speed with the implementation of projects and redevelopment of the site and halls. The structures we are building today include AC substations (alternating current), modules weighing 5,000 to 6,000 tonnes. In the future, we are looking at the DC market (direct current), and then we are talking about modules of 25,000 to 30,000 tonnes. Assembly and load outs require a lot of space, so it is a real opportunity that this site came our way.”

#### Let's get to work

Now it is a matter of making the site ready for construction. Key works on the planning:

- We are building a new quay, which will give us direct access to the North Sea, with a draft of up to 11 m for large installation vessels / barges. We are aiming for mid-2024 to finalise the quay.
- The existing production hall 7 was once built by its former owner, Scheepswerf de Donge, and was intended for ship renovation. The floor still has a sloping surface which should be levelled before we can get a shop floor at the same level along its entire length.
- In Q3-4 2023, we also plan to expand one of the existing smaller halls into a blasting and spraying hall, as these facilities are still missing from the site.
- Moreover, we have taken an option on an adjacent 9-ha plot from North Sea Ports (long lease). That

extra space would be quite convenient at a later stage for finishing modules and jackets. The timing of commissioning this site will also depend on obtaining the required environmental and zoning permits. At least part of it is already being used to stock material.

Besides the large production hall, smaller assembly and production areas are already in use for offshore projects. Until the construction holiday starts, we make sea fastening structural steel there. After the summer holidays, we will assemble the IJburg bridges at the site: 6 bridges for which the components are produced at our sites in Balen and Arendonk. After production, those parts come to Vlissingen for assembly, and are then delivered via water as 1 unit.

**“After production, parts come to Vlissingen for assembly, and are then delivered via water as 1 unit.”**



### Capacities for 2023 filled

Pascal Van Gucht: "Current activities are not just limited to getting the site ready. Our capacity for 2023 is completely filled with projects. Besides the IJburg bridges, in Vlissingen we are also assembling the jacket for the Hollandse Kust (west Bèta) offshore wind farm on behalf of TenneT.

The parts are in full production and the first ones have already been delivered in Vlissingen. If all goes according to plan, from October/November we will be able to help build the Ostwind 3 offshore high-voltage substation - a joint venture (JV) project between Smulders, HSM Offshore Energy and Iv-Offshore & Energy for German grid operator 50Hertz. Meanwhile, our local team is also making transport frames for the He Dreiht TPs. Together with Sif, we manufacture

64 TPs with a total weight of 36.3 Ktonnes for this offshore wind project. Continue: Hillebrand ASK Romein still had a series of projects underway at the time of their bankruptcy. Although we have not taken over these projects, we are indeed facilitating their further completion in the production halls."

Not just the production department is playing a role in Vlissingen. Smulders Projects Netherlands is a fully organised yard, with all support departments such as HR, finance, administration, safety and quality. And that takes manpower.



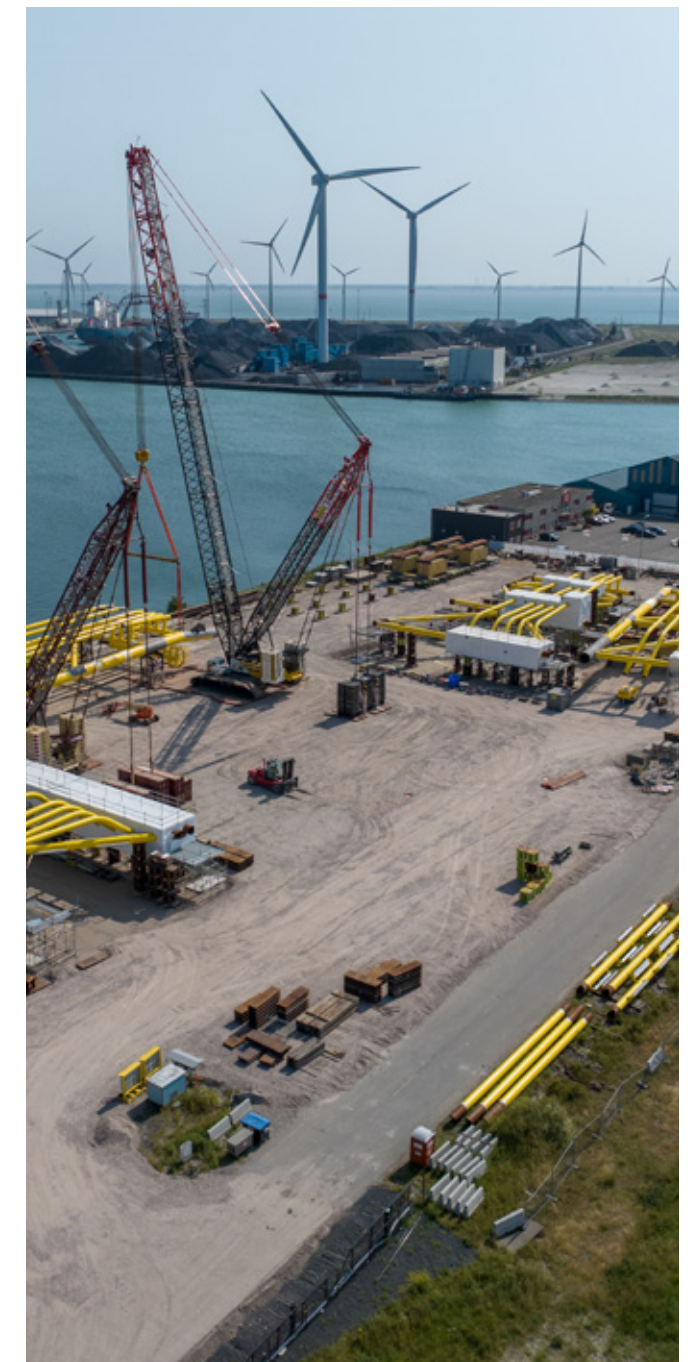
### People & synergy

Pascal Van Gucht: "Those colleagues are already there. In taking over the assets, we also wanted to keep as many Hillebrand ASK Romein employees on board as possible. They were recently given the opportunity to join us. Today we can say that we have 62 new colleagues, and we are very happy about that. Their expertise will come in handy to build the yard together. We are in the phase of synergy creation. This means that in addition to the urgency of making the site operational as soon as possible and filling future production capacity, we are also looking for unity. Both in terms of systems, processes, philosophy and values, we are trying to match the business operations and culture with those of Smulders. Today, our team of about 60 employees is sufficient to carry out the planned activities, but after the summer we need to scale up to over 100 or more colleagues depending on the bridges on the planning. Initially, we will carry this out with hired staff together with subcontractors we have already worked with in the past and whose expertise we can use. However, the intention is to attract people locally and deploy them to our production site. If we are going to build larger substations, then it is time for more resources. I am thinking of over 300 people who will be working on the site by 2024. We will have to find additional colleagues in electromechanics, for example."

**"Today we have 62 new colleagues, and we are very happy about that. Their expertise will come in handy to build the yard together. We are in a phase of creating synergy."**

Tenders and engineering are not carried out locally; this takes place in Arendonk. However, project managers are currently assigned to ongoing projects across the whole group to get to know our working methods.

Pascal Van Gucht: "It's 2-way communication. On the one hand, we bring people from Arendonk, Balen and Hoboken to Vlissingen and, on the other, we think it is important that our new colleagues also visit the other branches to gain as much knowledge as possible and feel the group identity."





### Sustainability & safety

What applies to our other sites also applies here: safety is top priority. And everything we do must be done as sustainably as possible.

Pascal Van Gucht: "Planning and investing is one thing, but in the meantime we are also up and running and we want to keep it safe. Fully in line with the prevailing mentality within the entire group. QHSE guidelines are also seeping through here. We want to set up awareness campaigns and take the time to get everyone on board with the safety story. That is a must. When it comes to sustainability, we can help pursue group ambitions, but we need to take extra account of what is possible in the Netherlands in terms of permits and the environment. It is starting almost from scratch, with a proper preliminary study to investigate what interventions we can do in the long term to keep nitrogen emissions manageable. Electric control of appliances, whether to use specific fuels or not... the study will tell. Work in progress. Our location is a big advantage in minimising transports from the hinterland to the site, also because our production units are grouped together. And after assembling the components, structures as a whole can be quickly transported via water."



### Perspective

The fact is that a bunch of projects are in the pipeline, and job security in the sector and for the people here is guaranteed. "When I look at the investments we have made as a group in the past and the expertise we have built up in the wind energy sector, those efforts are now paying off. This is also the reason why we can expand so much. There is a lot of perspective. Smulders Projects Netherlands gives a new impetus to our high ambitions and pioneering role in the energy transition. We can move quite quickly by bringing activities here and ensuring continuity. I myself will stay for some time, I would like to make a long-term contribution, together with the colleagues here. Teamwork is our guarantee of success."

For information: Branding is also being worked on, both in terms of clothing and marketing materials for our Dutch branch. For now, we want to give a warm welcome to our new colleagues. ■





## My job, my passion

### Interview with Tessa Van Goethem Production Administrator



**An extremely interesting position with a unique company. It happened to colleague Tessa Van Goethem when she joined Smulders Projects in Hoboken (SPB). She could have never imagined back in the days when she'd hang around the neighbourhood as child, playing near that site with big gantry crane. Today, she is proud to be part of this multicultural and family team as Production Administrator. Here is something about the missing link, and about being fit in your body and job.**

## Fit in body & job

### How did SPB come your way?

"I grew up across the street, I experienced the work of the workers up close. That was intriguing, but with my degree in Tourism, I had other plans. After finishing school, I started working directly at the airport and worked there until the pandemic. Then it was time for a more steady job, preferably flexible and closer to home. I saw the call for administrative profiles. And that's how I came on board in 2020."

### How would you describe your role?

"A Production Administrator is in charge of production administration. I am the right hand of the production team – of supervisors, team leaders, managers and quality inspectors. The idea is for me and my other fellow administrator to take over the administrative work from them so that they can be more present on the shop floor. We are also the link between HR/doc control and production, checking that working hours are correct and have been batched on the right project. The job has not been around for long. It was created because the production team needed more support."

### What does an average working day look like for you?

"At 7.30 am my working day starts, although I get to choose what time I start. As a first task, I check the workmen's hours from the previous day and, if necessary, request corrections from HR. Furthermore, I review plenty of documentation for the quality inspectors. In between, someone often stops by to have other production-related matters taken care of. The requests are very diverse. Organising a team building, for example, or gathering the right sizes for new coats, making sure workers get the right training, rectifying matters... whatever it is, I search and collect the right info wherever it can be found. And this every day."

### What do you like most about your job?

"SPB is a big production site, there is a lot to do. Different cultures, to start with, and that makes it so very fascinating. I was used to switching between languages at the airport, here you can do the same. As a woman among many men, wearing safety shoes and long trousers, that still feels special. In the beginning I had to find my place, but I get 100% appreciation and respect. The job content is so varied that I know a lot of people. And as diverse as our employee group is, it feels like a close-knit family. Surely this is typical Smulders. I enjoy coming to work because of the cool atmosphere there, and of course for the job content.... You see and hear about many of the parts, you get better at knowing when something is ready or not, it definitely boosts your knowledge and understanding."

### Who is Tessa when she is not working at SPB?

"I am the proud mum of 2 young sons. They are my world, we have a good life together. It is quite busy though, so not much time left for hobbies. Whenever I can, I go running. That is the result of childhood years on football with advanced running training. Football I left behind, running remained."

### How often, how much?

"I am not that fast, but I try to be a regular runner. Running is my passion and I need goals, like the Antwerp 10 Miles. I participated twice already and even improved my time this year! My next goal is the half marathon in Antwerpen in October. When the kids are not with me, I aim for 3x a week and a stretch of more than 10 km. Into the forest and yes, towards SPB, see the TPs and back. That is my route, so work is always close by and that is perfect. Sometimes the kids cycle along, that way we exercise together."

### How important is physical fitness for you?

"When you are a bit fitter, things often go better. Having to run to your office on yet another floor without a lift, it helps if your fitness level is up to scratch. Being fit also contributes to mental well-being. By walking, you can clear your head so that you can give it your all in your job again the next day."

### What will the future bring?

"Probably more running competitions, and lots of fun at SPB. I can see me working within the company for years to come, there are bright prospects." ■



## Projects

### Civil & Industry

#### Leverkusen



We have a lot of bridge projects in progress and in the pipeline. An overview is presented below.

The final phase of the A1 Rheinbrücke Leverkusen is approaching, a new bridge with one part over land and one part over water. Today, about 95% is produced in Arendonk en Balen. Final delivery is scheduled for July 2023. After the opening of the 1,068 m bridge, the old Rhine Bridge will be demolished and a new one will take its place. The bridge is expected to open to traffic in December 2023.

- **Customer:** Temporary Company (ArGe) SEH Engineering, Eiffage Métal, Max Bögl, Hochtief and lemans
- **End client:** Die Autobahn GmbH Des Bundes NL Rheinland – Außenstelle Cologne
- **Weight:** 3.425 tonnes scope Smulders, total weight 16,000 tonnes
- **Scope:** production and delivery in Leverkusen

#### Darmstadt

The modern bridge complex (4 bridges) at the intersection of the A5 and A67 motorways at Darmstädter Kreuz is taking shape. Today, 3 bridges were installed, with the first one commissioned and the second one that will be ready for use in November 2023. The latest bridge is in production in Arendonk: the first sections will be delivered from early August 2023 and we expect bridge 4 to be completed by June 2024.

- **Customer:** Eiffage Infra Süd-West
- **End client:** Autobahn
- **Weight:** approx. 5,150 tonnes
- **Scope:** manufacturing and installation 4 bridges



#### Henneaulaan

At Hector Henneaulaan, we complete the installation of the new bridges over the Ring Road in Zaventem. To avoid creating long-term disturbances and ensure traffic flow, we chose to adopt a phased approach with 2 bridges. The first bridge was built in Hoboken and successfully installed in June 2022, while the second bridge was made in Arendonk and installed in June 2023. So today, the unique Corten steel bridges are a reality.

- **Partner:** Joint Venture Besix (foundations, concrete works) and Smulders (steel production, installation)
- **End client:** DWV
- **Weight:** approx. 2,250 tonnes
- **Scope:** manufacturing and installation 2 bridges

#### Clyde Crossing



Smulders is helping to build a grand double, movable bridge over the Clyde. It will link the north and south banks of the river between the city of Renfrew and Yoker western district of Glasgow (Scotland). Production is in full swing. From the 3rd quarter, the assembly will take place in Flushing, with load-out scheduled for March 2024, delivery for July 2024.

- **Customer:** John Graham Construction Limited (JGCL)
- **End client:** Rivier Clyde, Renfrewshire, Scotland
- **Weight:** 2,200 tons
- **Scope:** mechanical, electrical, instrumentation, control, automation
- **Activities:** design, production, installation, testing, commissioning

#### IJburg bridges

This project concerns 6 bridges to the yet-to-be-constructed extension of the IJburg district in Amsterdam. Both sets of 3 bridges consist of a bicycle and pedestrian bridge, a tram bridge and a car bridge. At the construction site, work has begun on site layout. Engineering is in full swing and initial calculations have been shared with the customer. The subcontracting of substantial parts – such as main steel and transport – is in its final stages.



#### Last module for Borealis assembled

On 14 May, the last module (430 tonnes) for the Borealis Antco Semicon project in Zwijndrecht (Antwerp) was assembled.

The nearly 70 m high production tower will be visible from miles away. Again, a clever piece of work.



- **Customer:** Mobilis
- **End client:** Municipality of Amsterdam
- **Weight:** approx. 600 tonnes each (excluding road surface concrete)
- **Scope:** preparation of seawall calculations, development of drawings into workshop drawings, delivery and processing of steel and bearings, coating, transport to and installation in Amsterdam – 6 bridges



## Projects

### Offshore Wind



#### Load out of first TPs for the EnBW He Dreiht project

In early May, the first TPs for the EnBW He Dreiht project were transported from our Hoboken yard to Newcastle.

In Hoboken, all internal items are welded in the TP, after which they are shipped in seaworthy condition to Newcastle for further finishing: outer welding of all items, coating and final assembly of the entire TP.

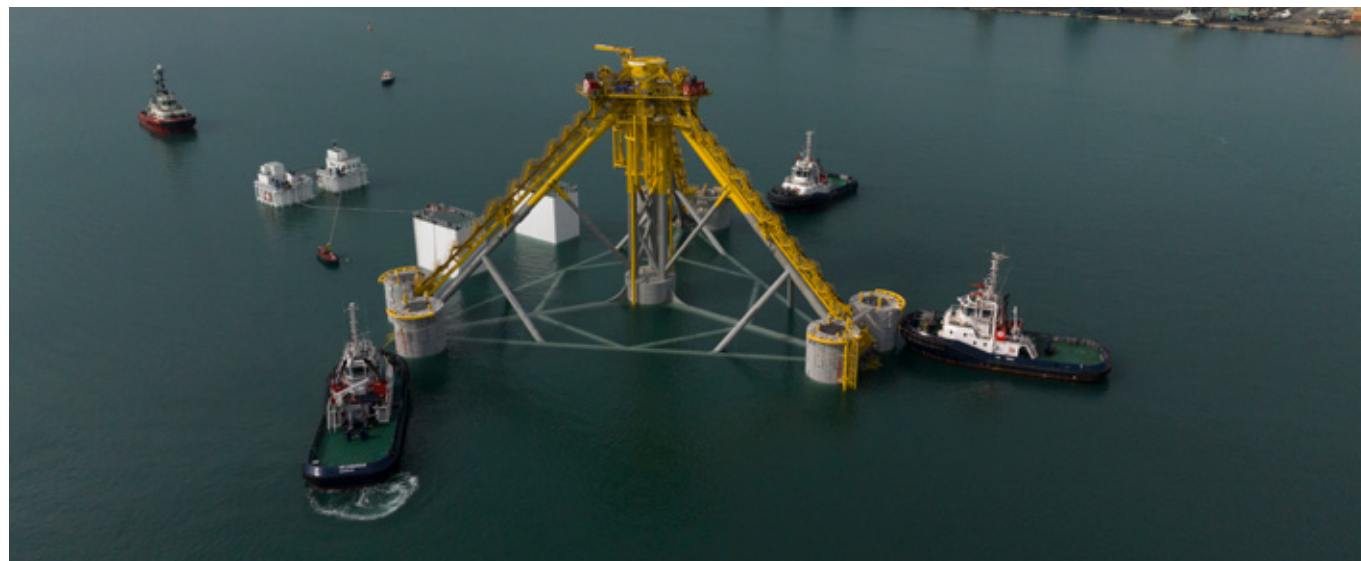
#### Load out of first floating foundations

The loads out of the floating foundations for the Provence Grand Large project took place in Fos-sur-Mer in May.

The 3 floating foundations, built at Eiffage Métal's yard in Fos-sur-Mer, have 2 underwater buoys at the ends and in between an innovative anchoring system.

The foundations are 45 m high and will support wind turbines capable of producing 8.4 MW.

Did you know? The colour difference (yellow-grey) of the foundations marks the waterline. The floating foundations of the PGL project will be submerged up to -35 m.



*Hollandse Kust (west Alpha) substation*

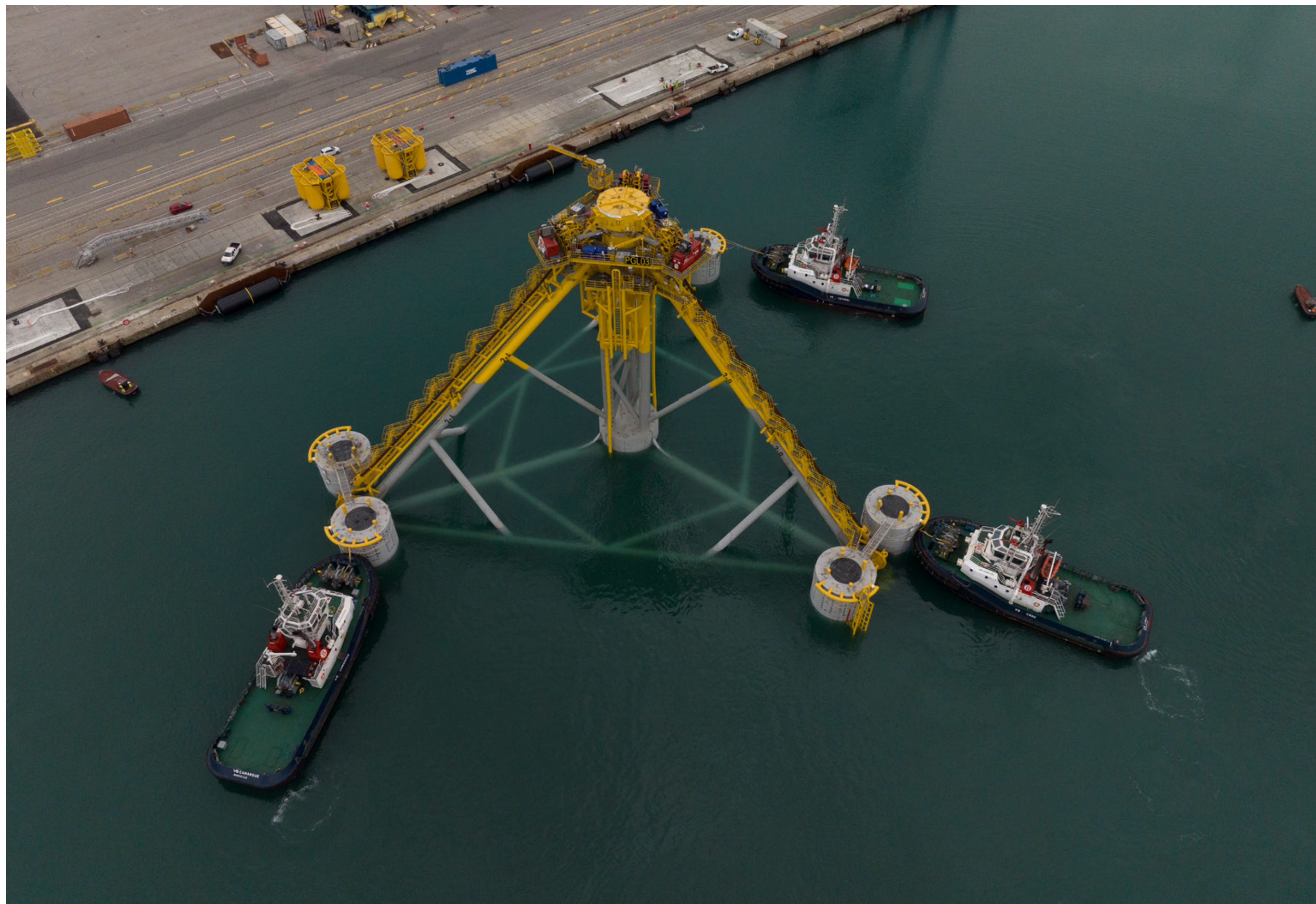
#### No less than 8 substations in production and order book!

At our Newcastle facility, we are currently building the 2 OTMs for Moray West. Later this year, we will also start production of the Inch Cape OTM and jacket.

In Hoboken, we are working on the substations for Hollandse Kust (west Alpha) and (west Beta). The jacket for the Hollandse Kust (west Beta) substation is being assembled at our new yard in Vlissingen.

Together with HSM Offshore Energy and Iv-Offshore & Energy, we will build the substations, including jackets, for Gennaker 1 (West), Gennaker 2 (East) and Ostwind 3 offshore wind farms – on behalf of 50Hertz.







## Quality, Health, Safety & Environment

# The good safety example

### Interview with: Kajetan Mrzyglod & Mark De Bruyn

Supervisor External Transport &  
HSE Manager @ Smulders Projects

**In this Passion, we are happy to let Kajetan Mrzyglod, Supervisor External Transport at Smulders Projects in Hoboken, take the floor. Our Director QHSE Carla Wellens saw him address his team with passion during a safety awareness meeting. More so... saw him 'connect' to encourage safe working. He makes employees aware of their own contribution and gives meaningful practical examples to go with the theory. That's enough for the introduction, here is Kajetan himself**

#### What does a safety culture mean for you?

"You are only as strong as the weakest link. We want to avoid lack of focus, inattention... incidents. That is why we need to engage our people with more interaction. Toolbox meetings are not always the perfect way because they are too informal in the workplace and it becomes just another routine. Listen, sign and back to work. We wanted to take a different approach to create more impact."

#### A safety gear up, you mean. How do you guys do that?

"We pull our people away from the yard and sit together in a conference room for about an hour and a half so they understand the urgency. With sweet rolls, but still. There is a presentation and they get a bundle to guide our group discussion. You have to start somewhere. The ultimate goal is for them to come up with their own themes regarding everyday safety and safety problems. On the basis of a logbook, this works out quite well. We give examples, they get to make suggestions, they ask questions and we answer them together. I see that listening works. Team members are heard and respected. This gives confidence."



#### What are the meetings about?

"Various topics from their production environment. The bundle also contains inspiring exercises, such as looking around a clean yard and finding mistakes on a picture. Furthermore, about abbreviations, procedures, human error, the safety culture ladder, self-awareness, supported with videos and pictures where possible. They learn that when an unsafe situation occurs, they have the right to stop the job. That talking to each other helps."

#### What did your breath of fresh air achieve so far?

"We have had 2 sessions and another one is planned. The team's input will be even greater, because we have asked 2 colleagues to contribute an idea. We feel that this approach works better now than when rules are simply imposed top-down. We speak in their own language where possible, within our group that is Polish. That too lowers the threshold. For us, these first meetings are about raising awareness and trust. First awareness, then we can proceed to actions with areas for improvement. We want more of that."

Tips from Kajetan for other teams:

- Every department benefits from this approach, all our work is dangerous
- Limit your meeting to 15 people for optimal interaction
- Listen and let the team speak ■

**"Communication does not automatically mean dialogue and we need dialogue among all colleagues to learn from practical experience in the workplace. That dialogue is essential to improve our safety culture."** - Mark De Bruyn

#### Any suggestions for improvement?

[veiligheidscultuurladder@smulders.com](mailto:veiligheidscultuurladder@smulders.com)

## Sustainability

# Change is coming

Interview with Tim Balcaen, QHSE Manager

**Smulders' sustainable journey has been ongoing for many years. We research, invest, launch initiatives, capture data and report on them in our sustainability report. On the one hand, to play a major role in the value chain, with a positive impact on the environment and society. On the other hand, because regulations are getting stricter. Let's see what lies ahead.**

#### Fit for 55

Tim Balcaen: "There is the EU Green Deal, a collection of actions aimed at countering climate change. The ambitions: a 55% reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions – compared to the 1990 levels – by 2030, in order to be climate neutral by 2050. That's not new. Now, the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) came into force in early 2023, as part of measures that aim to direct financial resources in the EU towards sustainable activities. Requiring companies to report more transparently on environmental, social and human resources issues. Good governance should enable consumers

and other stakeholders to make the right choices, counteract greenwashing and make investments more sustainable. Greenwashing means that companies pretend to be greener than they actually are, while they receive government funding for their investments. The idea is to monitor those funds more strictly, including by means of new laws. The 'Fit for 55' package of actions within the EU Green Deal is one example. It is about the financial side, as you can see from the yellow dots on the figure."

#### 2 striking changes:

- Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism – from October 2023, companies will pay for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and, if we buy steel outside the EU, we will also have to pay at the external border for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions derived from non-European manufacturing. This is to neutralise price competition and green the EU economy.
- Emissions Trading System – CO<sub>2</sub> tax on emissions will be extended to individuals from 2027. Everyone will pay a CO<sub>2</sub> tax on personal emissions. An example: if you fill up your car, you'll pay an extra cost. The same goes for your gas boiler bill. Maybe you should start thinking about an electric car, a charging station or a heat pump.

Tim Balcaen: "We are studying the impact of the new legislation and we are adjusting our reporting. By 2024, our sustainability report will be CSRD compliant. We have come a long way, the packaging needs some fine-tuning. Furthermore, we are shifting up a gear in terms of renewable energy. Over the next 3 years, we will fill all suitable roofs of our sites with solar panels. We will also install batteries. Come and see." ■



**Sustainability  
takes forever.  
And that's the  
point.**



## Young talent

# A drive to excel

Interview with

**Krzysztof Piotrowski**

Welding Process Coordinator

Constantly think about how you could be doing things better, and keep questioning yourself – a quote from Elon Musk, but also the philosophy of our colleague Krzysztof Piotrowski. He currently is Welding process coordinator at Spomasz, but he has already a varied career path behind him. The hunger for knowledge and optimisation drives him forward. It is nice to meet this talented and ambitious guy.



**“Welding works are very enriching. It brings all technical disciplines together. There is a scientific side to it and also involves mathematics. And so my work feels like my hobby.”**

### How did it start for you in our group of companies?

“In 2014, I started as a production assistant after a recommendation. I was excited straight away, as it was my dream to develop myself in the service of a global industrial player in the sector. Where standards are high and engineering makes the difference. This is my area of expertise. As a student, I was already working as a maintenance technician. I have earned several engineering degrees and maybe I’ll get a PhD. At Smulders I have had the opportunity to do several jobs in the meantime, the best way to learn. From production worker, machines operator to documentation specialist and calculator. Diversity has been the tenor of my career path so far, and each stage has made me grow.”

### Why does welding fascinate you so much?

“It’s such an enriching world. It brings all technical disciplines together. There’s a scientific side to it and also involves mathematics. And so my work feels like my hobby. The passion for (welding) engineering has always been in me, as well as a strong interest in innovative technology. On that front, I follow all the trends, I read about it, I educate myself permanently and I try to put that knowledge to good use.”

### How does that reflect in your job?

“Today I monitor the production quality and welding processes in Zary and Łknica, as well as the progression and training of new employees. I am also responsible for optimising our welding technology with new solutions. For instance, automation by means of cobots (collaborative robots). I have a programming background and it comes in handy now. I spend much of the day developing welding plans and preparing documentation. And I also advise colleagues on projects in the tender stage, in view of adjustments, execution and production planning.”

### What do you like most about your work?

“The fact that I contribute to engineering excellence. That my job is a mix of production and office work. The sense of trust that is really tangible here. Delivering strong projects based on expertise. And there are so many other reasons: the chance to study all welding processes from the inside, being at the forefront of technology, teamwork, the communication and sharing of information with other technical departments within our company. I am learning every day and I am also proud that I get to write the robotic programming for our production sites.”

### How do you make the difference?

“Where others sometimes stop or are afraid to take the next step, I rise to the challenge. What I mean is, I tap into less familiar topics. I am not afraid of change, I open myself up to special things. Production, for example, I always try to look at it from a less traditional perspective. Technical drawings no longer hold any secrets for me, I can immediately see which welding type fits best. I have a drive to excel inside, and I also try to achieve the best results with creativity. I am developing myself for the growth of our company, and I cherish the ambition to get into welding management. There is always room for improvement.”

And for those wondering if Krzysztof also has free time: he does, although he likes to immerse himself in scientific literature, welding techniques, electronics and audio technology. A busy bee and a vessel of knowledge. ■

### Krzysztof's working day:

- Start-up: check emails, view daily schedule, handle priority tasks – no question goes unanswered
- Production tour: onsite tour and inspection of some process-critical points
- Preparation of as-built documentation showing exactly how a structure was built, including modifications and additions
- Checking the welding cards
- Resolving any production issues
- Urgent matters: like last-minute 700-page documentation review – nothing too much, I am flexible towards colleagues, they can count on me



**Don't  
shrug off  
safety**