Cammell Laird completes first year of second RFA cluster term

Merseyside shipyard and engineering services company Cammell Laird has completed the first year of the second five-year period of its cluster contract with the RFA, it was reported in mid-July.

Cammell Laird CEO John Syvret said the first anniversary marked a period of significant progress and added that the company would now be redoubling its efforts to deliver the best possible service to the RFA. He emphasized that the RFA contract plays a key role in the company’s rapid growth in the commercial marine, offshore wind and civil nuclear markets. He said that the stringent health and safety, project management and quality requirements demanded by the MoD helped significantly in other markets.

Work began in summer 2013 on the second period of Cammell Laird’s through-life support cluster contract to maintain nine of the 13 ships in the RFA flotilla. The cluster contract was first awarded to Cammell Laird in 2008, then in 2013 following reviews of performance and value for money, the contract was extended for a further five years to 2018.

“The last year has seen us complete three major refits and start two more,” said Syvret. “The successful delivery of the three refits, to the Ministry of Defence’s satisfaction, reinforces the value of clustering. We have further continued to deliver the global reach element of the contract helping maintain the vessels wherever and whenever they need it. The cluster agreement is Cammell Laird’s biggest single contract and is enabling the company to invest in our world class facilities and workforce. We have spent more than £35million on training. We now have one of the biggest apprenticeship programmes in the British maritime sector with 115 talented young people either in training or who have graduated into the company. Cammell Laird will continue to do all in its power to continue to meet the RFA’s standards and expectations.

“I would like to emphasize the breadth and calibre of engineering work being undertaken for the RFA. This is a complex and hugely demanding contract and it showcases the exceptional expertise, skills and facilities we have at Cammell Laird.”

Cammell Laird managing director Linton Roberts said the three major refits completed in the last 12 months were of RFAs Fort Rosalie, Gold Rover and Wave Ruler. The value of the three refits was in the region of £41million and they employed 200 people directly and indirectly. He said the company is also
well underway with its biggest ever refit for the RFA to date, the year-long overhaul of *Fort Victoria* in Birkenhead, which is employing more than 200 workers and sub-contractors.

Roberts said over the last year that Cammell Laird had undertaken 14 assisted maintenance periods (AMPs) as part of the global reach element to the contract on seven ships in the UK, UAE, Bahrain, South Africa, the Caribbean and the United States.

Cammell Laird has further provided more than 1173 spares’ requests in the last year. In addition Cammell Laird has provided 195 design support tasks worth £2.1million, which brought the total number of design tasks to 1,524, since 2008, at a value of £10.2million.

**RFA Fort Rosalie, RFA Gold Rover and RFA Wave Ruler and Fort Victoria main works:**

**RFA Fort Rosalie**

**RFA Gold Rover**

**RFA Wave Ruler**
Grit blasting and coating of water ballast tanks, installation of new sewage treatment plant. Upgrade of integrated platform management system. Upgrade of fire detection system. New ballast water treatment system design and installation. New eight zone water mist system for selected machinery items.

**RFA Fort Victoria**
Accommodation uplift; the replacement of six diesel generators; overhauling the engine and main propulsion systems and steering systems; installation of two ballast water treatment and reverse osmosis plants; replacing two sewage treatment plants and fire detection system; new incinerator; upgrading all crane ammunition handling equipment. Meanwhile extensive general dry-docking works will be undertaken.
The RFA Through Life Support cluster contract provides engineering support to the RFA flotilla and included capability insertion allowing the ships to be fully integrated with the Royal Navy. The cluster contract is Cammell Laird’s biggest single contract. It is reviewed every five years based on performance and value for money. The contract was extended in June 2013 for a further five years to 2018.

The nine ships entrusted to Cammell Laird are fleet tankers Gold Rover, Black Rover, Wave Knight and Wave Ruler, support tanker Orangeleaf, stores ships Fort Austin and Fort Rosalie, Fleet replenishment ship Fort Victoria and forward repair ship Diligence.

The global reach element to the contract also sees Cammell Laird deliver extensive support to the fleet around the world.

Cammell Laird’s business is in the centre of a marine cluster, with direct access to many support services. It has a 120 acre site with four dry docks, a large modular construction hall and extensive covered workshops. The company specialises in military ship refit, commercial ship repair, upgrade and conversion and heavy fabrication and engineering. It deals with a wide variety of projects ranging from specialist offshore conversions and fabrication, commercial ship-repair through to the refit and upgrade of highly complex naval auxiliaries. It has also recently re-entered the shipbuilding market.

The business is further active in the energy sector for it has become a hub of the off shore wind industry and it is offering its facilities and highly trained workforce of engineers for work in the civil nuclear sector and the off shore oil and gas sector.

Picture captions

*RFA Fort Victoria in Cammell Laird's Birkenhead yard.*

*Aerial photograph of the shipyard with RFA and commercial vessels.*

*Latest apprentice intake with RFA Fort Rosalie.*