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Service resources will be critical to the success of ballast water treatment systems

As the deadlines for choosing a ballast water treatment system draw closer, more ship owners are realizing the long-term implications of this one-time investment. Beyond the choice of technology, supplier service capabilities are coming into focus.

Before ballast water regulations entered into force, the discussion on the market centred largely on the differences between treatment methods. Today, however, a growing share of it focuses on the differences between suppliers. Given that ballast water treatment systems should comply throughout the vessel lifetime, ship owners are concerned about supplier stability and technical support down the road, especially when it comes to accessing parts.

A supplier's continued existence and ability to provide parts, however, is not enough to guarantee a smoothly functioning ballast water treatment system. For customers to feel secure in their choice, they must also know that services and knowledge resources will be widely available to keep their system compliant.

"Service is at least as important for our choice of ballast water treatment system as the technology itself," says Per Tunell, Chief Operating Officer at Wallenius Marine. "We need to be certain that the supplier we buy from is going to be able to support us in the future."

Global resources for a global need

It is important to remember that the installations performed in the next few years are only a starting point. Given the size of the world's fleet, there will soon be a significant number of ballast water treatment systems in operation. This places obligations on the system suppliers, who must be prepared for their support.

"Providing the support customers expect and require will take much more than a handful of

field service engineers globally,” says Carl Kesselmark, Service Development Manager for Alfa Laval PureBallast. “That makes it important to look beyond the coming wave of retrofits and consider their service future today. Our customers’ reputations and revenue depend on their ability to keep their own promises, so we need to safeguard their compliance in the long term. Fines, delays and related costs are unacceptable outcomes.”

As Kesselmark points out, Alfa Laval has done much to reinforce its already strong global service network. “In the past year, we’ve trained even more of our 500 field service engineers to work with PureBallast, and we’ve added dedicated PureBallast engineers to handle individual regions,” he says. “Worldwide, Alfa Laval has around 100 service engineers who can provide service for PureBallast, plus a nearly dozen-strong team in Sweden and China that supports our engineers and customers 24/7. The numbers will continue to grow, along with the already deep knowledge in our 26 sales companies.”

Packaged services for convenience and economy

Just as important as having service resources, says Kesselmark, is making it easy for customers to take advantage of them. Here as well, Alfa Laval is ahead of the curve. The company has clearly packaged its PureBallast service offering, with the result that many PureBallast customers choose to sign service agreements at the time of purchase.

“The Alfa Laval 360° Service Portfolio contains a wide range of services that can keep PureBallast systems running at their best,” says Kesselmark. “But it’s more convenient and economical for customers when they can choose a package that meets their needs as the basis for a service agreement. Our Compliance Service Package, for example, includes calibration and everything needed to verify that PureBallast is functioning according to its type approval. Legislative compliance and the protection of our marine environment is the whole reason for purchasing a system, so keeping it running and in compliance is our constant focus.”

Having clearly defined service options on the table, says Kesselmark, shows that Alfa Laval knows their importance to long-term success. “We present our services along with our PureBallast systems, because it’s not just systems that customers are choosing,” he says. “They’re choosing a supplier to work with throughout the lifetime of their vessel, and we want them to know that we have the commitment it takes.”

To learn more about Alfa Laval PureBallast 3.1 and Alfa Laval's approach to ballast water treatment, visit www.alfalaval.com/pureballast

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Editor's notes

About Alfa Laval PureBallast

PureBallast, which was the first commercially available ballast water treatment system, is a chemical-free system sold and serviced by Alfa Laval. A vital component of the system is the Enhanced UV Reactor, which was developed jointly by Alfa Laval and Wallenius Water based on Wallenius Water Technology.

About Alfa Laval

Alfa Laval is a leading global provider of specialized products and engineering solutions based on its key technologies of heat transfer, separation and fluid handling.

The company's equipment, systems and services are dedicated to assisting customers in optimizing the performance of their processes. The solutions help them to heat, cool, separate and transport products in industries that produce food and beverages, chemicals and petrochemicals, pharmaceuticals, starch, sugar and ethanol.

Alfa Laval's products are also used in power plants, aboard ships, oil and gas exploration, in the mechanical engineering industry, in the mining industry and for wastewater treatment, as well as for comfort climate and refrigeration applications.

Alfa Laval's worldwide organization works closely with customers in nearly 100 countries to help them stay ahead in the global arena. Alfa Laval's worldwide organization works closely with customers in nearly 100 countries to help them stay ahead in the global arena. Alfa Laval is listed on Nasdaq OMX, and, in 2016, posted annual sales of about SEK 35.6 billion (approx. 3.77 billion Euros). The company has about 17 000 employees.

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