

North East firm launches 'world's first' automated offshore wind vessel charging technology

A North East marine engineering company has launched what it says is a "world first" technology that will allow offshore wind farm support vessels to charge directly from wind turbines.

Stockton's MJR Power and Automation presented the ground-breaking charging system to the global maritime industry at the recent Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition (CMDC) Final Showcase in Portsmouth.

The firm's innovation is one of the flagship projects to come out of the competition which has distributed £23m of research and development funding to 55 projects across the UK to support the design and development of zero-emission shipping technologies and greener ports.

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Billed as the "world's first fully automated offshore wind vessel charging system", MJR's equipment can deliver energy directly from the wind turbine to electric crew transfer vessels designed to take workers to and from wind farms.

MJR led a consortium of partners – including Ore Catapult; Xceco; Artemis Technologies and Tidal Transit – who all provided expertise in their given field to develop the system in seven months.

The firm has completed construction and in-house testing of

the offshore charging system that it says is set to revolutionise the offshore wind sector.

Paul Cairns, managing director at MJR Power and Automation, said: “We are delighted to have been able to showcase our development amongst a series of UK innovators transforming marine operations.

“It has been a monumental achievement for MJR Power and Automation to fast track this ground-breaking development in such a short period of time, with special thanks to our consortium of experts who have been instrumental in driving the project forward.

“With vital schemes, such as this, we have been able to demonstrate our innovative capabilities – coupled with unrivalled knowledge and expertise possessed by our world class team – to develop world-leading technology that will be absolutely vital in the decarbonisation of marine operations.”

In allowing vessel charging in the field, MJR hopes the new technology will encourage owners and operators to transition to fully electric and green propulsion systems across their fleets – both via retrofit and new builds.

The firm also says it will help the global maritime sector to decarbonise, and support government and offshore wind owners to achieve net zero maritime targets.

Maritime Minister Robert Courts MP opened the CMDC event at Portsmouth International Port which brought together the 55 projects from across the UK that received funding from the Department for Transport and were delivered in partnership with Innovate UK as part of the Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition.

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