

Unmanned air vehicle trialled on Dogger Bank

Fri 06 May 2016



Aerial photo of the Dogger Bank met mast and Tidal Transit's Eden Rose taken by Cyberhawk's drone

Forewind has used a regular operations and maintenance trip to the meteorological (met) masts on the Dogger Bank offshore windfarm to trial innovative technology including the use of an unmanned aerial system (UAS) or 'drone' and a specialised camera.

The trial enabled aerial inspection and survey contractor Cyberhawk to utilise advanced camera technology to inspect the met masts and condition of bolts along with the structure of the lattice towers. The use of UAS – or 'remotely operated aerial vehicles,' as they are also sometimes known – reduces the amount of working at height that is needed to inspect the structures and reduces worker health and safety risks.

For the first time, Forewind also employed a multifunction crew transfer vessel, Tidal Transit's 20m *Eden Rose*. The aim was to determine how smaller vessels are likely to cope with operating at such distances from shore and in different wave and weather conditions. *Eden Rose* transited from the Port of Sunderland to work on Dogger Bank met mast east, which is approximately 100km from the UK coast, and Dogger Bank met mast west, which is 150km from the coast.

Forewind's operations and HSE manager Nachaat Tahmaz said that although *Eden Rose* was somewhat smaller than other vessels used at Dogger Bank, it performed as well as larger vessels. "This trip was a positive signal for the potential use of similarly sized vessels as part of operations and maintenance trips to Dogger Bank in the future," he said.

For more information about unmanned aerial systems and their potential uses in the offshore wind industry see [OWJ's article](#) about them and the RepaKorr project in Germany.