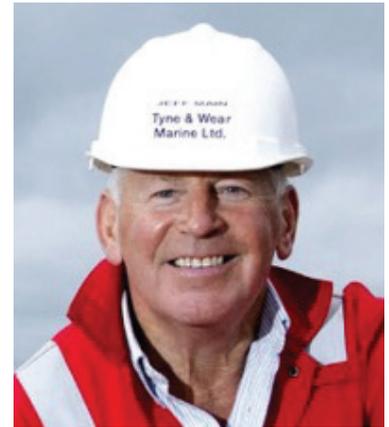


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THE LAST TIME PORT TECHNOLOGY SPOKE TO BLT, YOU TAUGHT US OF THE IMPORTANCE OF BOLLARD LOAD TESTING, COULD YOU REAFFIRM WHY IT IS IMPERATIVE FOR PORTS TO BE AWARE OF THIS?

Health and safety best practice. Capability of lifting and load bearing equipment requires testing and specific health and safety conformance, proving the safe working load of quayside bollards does not.

Proof testing projects to date in the UK have resulted in down-rated safe working load capability and failure, including newly installed bollards.

"Why should we do it? is a common question across the world and not just UK ports when it comes to question of bollard load testing as there is no specific legislation that needs to be met, so why should ports spend money on this area?"

HSE issue notice for compliance to a UK port after a bollard failure and are working with 'Ports Skills & Safety' to raise awareness.

The European Union proposes amendment to Regulations: "The EU proposal aims to mitigate occupational risks including appropriate positioning of mooring winches, protective arrangements to eradicate exposure to dynamic forces, use of fixed mooring lines (only) and methods to avoid manual handling of heavy loads. This

will also require assessment of the relationship with the shore side, including infrastructure like bollards."

A Firm Directive issued by Nigerian Port Authority 'procedure to construct, erect, occupy and operate a jetty' led to Nigerian BLT Ports and Marine Services Ltd, Licensed by BLT in the UK to test bollards and meet compliance.

HAVE YOU FOUND IT EASY OR DIFFICULT TO CONVINCE PORTS OF THE NEED TO BE AWARE OF BOLLARD LOAD TESTING?

Convincing those responsible for mooring operations has not been an issue. It is already known in the industry that there has been, and is a problem.

Forward thinking port engineers are not waiting for incidents and H & S compliance notices to force their hand for action. As awareness is gained there is now an available safe, practical, portable and cost-effective solution to help meet this area of responsibility and accountability, enquiries for testing projects in the UK and globally is gaining momentum.

Since the launch in 2015, 20 projects have taken place in Rotterdam and the UK, including Scotland and Ireland testing the safe working load of bollards with many more programmed to be carried out.

The convincing difficulties often arise with financial controllers who do not

have the responsibility and accountability for mooring problems. Justifying a new budget area for expenditure on bollard testing preventative maintenance – other than a visual inspection and quick lick of paint, is the challenge.

The importance of the task of proving fit-for-purpose safe working load can be negated, until a failure prompts financial consequences, and worse.

BLT experience concludes industry cultural practice is to conceal bollard failures, or potential failure unless it is evident and creates press coverage where the impact is obvious.

Why would ports raise an issue about an operational problem when there was not an easy solution or where there was too costly an option for solving it? Equally and frustratingly, even forward thinking ports testing bollards are reticent at allowing Bollard Load Testing Ltd to promote the fact they are carrying out testing to encourage the industry to do similar to follow safer practices.

WHAT DEVELOPMENTS HAVE YOU SEEN IN THE PAST YEAR THAT HAVE EXPANDED YOUR ORGANISATION?

The originating equipment manufacturer Tyne and Wear Marine Ltd, having formed the associated company Bollard Load Testing Ltd to meet demand, needed both companies to expand resources.

This included employing a BLT Manager heading up testing teams, and a Financial Control Manager to oversee the financial impact across the associated businesses. BLT's business model is to work closely with licensed service contractors expanding service globally by the purchase of equipment and receiving training and support in order to enable their success.

Nigeria, the first Licenced Service Contractor is in place, with Ireland following shortly.

Germany, Bahamas, Australasia, USA, Turkey, and the UAE are at various stages of working toward setting in place bollard load testing services in their countries after many have visited BLT's UK base for demonstrations and meetings.

The initial North East of England local manufacturing business is now reaching out globally with a vision of raising awareness and educating the marine sector on the subject of proof testing the safe working load of bollards, for fit for purpose and safety, which demands very different business operating approaches, and skill sets.

CONGRATULATIONS ON THE NORTH EAST BUSINESS INNOVATION AWARD YOU WON HERE IN THE UK, CAN YOU TELL US HOW YOU ACHIEVED THAT?

Encouraged to apply, three Judges visited BLT to see equipment and how it had been designed and manufactured locally. We were delighted to win first the sub-regional award, followed by the North East Regional Innovation Award.

As well as the equipment development, BLT shared the business model for rolling out the service. This included ideas about the global aggregate data being gathered through the bespoke designed software on the topic of bollard testing and its usefulness to the industry.

BLT is now a multiple award-winner, including Seawork Innovation 2015, and BEEA Mechanical Product of the Year runner up for its safe, portable, practical and cost-effective equipment and method.

HAVE YOU ANY NOTABLE SUCCESSES IN THE PAST YEAR YOU CAN TELL US ABOUT?

There are many. One that stands out was having the opportunity for BLT's first Licensed Service Contractor from Nigeria



to co-incidentally be present in the UK at the celebration when we achieved the North East England Sub-Regional Innovation Award winner.

This reinforced the work done and recognition for new product design, manufacture, and introducing something innovative that has a global reach and benefits for the marine industry.

WHAT ARE YOUR PREDICATIONS FOR BLT AND THE FUTURE OF THE INDUSTRY?

Growth. Bringing a new product to market in an industry, even when needed, takes time and BLT is pleased with the take up of its service to date.

As the marine sector in the UK and globally embraces good practice regarding proof testing the safe working load of bollards it will become acceptable, even desirable for ports to share information promoting the fact that its bollards are being tested.

BLT will continue gathering valuable aggregate data previously unavailable in the industry with regards to the topic as testing projects are driven by enquiries from vessel owners and insurance companies who are demanding that the safe working load of bollards are tested before their vessel enters unfamiliar ports.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jeff Main is Managing Director of privately-owned company Tyne and Wear Marine which has been providing bespoke marine engineering solutions to clients for over 30 years. He has an extensive and diverse maritime background, having previously built a salvage vessel and starting his own company. Jeff's mission is to make clients problems go away; to solve them by providing innovative thinking, outside-of-the-box creative approaches, and cost effective, highly practical solutions. It was by having such an approach and mission that the Bollard Load Testing Equipment was created.

ABOUT THE ORGANISATION

Bollard Load Testing Ltd (BLT) is an associated company of Tyne and Wear Marine Ltd (TWM), and began formal trading in April, 2015. BLT was established to deliver an innovative solution for testing the safe working load of marine mooring bollards in ports, harbours and shipyards.

ENQUIRIES

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