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Catamaran Survey Vessel Delivered to Global Geophysical Services

The 140' catamaran seismic survey vessel MS. CORDELIA was recently delivered to Global Geophysical Services, Houston, TX. The all aluminum vessel was converted from a prototype high speed low wake passenger ferry that had not been completed or put in service. The conversion design and engineering was done by the naval architectural firm of Guarino & Cox, LLC, Covington, LA. Seacraft Shipyard carried out the conversion work at their facilities in Amelia, LA.



The unfinished vessel was considered an ideal candidate to be converted for its intended use primarily due to the large deck area available and its shallow draft. The MS. CORDELIA will be capable of performing inshore shallow water seismic survey work laying and retrieving cables in as little as 6 feet of water. Because of the generous deck area of the catamaran it was possible to use removable container modules that not only facilitated the conversion but also enhanced the vessel's ability to be easily reconfigured for equipment upgrades or modified for other missions.

The slender catamaran demi-hulls make the vessel extremely fuel efficient at a continuous cruising speed of 12 knots and comfortable in the short steep waves often found in inshore locations. The major modification to the hull form was the removal of the large water jets originally installed and altering the stern lines to utilize conventional propellers in shallow tunnels. A continuous maximum speed of 15 knots is obtained through this arrangement with power provided by two new 700shp Luger diesel main engines engines.

An operating speed of 2 to 3 knots was a requirement during deployment and retrieval of the special cables used while surveying. This would normally be impossible to achieve with the easily driven catamaran form but the naval architects of Guarino & Cox devised a scheme using oversized independent rudders capable of being splayed outboard up to 60 degrees that deflect the propeller wash and act as water brakes. This has proven to be very effective and is much less expensive than other potential solutions such as controllable pitch propellers. Sal Guarino, a principal of Guarino & Cox, stated that his company has a reputation of meeting engineering challenges with innovative but workable solutions.

Global's growing fleet now consists of eight seismic survey vessels with the addition of the MS. CORDELIA. The company provides seismic survey services domestically and world wide on land and offshore and is known for their Reservoir-Grade 3D (RG3D®) seismic surveys. Meeting their global commitment included substantially increasing the vessel's fuel and fresh water capacity during the conversion to provide sufficient range for overseas assignments and enable it to remain at work for extended periods.