



Oleg Strashnov

Mr. Oleg Strashnov, who died in 2001, was no ordinary Manager. He was like a father to the crew and he knew every crew member of the Stanislav Yudin personally. He also knew the names of their wives and children. He was always interested in the people supporting the crew member. Seaway Heavy Lifting's second crane vessel is rightly named after this charismatic individual.



'For the lighter-lifting activities Seaway Heavy Lifting hits a bull's-eye'

The co-founders of Seaway Heavy Lifting, Valery Petrakov and Oleg Strashnov of KMNG, Jan Frederik Meling and Arnfin Vika of SNS and Michel Bonte, aim at a niche market with the Stanislav Yudin. This vessel has a lifting capacity of 1600 tonnes, when other ships at the time are the enormous, but costly, semi-submersible vessels of Saipem and Heerema. Oil companies become interested in this new contractor for the lighter-lifting activities. Seaway Heavy Lifting hits a bull's-eye, especially in the North Sea where Heerema practically has a monopoly. More competition often means lower prices. In addition, the Stanislav Yudin has a large open deck area. This feature enables the vessel to transport large offshore elements to the offshore location, such as platform components, which avoids costs for an additional cargo barge.

Michel Bonte and Commercial Manager Keith Denham initially focus on managing and starting up the first lifting operation: Installing Statoil's M12 module on the 16/11-S platform at the HMV shipyard in Haugesund. The Russian crew, including the captain, has very little experience with working on a crane vessel. Hardly anybody speaks English except for chief mate Yuri Vorobiev. Michel Bonte takes on the role of an improvising superintendent during the first lifting operation.

Michel Bonte manages to get an incredible amount of work done during the short 3 months that he is involved with Seaway Heavy Lifting. He diligently searches for capable crew members to perform the specialist tasks. One of the first to hire is former Heerema Purchase Manager Ruud Steffers. After a month, several other senior staff members of Heerema joined the team: Commercial Manager Martin Spaans, Chief Draftsman Paul Simpson and Construction Manager Wim van der Velde.



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Michel Bonte
 General Manager of
 Seaway Heavy Lifting