

NEWS RELEASE

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HORIBA Instruments and Ricardo to collaborate on engineering design of new 15MW drive train test system for offshore wind

It has been announced by the UK's Energy Technologies Institute (ETI) that HORIBA has been selected for the Phase 1 engineering design contract for the world's largest open access offshore wind turbine test facility – Ricardo will be included in this effort as a design partner

The new drive train test rig will be designed for testing the next generation of higher power wind turbines capable of producing more affordable electricity. The intention is for the test rig to be built at the NaREC Test Facility in Blyth, Northumberland. Co-located with NaREC's existing renewables testing facilities such as blade testing, the offshore wind nacelle drive train test rig will be capable of dynamically testing a wind turbine drive train or nacelle with input powers up to 15MW. In addition to partnering with Ricardo on this project, it will also draw upon the large construction programme management skills of Complete Construction Management Ltd (CCM).

Providing this facility in an onshore location will provide a significantly lower cost alternative to deploying and testing offshore. Complete turbine nacelles will be able to be tested, reducing the technical and commercial risks of mass production and deployment and will also enable turbine manufacturers to accelerate the development of new and more reliable prototypes, increasing the deployment of new turbines. As such it will enable the reliability and performance of new technologies to be assessed early on in the development process and reduce the risk of developing large multi-megawatt wind turbines for offshore use before deployment offshore.

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Commenting on the award of this contract by ETI, HORIBA executive vice president and general manager, Rex Tapp, said:

“We are pleased to have been awarded this key contract by ETI to design the world’s first open access offshore wind turbine test system. HORIBA Instruments is a leader in the development of testing technology across a range of industrial sectors and on a global basis. We look forward to working with our long-standing partner Ricardo to deliver the test system design for this important new facility.”

Ricardo clean energy projects director Giles Hundleby added:

“We are honoured that the HORIBA-Ricardo team has been selected by ETI to collaborate on the design of this important new UK offshore wind energy testing facility. This project is a further example both of Ricardo’s technology leadership in the wind power sector, as well as a demonstration of our very successful relationship with HORIBA.”

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

HORIBA: Headquartered in Kyoto, Japan, the HORIBA Group of worldwide companies provides an extensive array of instruments and systems for a wide variety of analytical and testing applications. The same specialized road and environmental simulation testing technology that HORIBA has used for years to help the automotive industry build reliable and environmentally sound drive trains is now being used to capture the variable wind and challenging conditions experienced during the life of a wind turbine drive train. This shared experience will result in more accurate testing data on which to base solid engineering decisions for the wind industry.

Ricardo plc: With technical centres and offices in the UK, USA, Germany, the Czech Republic, France, Italy, Russia, China, Japan, India and Korea, Ricardo is a leading independent technology provider and strategic consultant to the world's transportation sector and clean energy industries. The company's engineering expertise ranges from vehicle systems integration, controls, electronics and software development, to the latest driveline and transmission systems and gasoline, diesel, hybrid and fuel cell powertrain technologies, as well as wind energy and tidal power systems. Ricardo is committed to excellence and industry leadership in people, technology and knowledge; approximately 70 per cent of its employees are highly qualified multi-disciplined professional engineers and technicians. A public company, Ricardo plc posted sales of £178.8 million in financial year 2009 and is a constituent of the FTSE techMark 100 index – a group of innovative technology companies listed on the London Stock Exchange. For more information, visit www.ricardo.com.

Energy Technologies Institute (ETI): For more information on the ETI, visit www.energytechnologies.co.uk.

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