CASE STORY

Under tough circumstances, the first of many PureBallast 3 systems enter Briese Group's fleet

Customer: Briese Group

Headquartered in Leer, Germany, Briese Group provides custom marine transport solutions to a wide range of customers. The company combines high performance with organizational versatility, and its decision makers expect the same qualities from a ballast water treatment solution. Having selected Alfa Laval PureBallast 3 for roughly 100 vessels, they feel secure in Alfa Laval's expertise and flexibility – which proved valuable during first installations at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The right match for the fleet

At Briese Group, a shore staff of around 500 and over 2400 employees on board make integrated logistics work smoothly worldwide. The company offers transport solutions for diverse cargos, which it moves with around 130 multipurpose vessels, project carriers, bulk carriers and container vessels. Most of the Briese Group fleet will be equipped with PureBallast 3 ballast water treatment systems by 2024, thanks to a comprehensive agreement recently signed with Alfa Laval.

“We’ve compared technologies in several test installations, and the PureBallast 3 setup of UV and filter has proven a reliable solution for our crews,” says Adrian Beckmann of the Newbuilding and Project department at Briese Group. “Unlike electrochlorination, which is more of a black box, the technology is known from other applications on board. Alfa Laval can provide us and our crews with a full solution, including PureBallast 3 Computer-Based Training, guidelines and how-to videos for operation and maintenance. And with trained service people in nearly every country, they can provide us with truly worldwide service.”

Adapted for each vessel’s needs

Given the variations in vessel size and design, Briese Group will equip its fleet with a mix of different PureBallast 3 systems. Smaller vessels will use skid-mounted PureBallast 3 Compact systems in capacities of 135–300 m^3/h, while a majority of vessels will use PureBallast 3 Compact Flex systems in capacities of 300–600 m^3/h. The bulkers, which load and unload cargo at different rates, will have PureBallast 3 bulker-fit configurations, which differentiate the inbound and outbound flows.

“The arrangement of PureBallast 3 is very simple, and it will be easy to stock spare parts since the components will be identical from vessel to vessel,” says Beckmann. “The bulker-fit configuration was a good compromise for our bulkers’ needs, since it combines a smaller footprint with lower CAPEX and OPEX. During deballasting, the bulks can treat the full 1500 m^3/h they need to discharge at full capacity while loading. But during ballast water uptake, which is not so time-critical, 750 m^3/h is sufficient.”

On schedule despite a pandemic

Yet while system flexibility is important to Briese Group, it was supplier flexibility that proved vital when it came time for the first PureBallast 3 installation. The system order for the M/V BBC GANGES was placed in early March 2020 – just as the COVID-19 pandemic began raging in Europe.

“Thanks to Alfa Laval, our plans were not really affected by the pandemic,” Beckmann relates. “The project managers coordinated things from their homes, and the team at the factory in Aalborg, Denmark, was able to perform the acceptance test, pack the system for shipping and transport it by truck to our shipyard in Gdansk. We lost only half a day due to congestion at the border, and there was no delay in commissioning because Alfa Laval has service everywhere. The commissioning technician was simply arranged from Poland.”

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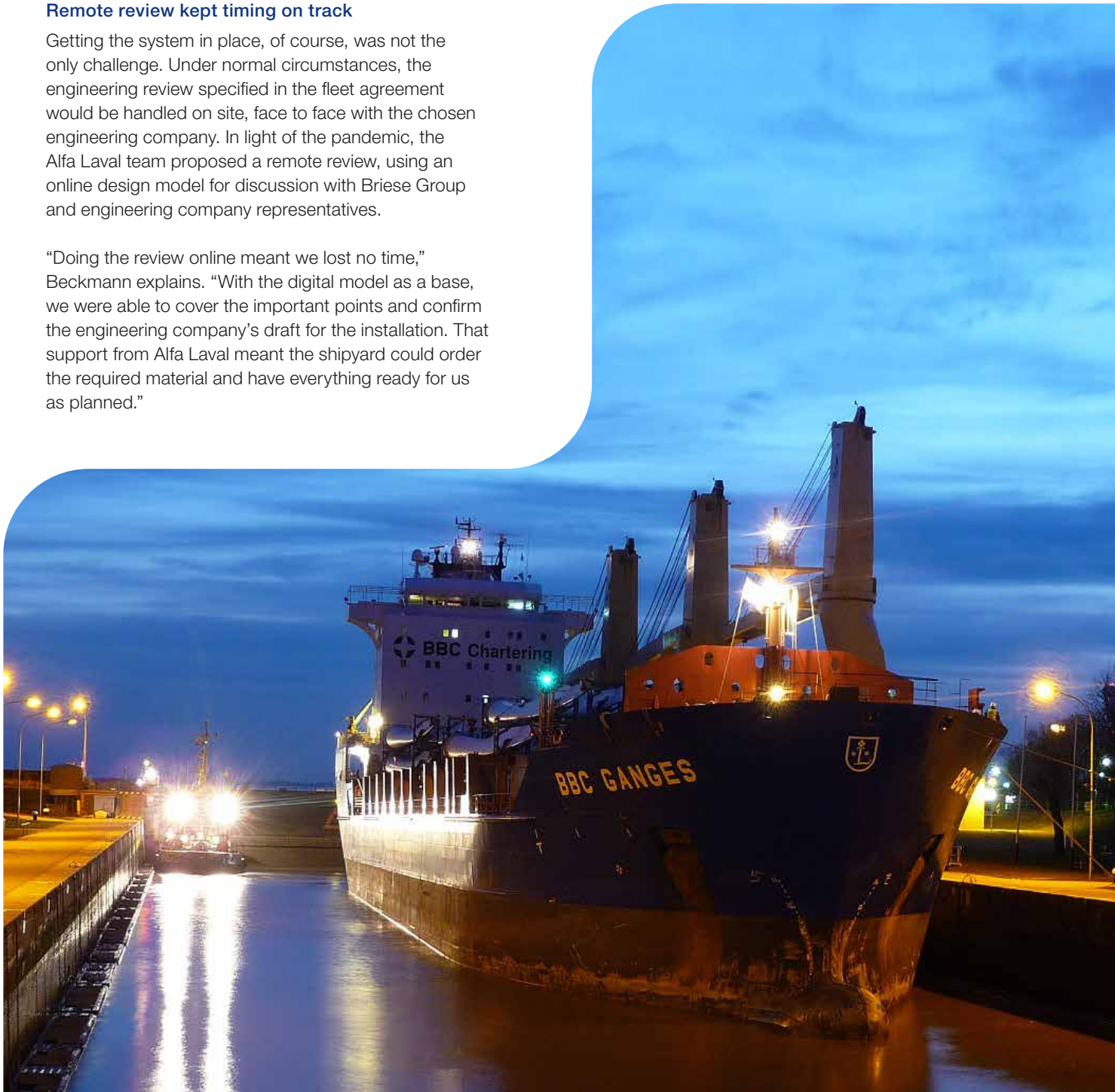
Remote review kept timing on track

Getting the system in place, of course, was not the only challenge. Under normal circumstances, the engineering review specified in the fleet agreement would be handled on site, face to face with the chosen engineering company. In light of the pandemic, the Alfa Laval team proposed a remote review, using an online design model for discussion with Briese Group and engineering company representatives.

“Doing the review online meant we lost no time,” Beckmann explains. “With the digital model as a base, we were able to cover the important points and confirm the engineering company’s draft for the installation. That support from Alfa Laval meant the shipyard could order the required material and have everything ready for us as planned.”



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Strong partnership going forward

Since retrofitting PureBallast 3 on the M/V BBC GANGES, the first bulker-fit installation has also been performed on the M/V BBC NEPTUNE. An additional five installations will be performed in 2020, before the pace is ramped up significantly to equip all Briese Group vessels by the 2024 deadline.

“Having installed three systems and done the engineering for 20 more, we’ve been operating without problems and have had no major difficulties integrating PureBallast 3 into our vessels,” says Beckmann.

“We have good routines for installation and have learned a lot from the three installations so far. Of course, we won’t be able to use the same shipyard for all installations, so we’ll be counting on Alfa Laval’s worldwide capabilities and shipyard guidance.”

That said, Beckmann foresees no major difficulties on the road ahead. “We have a very open dialogue with Alfa Laval, and there are good technicians behind it all,” he says. “If we encounter a problem, they provide answers and solutions in a very short time. We’re very happy with Alfa Laval – and we know that we’ve made a good selection.”

How to contact Alfa Laval

Up-to-date Alfa Laval contact details for all countries are always available on our website at www.alfalaval.com

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