



HoneAll

Hone-All Precision Limited



"The North Sea industry is a key market for our specialist machining skills", says Colin Rodney, Hone-All Precision Limited's Managing Director

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It is thirty years since the formal opening of the UK's first oil pipeline, built by BP and running 209 km from Cruden Bay to Grangemouth. The discoveries of substantial deposits of oil and gas that followed transformed the economy of the north-east of Scotland, with the initial trickle topping 2.5 million barrels a day in 1985. And despite an inevitable decline, it is predicted that there will be a North Sea industry as far ahead as 2050, with BP stating in July 2007 that it remained committed to North Sea oil production. In fact, UK Oil & Gas, the new pan-industry trade body, says that with an estimated 25 billion barrels of oil still to be recovered, there is still a 'huge prize' to be won by the industry.

This is, of course, good news for companies such as Hone-All Precision Limited, which regards the offshore oil and gas industry as a key market for its specialist machining skills. Although the Dunstable-based company defines itself as a one-stop-shop supplier of fully-machined components, deep hole boring and honing continue to be at the heart of business. "We can machine components up to 250 mm diameter by 3 metres long and our ability to produce bores to an extremely high standard of dimensional tolerance and surface finish continues to attract new customers," says Colin Rodney, Managing Director. This expertise, combined with a commitment to a fast response to customers requirements and a tightly controlled quality environment, is particularly helpful when dealing with customers in technology-driven industries such as oil and gas, aerospace and motor sport.

The ISO 9001:2000-accredited sub-contractor says honing is the ideal process to achieve the mirror finishes of 0.1µ or 4 CLA often demanded to prevent wear on the seals in hydraulic systems, for example. As a result of increased demand, further investment is taking place with a new Jones & Shipman vertical honing machine due to be delivered this month and the recent purchase of a Sunnen CNC vertical honing machine. The addition of these two machines will ensure that Hone-All Precision can match the pace and productivity of the newly expanded and improved deep hole boring department. Inspection and quality control are also high on the investment agenda, not least because of the requirement to verify the

tight tolerance and surface finish requirements demanded by safety-critical industries such as oil and gas.

"Our emphasis is on continuous improvement because that benefits both the customer and the people who work here. One of the many changes that has taken place as a response to the competitive pressures of our oil and gas customers is the creation of cells to minimise the movement of heavy material and components through the machine shop, while allowing individual operators to look after more than one machine and encouraged, with on-the-job training, to broaden their skills set."

Typical oil and gas components machined by Hone-All Precision include tubing hangers, turbine housings, rotors, flow tubes, sample bottles, manifolds and high-pressure assemblies. Materials tend to be high specification alloys such as Inconel, 4140 and 17/4PH stainless steel as well as more unusual materials such as Ferrulium, Staballoy and Datalloy. And reflecting the nature of the oil and gas industry, most of the orders are small to medium batch, although they do repeat on a regular basis.

This all-round capability explains why, in addition to its day-to-day work, Hone-All Precision is frequently asked to help out, often at very short notice, in instances where the customer has been asked to meet a seemingly impossible delivery lead time or, in the case of honing, in-house machining has failed to achieve the tight tolerance, high quality surface finish specified on the drawing or out-of-tolerance tube is causing problems. "Whatever the reason for the customer's phone call," says Andrea Rodney, Director, "Hone-All Precision is always prepared to take on the challenge with the minimum of fuss and at a competitive price."



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