Universal Foundation Concept – A SCM Approach to Industrialization

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Abstract
Supply Chain Management (SCM) is a driving factor in the development of new technology and the vision of industrialization, series/mass production and installation of foundations for offshore wind farms. As the sites are getting larger in the future wind farm developments, and in most case more complicated in a geotechnical and logistic sense, it is a must to find more feasible ways to configure standard structures and procedures into unique foundations for each wind turbine position using the philosophy of systematic mass customization and to optimize the supply chain with a focus on the industrialization process.

Background
The development of the UFC system is initially based on the flexibility and characteristics of the bucket foundation concept as known today. The bucket foundation is a hybrid combining features from the gravitation platform and the mono pile, but with the ability to vary more parameters for diameter, penetration depth and dead load than the traditional concepts.

Bucket foundation principle
The bucket foundation (B) is a hybrid combining features from the gravitation platform (A) and the mono pile (C).

Development
The innovative foundation concept, inspired of the well known offshore technology suction anchors, was initiated by a research program in a joint venture formed by Marcon, Bladt Industries, MBD and Aalborg University. As it is a new concept, a design procedure had to be developed based on laboratory test and certified by DNV. The full scale foundation for the Vestas V90 3 MW turbine was build in Frederikshavn and transported to and installed in the semidry NearshoreLAB test site in October 2002.

Project development approach industrialized product development
Focus on total supply chain
• Coordinated R&D in each link of the supply chain
• Active use of feedback

Technology transfer
• is not only using a product in a different location
• it is adapting technology to new physical environment
• it is adapting the organisation culture
• it is adapting the knowledge and education

UFC philosophy, a framework for project development

Technology
Main objectives in the development of the concept
Cost reduction, reduction of steel consumption, rational production, smaller installation equipment, reduction of load regime.
Risk management, availability of vessels, weather window, seabed condition.

Going from "one off" to industrialized product
Optimized design at each position, parameter driven design, standardized construction elements, standardized installation procedures.

Organization
The database is containing description of principles, methods, procedures, structures stipulation the operation parameters and cost estimates for each element. The database is also updated with operation project experiences to ensure an efficient feed-back to be used in future projects

The product configuration system is a program defining the application range for each structure and procedure and the rules for combining the different elements to cover the entire wind farm. The system contains a decision support facility with the ability to estimate the involved cost/risk in the different project phases. The documentation facility is based on standard output formats for each of the project phases, feasibility study, conceptual design, tender design, detail design, construction documentation and “as build” documentation.

The UFC / SCM facilitator
The implementation of the concept is conducted by a facilitator organization with access to the IP-rights of the bucket concept and in close cooperation with the project developer/owner of the wind farm project. The functions of the facilitator are to ensure that the technology, methodologies, and procedures is optimized throughout the entire supply chain as well as ensure that the contract relations between the different stakeholder is managed to utilize the full potential of the concept.

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