

# DUKC® wins International Bulk Journal accolade

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By Danielle Shaw – Sydney

**Melbourne firm OMC International has won the 2015 International Bulk Journal 'Safety in Bulk Handling (Marine)' award for its real-time Dynamic Under Keel Clearance (DUKC®) technology.**

OMC International executive director Dr Terry O'Brien AM accepted the award on behalf of his staff on Monday night (November 16) at an awards ceremony dinner in Antwerp, Belgium.

Dr O'Brien said the company's latest web-based product suite DUKC® Series 5 offers operational capabilities such as real-time under keel clearance chart overlays, as well as port capacity modelling.

"We have been working very successfully together with Pilbara Ports Authority (PPA) and just last Friday (November 13), the WA transport minister Dean Nalder announced that this new modelling had pinpointed opportunities to increase the port's forecast capacity from 495m tonnes a year to 577m tonnes," said Mr O'Brien.

The modelling has also integrated recent operational changes implemented by the PPA which has resulted in increased sailing drafts, a move to larger and more draft efficient vessels and the port's ability to sail more ships on a tide.

Dr O'Brien said the Port Hedland Series 5 system together with high spot dredging and the Tidal Modal Project for which PPA recently received the Premiers Award, has resulted in a significant increase in vessel sailing drafts and tidal windows.

This has allowed the PPA to increase its export capacity which was demonstrated on February 28, 2015 when eight capesize bulk carriers sailed out with a record tonnage of 1,511,977 tonnes.

Rio Tinto recently signed off for the Series 5 systems to be installed at the ports of Dampier and Cape Lambert. DUKC® Series 5 has also been installed in Torres Strait, Port Hedland, Fremantle, Montreal-St Lawrence River, and this year in Napier, Newcastle, Arrium Spencer Gulf and Geelong.

Dr O'Brien said the technology also played a vital safety role in the deepest draft vessel visit to Melbourne this year. On April 5, the Exxon chartered Nordic Breeze Suezmax tanker vessel (247m long and 48m beam) with a draft of 14.5m safely passed through the Port Phillip Heads and docked at Gelibrand berth under DUKC® guidance.

"Looking ahead, OMC will continue directing a significant percentage of our profits into R & D to allow our team of experts to further extend the potential of our DUKC® technology to import port safety and efficiency around the world," said Dr O'Brien.

He said the company intends to forge ahead into new markets and develop more collaborative industry partnerships.

Dr Terry O'Brien was last year inducted into Lloyd's List Australia's Maritime Hall of Fame.

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