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218 US Hwy 701 North By-Pass
Tabor City, NC 28463
(p) 910-653-5200
www.filtec-precise.com

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dustries. However, the economic climate in Kazakhstan, in particular, lends itself to diversification.

Situated to the east of the Caspian Sea (Baku, Azerbaijan is 230 miles south west on the opposite coastline), the Aktau site is well placed to serve the nearby Kashagan and Tengiz oil fields but, more notably of late, Kazakhstan's mining and power industries are demanding heavy lifting equipment as the oil and gas market remains cool in the region.

"While globally there are positive signs for the oil and gas sector, the Kashagan field has experienced problems and I don't anticipate Phase II of the drilling project to commence for a number of years," according to Neil Brodie, General Manager at Rigmarine Kazakhstan LLP. "Mines and power stations however, are showing signs of greater potential and there are opportunities to leverage our heavy lift expertise and product supply capabilities as well."

Despite the fact that Kazakhstan's mines are located in eastern regions, such as Almaty, Astana, Karaganda and Pavlodar (the latter is approximately 2,000 miles away in the country's northeastern corner), Brodie states that Rigmarine wouldn't need to expand its

footprint and could serve an expanded customer base through recruitment of additional sales representatives.

"We are actively contacting professionals in the country's mines and power stations to update procurement contacts and arrange further meetings to discuss potential cooperations," adds Brodie. "And there are many similarities between the industries and our traditional offshore markets but to release this potential we need sales staff strategically positioned to build relationships."

"However, there is one tricky issue to deal with as well, and that is the fact that majority of Kazakhstan's power and mining companies are government-owned and will source equipment via tender processes. Accordingly, Rigmarine is registered to respond to these requests as they are issued."

Meanwhile, the Tengizchevroil (TCO) joint venture Future Growth Project and Wellhead Pressure Management Project at the Tengiz oil field will create product and service opportunities as it gathers pace. Tengizchevroil LLP was formed between the Republic of Kazakhstan and Chevron Corporation in 1993 to explore and develop the Tengiz oilfield.

"We have built up and retained a skilled workforce through the Rigma-

rine," says Brodie. "That includes accredited training programs as well as third-party qualifications. And despite market challenges, we remain excited about prospects for our diversification strategy and look forward to what 2017 has in store for the Aktau operation."

The growing demand in Azerbaijan for effective and professional training services led to the unveiling of Rigmarine's new custom built training facility.

The 10 class facility with expansion plans for a further 10 is without doubt the most advanced in the region and is delivering internationally accredited courses to the Oil and Gas industry. The expansion also allows an increase in abilities to offer a full range of Health and Safety management programs underpinned by recognized industry figures such as NEBOSH and IOSH.

Contracted by Maersk, Rigmarine has even delivered and installed a pre-layed mooring system for the MODU Explorer in preparation of their drilling program for France's TOTAL. Managing the complete operation from mobilization, delivery, quayside management through to deployment meant a smooth and trouble free solution to both the rig operator and their client.

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