

STURROCK-GRINDROD OFFSHORE

**SUPERIOR AFRICAN
OFFSHORE SERVICE**



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General Manager for Oil and Gas, Rob Gardner highlights the ways in which Sturrock-Grindrod Offshore is helping to cater for the needs of those investing in and capitalising on Africa's vast oil and gas potential

WRITTEN BY: **WILL DAYNES**
RESEARCH BY: **JAMES BOYLE**



Until as recently as 2010 it appeared that all southern African countries had to offer in terms of oil and gas were scattered pockets of natural gas off the coasts of South Africa and Mozambique. The event that changed this perception was the discovery of a potential 500 trillion cubic feet of gas across South Africa and Mozambique, in addition to an estimated eleven billion barrels of oil in Namibia.

Founded in 1969 as both a shipping agency and clearing and forwarding company, Sturrock Shipping, was until its merger with Grindrod, one of the largest, privately owned shipping and logistics companies in South and East Africa. Based in some of Africa's fastest developing nations, including Ghana, Angola, Namibia, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique and Madagascar, the company specialises in providing a full supply-chain service for the handling of sea transport and the import and export of goods into and out of sub-Saharan Africa.

"Since we spoke almost a year ago," begins General Manager for Oil and Gas, Rob Gardner, "arguably the most significant development on the oil and gas side of the business was the bringing together of Sturrock Shipping and Grindrod Ships Agencies, a business with more than 100 years of operating within southern Africa and a vast portfolio of assets behind them, from their own fleet of vessels to warehousing, terminals and container depots."

What the bringing together of these two entities has done is not only create a much stronger and more diverse ships agency operation, but also provided the company



Vessel support



Mputo Port aerial



Overseeing work taking place

formally known as Sturrock Shipping with an injection of capital, infrastructure access and a plethora of diverse service offerings and know-how.

“Today,” Gardner continues, “we boast a presence in eleven African countries which, if you look at most of the other large branded ship’s agencies, gives us an unrivalled sub-Saharan footprint. By employing local people in these countries and combining

their hands-on skill and local expertise with the more specialised international shipping and offshore expertise that the group offers, we are reaffirming ourselves as a truly African company that possesses the ability to offer first world services and expertise wherever it is required.”

In addition to actually being able to boast that it has a physical presence on the ground in some of Africa’s most important

markets, Sturrock-Grindrod Offshore also has the unique ability to offer several different types of service that few, if any, of its competitors can match. These include the ability to service and replace life rafts on vessels in remote African ports as part of its role as exclusive agents for the company Survi-Tech and to handle the supply and transportation of pyrotechnics, something which can be a technically challenging and time consuming task for a customer.

“I think it is fair to say,” Gardner states, “that the favourable nature of Southern Africa’s exploration laws today, particularly

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African countries in which Sturrock-Grindrod is present

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compared to those of a decade or so ago, has contributed significantly to more and more businesses looking to our shores to explore for oil and gas, specifically in places like Namibia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique and Madagascar where drilling is currently on-going.

Couple that with the improved technology and the ability to explore at greater depths and you can see the great level of potential that we have here.”

In addition to this potential there is also the tremendous physical infrastructure that the country has, and will have, at its disposal. At Saldanha Bay, for example, a huge amount

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of funding has been allocated to develop what will be an exclusive oil and gas facility, one where the deep water draft is capable of accommodating the next generation of rig ships, as well as shallower facilities for traditional jack up rigs.

This type of infrastructure investment also bodes well for the country's long term future in other areas linked to the oil and gas sector. "With the work that we have on-going

in places like Saldanha Bay," Gardner says, "it also provides the opportunity for companies like ours to take on greater amounts of ships agency work in the fields of ship repairs, maintenance and the repatriation of crews and auxiliary vessels related to the industry."

As optimistic as the future appears for South Africa, Sturrock-Grindrod Offshore is equally as keen to prosper in markets further afield. "While we have all this know-how and

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Rob Gardner, General Manager for Oil and Gas

expertise down here in South Africa," Gardner highlights, "we realised the need to expand some 15 years ago and whilst we already have an extensive and well-established sub-Saharan African footprint in place, our goal is to cover as much of Africa as possible. While Africa remains a predominantly commodity based economy, the signs are that this could be changing thanks to the well-publicised oil and gas finds in countries like Mozambique."

It is obvious that Sturrock-Grindrod Offshore shares the view that Africa is a hugely dynamic area, yet more importantly it is clear that the company believes itself to be well positioned to grow with it in the years to come.

"If you look at the management structure of Sturrock-Grindrod," Gardner concludes,

"you will see it is a young, highly driven team. We look at Africa and we believe we know this market and our goal is to be the recognised company here when it comes to oil and gas related services. What we want is for companies coming into the market to say to themselves that, if they want to prosper, they need to be talking to us, because we are the guys who have people on the ground, the agency crews, the logistical staff, and the supply chain staff. These are all highly qualified, dedicated people and it is they who help keep us at the top of our game." **BE**



Oil rig

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