

Press Release

Gottwald Port Technology Introduces Remote Control System for Harbour Cranes

Düsseldorf (Germany), 13 September 2004 – Gottwald Port Technology, the worldwide leader in Mobile Harbour Cranes with some 900 cranes installed globally, has recently introduced a remote control system for both Gottwald HMK Mobile and HSK Portal Harbour Cranes. This new powerful tool was developed together with HBC-radiomatic GmbH, based in Crailsheim, Germany, a supplier of state-of-the-art industrial radio remote controls.

Giuseppe Di Lisa, Gottwald's Sales Director comments on the company's recent innovation: "The newly developed remote control system comes in line with our strategic aim of continuously developing new technologies and answering customer needs. Mobility and versatility are the major assets of our Harbour Cranes and the remote control system was designed to further enhance operational usability, safety, ease of operation and economic efficiency of our cranes."

Key Features Offered by the Remote Control System

Equipped with an LCD screen, hard buttons and joysticks, the most advanced remote control system packs all crane functions in a handy, robust, weather-proof unit. The control elements are absolutely identical to those found on the operating console in the crane's tower cabin. Thus practically no additional learning is required. Once the crane driver is familiar with the console functions in the tower cabin, he is likewise able to use the remote control system.

Since all crane functions, e.g. crane driving and propping, can be executed by the remote control system, there is no need for an additional cabin fitted to the crane's chassis or superstructure. "With a remote control system, the crane driver can move the crane from one job site to another by walking along beside the crane. Crane operators do not need additional staff to provide guidance in order to avoid accidents when moving the crane," explains Di Lisa. Many cranes – especially the smaller ones such as the HMK 170 Mobile Harbour Crane – often are ordered without additional driver cabin. In this case, the crane

has to be moved by a crane driver sitting in a tower cabin some 20 m above ground level, which is not easy and also requires additional staff. Di Lisa: "The new remote control system now offers an economical alternative to an additional driver cabin while at the same time efficient solution. But of course, if a crane operator opts for an additional driver cabin, this can always be supplied."

A further benefit becomes obvious when changing the crane's lifting gear, which often means extensive communication between the crane driver high up in the tower cabin and the ground staff in charge of attaching the lifting device to the crane's hook. The remote control system enables the crane driver himself to change the lifting gear when staying on the quay, positioning the hook precisely into the right position so that the spreader or other lifting gear can be easily attached to the hook. Besides, as there is no need for additional staff, accidents cannot occur as a result of miscommunication between the crane operator, on the one hand and ground staff, on the other hand.

Above all, the small powerful tool enhances manoeuvrability on sites with limited space. It allows, for example, better positioning of the crane when there are strict propping regulations at certain job sites due to quay loading restrictions. The crane operator walking along beside the crane can easily see the propping points indicated on the quay. Also when assembling and commissioning a crane at the operator's site the new remote control system ensures more safety, less staff and economic efficiency.

For HSK Portal Harbour Cranes usually operated on rails, for example, that have a special travel gear equipment, with which they can travel quickly to different sites of operation, the remote control system improves manoeuvrability when the crane is mounted back on the rails.

"It goes without saying that the new remote control system underwent extensive tests at Gottwald's Düsseldorf testing ground before market launch," states Manfred Kirchner, Head of Testing and Trials. "It shall now be offered for all Gottwald HMK Mobile and HSK Portal Harbour Cranes, starting from the 63-tonne Harbour Cranes upwards. First units of Gottwald's most recent innovation have already been supplied and the response to the remote control systems in active use, such as the one operated in an HMK 170 EG Mobile Harbour Crane at Sapec, Portugal, is exceptionally positive."

Successful Active Use also in Le Havre, France

Recently, the Gottwald remote control system has proven a powerful tool in real crane life when it was used by the French Port Autonome du Havre to reposition an HMK 170 E over a distance of four kilometers, from the Quai de Bougainville to the Quai de L'Europe. Commenting on the new equipment, Jean-Christophe Molliere, Northern Container Terminal Manager, Port Autonome du Havre, says: "Since our HMK 170 E Crane does not have a driver cabin at the chassis, the new remote control system was of great help. Without, the crane would have had to be moved by a crane driver sitting in the tower cabin approximately 20 m above ground level – a very demanding operation." And Karl Huard, Maintenance Officer at Northern Container Terminal adds: "Applying the remote control system ensured comfortable, quick and safe repositioning of the Mobile Harbour Crane. We are very satisfied with the equipment that helps us save time, staff and money."

Giuseppe Di Lisa sums up: "We are very happy about the positive start and are sure that in future more and more crane operators will make their decision in favour of our innovative technology. The new remote control system is a powerful supplement for any crane – with or without driver cabin. Simply speaking, it means making work easier. And in the end, it helps crane operators, facing increasing productivity demands, remain competitive."

About Gottwald Port Technology

Gottwald Port Technology GmbH, located in Düsseldorf (Germany), is the world's leading supplier of Mobile Harbour Cranes (HMK series). The company produces a comprehensive range of Mobile Harbour Cranes with lifting capacities of up to 120 tonnes and radii of up to 56 m, in addition to the rail-mounted Portal Harbour Cranes (HSK series) and the Wide Span Gantries launched at the beginning of 2003. Gottwald also offers a multitude of services for terminal operators. These services range from conceptual design and operational layout, basic engineering of equipment and systems to Automated Guided Vehicles and Automated Container Stackers. The company presently has a workforce of around 670 employees in Düsseldorf and the turnover for the financial year 2002/2003 (as of 30 September) is €183 million.

About HBC-radiomatic GmbH

For over 57 years, HBC-radiomatic GmbH, based in Crailsheim, Germany, has been the trend setter in radio equipment. Today, it's name is synonymous with state-of-the-art industrial radio remote controls. The use of HBC-radiomatic products not only means

rationalization, but also means making work easier. At present, HBC employs approx. 200 workers in its main factory in Crailsheim. On a platform of 18 core products they can manufacture a wide range of products and market them world-wide utilizing the support of six subsidiaries and over 30 well-established partners both in Germany and abroad.

For further information, contact:

Gottwald Port Technology GmbH

Postfach 18 03 43 • 40570 Düsseldorf • Germany

Peter Klein

Phone: +49 (0)211 7102-355 • Mobile: +49 (0) 173 722 10 74

Fax: +49 (0)211 7102-660

peter.klein@gottwald.com