

Autonomous wave power play in sight at Fred Olsen

Fred Olsen is looking at producing new wave device prototypes from next year for testing in European waters.

The Norwegian developer is in talks with a number of potential customers for its Bolt Lifesaver point absorber unit.

Some customers are interested in buying a device outright while others are keen

on hosting commercial tests in the field. Work could start next year ahead of potential deployment in the North Sea, it is understood.

Olsen is targeting the machine at offshore wind farm developers, oil and gas drillers and the defence industry to provide a charging device for seabed sensors, data communication lines and



Photo: University of Washington

subsea drones. "Our feedback tells us clients are looking for 5kW to 15kW of constant, autonomous power at low wave heights with battery banks and not hundreds of megawatts of grid-connected power," said commercial director Steve Pears.

The company has modified

its existing machine scheduled to be installed by the end of September at the US Navy's Kaneohe Bay Wave Energy Test Site off the Hawaiian island of Oahu.

The six-month trials will be led by researchers from the University of Hawaii, who will test the ability of

the Bolt Lifesaver to power communications equipment on the seabed and to run in autonomous mode.

All upgrades and improvements have been made to the device and the developer is now awaiting a suitable weather window for deployment, said Pears.

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IN BRIEF

■ The Crown Estate has agreed in principle to extend Perpetuus Tidal Energy's seabed option off the Isle of Wight, southern England, as the developer seeks to kick off construction of a 30MW deployment site from 2020.

The agreement for lease deadline for the Perpetuus Tidal Energy Centre will likely be extended from 15 November 2018 to 19 April 2021. The developer has signed on Tocado and Schottel to deliver 20MW and 10MW, respectively, at the array off St Catherine's Point.

■ DesignPro Renewables of Ireland is eyeing Canada and France for potential deployments of its next-generation tidal device after the company withdrew an application to install a 60kW machine in its homeland. Plans to test in the river Fergus in the Shannon estuary were canned because consent was likely to be granted beyond deadlines associated with a €1.95m Horizon 2020 grant, it said.

■ Minesto is to start subsea testing of its 500kW DG500 tidal kite off north Wales after completing initial commissioning sea trials near Holyhead.

■ Canadian utility Emera has withdrawn from its Cape Sharp Tidal joint venture with OpenHydro, which installed a 2MW vertical axis turbine in the Bay of Fundy, Nova Scotia, last month.

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