

ASIAN OFFSHORE

—With offices in the heart of Singapore's business district, Standard Asia is well placed to take advantage of future industry growth.



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Standard Asia, the Standard Club's Singapore based P&I club, has been underwriting Asian offshore business since it was set up in 1997, during which time the book of business has greatly expanded. It is also more varied; in 1997, it was dominated by supply boats, but now includes floating production storage and offloading vessels, drilling rigs and construction units, with the growth of Standard Asia's offshore business mirroring that of the upstream energy industry in Asia and Australasia.

With offices in the heart of Singapore's business district, Standard Asia is well placed to take advantage of future industry growth. It is well known that Singapore has been highly successful in positioning itself as a global maritime hub, and the Maritime and Port Authority (MPA) works tirelessly to attract and support a core group of shipowners, operators and maritime service providers. Included amongst these are the some 110 offshore related companies that today are established in Singapore, while there are presently 406 offshore service vessels under the Singapore flag.

The Singapore offshore cluster has attracted a number of leading players in international offshore shipping operations, including companies from Norway, the US and elsewhere. Examples include Tidewater Marine, the Swire Group, Bourbon Offshore, DOF, PGS, Farstad, Seadrill, Prosafe and Vroon. In addition to the foreign players, the cluster also comprises numerous local offshore vessel companies that have expanded globally, such as Ezra, Swiber, POSH, Miclyn Express Offshore and Pacific Richfield Marine, amongst others.

These offshore vessel operators are supported by a comprehensive cluster of shore-based businesses and infrastructure, including numerous yards specialising in offshore vessel construction and repair, by the upgraded Loyang Offshore Supply Base and the new Marine Centre at Tuas, which will be operating by the end of 2011. There are also a number of supporting service providers such as equipment design companies. Many of these companies will be members of the Association of Singapore Marine Industries (www.asmi.com).

Commercially, offshore support vessel owners and operators also have access to a host of major shipbrokers, shipping and offshore

financing banks, marine insurers and law firms. Virtually all the international maritime law firms have a presence in Singapore, and Lloyd's Asia now has 16 syndicates, including a number underwriting energy risks. In addition, the Singapore Chamber of Maritime Arbitration offers an arbitration framework in many ways similar to LMAA (www.scma.org.sg).

Recognising the need to accommodate the growing number of ships involved in offshore oil and gas activities, the MPA amended the Merchant Shipping Act to allow the Singapore Registry of Ships to register 'offshore industry mobile units' that comply with the IMO's Mobile Offshore Drilling Unit code. Today, the Singapore Registry of Ships' book of offshore vessels includes seismic survey ships, anchor handling tugs, anchor handling tug supply vessels and platform supply vessels, and various offshore units such as semi-submersible rigs, drill ships, jack-up rigs, FPSOs and floating storage and offloading vessels, accommodation platforms and construction vessels.

International shipping companies with established worldwide networks, a strong track record, demonstrable business plan and a commitment to expanding their shipping operations in Singapore may apply for Approved International Shipping Enterprise status. Companies under the AIS scheme enjoy tax exemption on qualifying shipping income for 10 years.

A number of local organisations support the work of the offshore sector in Singapore. Samantha Lee of Standard Asia is a member of the Offshore Services Committee of the Singapore Shipping Association (www.ssa.org.sg), which has provided owners and operators in Singapore with a platform to debate and drive initiatives for this sector. The Singapore-based Marine Offshore Oil and Gas Association is another relevant association.

All in all, Singapore is proving itself highly attractive as a centre for companies involved in the offshore oil and energy industry in all its forms. We have no doubt that the offshore cluster in Singapore will continue to grow and thrive, and Standard Asia looks forward to being part of its future expansion.