

Brazil's Oil Hub Gets State-of-Art Medical Support from Great Britain

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British Trade Minister Ian Pearson launched the Berkeley Training Center in Macaé, 182 km away from Rio do Janeiro, in the Brazilian southeast, which will be the first Medical training center aimed at the oil and gas industry in Latin America.

The center is a joint project involving the City of Macaé, Berkeley Training center and a consortium of UK companies led by Lancashire Ambulance service.

The training unit will be located at Macaé's brand new state of the art city hospital with its emergency and telemedicine center, meeting the needs of the local population and the 35,000 people working in the offshore industry.

Macaé, in Rio de Janeiro state is known as Brazil's oil capital because of its proximity to the offshore fields that account for 80% of the country's oil production and 45% of its natural gas.

In the inauguration speech Macaé mayor Riverton Mussi said the city population has grown three fold since Brazilian government owned oil giant Petrobras located its operational headquarters there.

"The city has been transformed, accommodating workers from all over the country and the world. Currently 10% of Macaé's inhabitants are foreigners", stressed Mussi.

"This is an excellent example of how British expertise can help Brazil and other emerging economies develop their sectors. I am delighted that Lancashire Ambulance Service, who have honed their training skills over a number of years, will be passing them on to the other side of the world to help save lives," said Minister Ian Pearson.

The UK companies involved in the project are: Lancashire Ambulance Service, which will provide training and accreditation to local health professionals and health & safety personnel offshore; HW Communication, an advanced technology developer specializing in transferring advanced technical concepts and technologies from research laboratory to the marketplace.

HW works closely with Lancashire Ambulance Service and is responsible for developing the technical aspects of their RADEEM Telemedicine Systems; PPS (Professional Protection Systems) design, manufacture and market a comprehensive range of Personal Protective Equipment and Protective Industrial Clothing for every type of hazardous environment.

"Lancashire Ambulance Service NHS Trust has been working in Brazil since 2001, but this is the most comprehensive and exciting project we have managed to date. We are looking forward to implementing the medical protocols and systems that many countries have recognized as essential for providing high quality medical services for international oil & gas industry clients", pointed out Alan Bolam Director of Commercial Services at the Lancashire Ambulance Service.

The training center opening should aid and speed up care for thousands of workers on the almost 500 oil-drilling platforms in the Campos basin, off the coast of Rio de Janeiro state with an average production of 1.3 million bpd.

"I am confident that British talent and expertise in a wide variety of sectors is second to none but we must maximize the benefits of this. UK companies must fully open their eyes to the current growth and future growth of nations like Brazil, India and South Africa. With all the news headlines about China it would be an easy mistake to not see the potential of many other nations," added Mr. Pearson.

Until next February 3, Berkeley and Lancashire Ambulance Service will run two courses aimed at the oil and gas industry at the new facilities: Trauma and Multiple-Victim Accidents with courses given by Professor Nelson Norman, Professor of Medicine, Aberdeen University and Professor Graham Page, A/E Consultant Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

The two UK guests are among the world's top experts in Emergency and Telemedicine. Prof. Norman is an authority on Oil & Gas Remote Medicine and Extreme Temperature Medicine.

He was responsible for developing medical training and qualifications for Antarctica expeditions as well as Middle East desert environments.

Prof. Page led on the medical response for the Piper Alpha disaster in the North Sea and has held many high-ranking medical positions in the UK, including Diving Medicine.

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