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Coupling manufacturer VULKAN Couplings from Herne showcases its new product at the SMM 2014:

## New TDS Plafrix shifting clutch combination for hybrid tugs



(Herne, September 2014) VULKAN Couplings presents a combination of clutch and highly flexible coupling, specially designed for use in (harbour) tugs, at the SMM 2014 in Hamburg. With this innovating product, the Herne company especially known for manufacturing highly flexible couplings, is moving forward along the path from a mere supplier of high quality components into a provider of complete solutions.

To develop and market the new TDS Plafrix clutch, Vulkan Couplings and DESCH Antriebstechnik, Arnsberg, have entered into close cooperation. DESCH Antriebstechnik GmbH & Co. KG is a worldwide active manufacturer of innovative products for drivelines for the complete machine building industry.

Both companies have brought their system competence into the development of the TDS Plafrix. TDS stands for Tug Drive Solution and Plafrix is the well-known market name of the DESCH Planox® clutch, which has been already successfully marketed by Vulkan Coupling.

The background for the development of the TDS Plafrix includes the increasingly strict laws and regulations for watercraft operation in coastal waters, together with the increasing number of Emission Control Areas (ECA), which make alternative drive concepts necessary. Emission Control Areas (ECAs) are special navigation areas established by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). Specific environmental guidelines apply to these zones, e.g. regarding emissions, so that special restrictions on sulphur oxide, nitrogen oxide and soot particle emissions exist in these areas. Tugs are particularly affected by this as, by their very nature, they perform their work almost constantly close to the coast, and thus in ECAs located in many parts of the world. In addition to this challenging field of application, tugs usually share a certain load profile, so that the market regards hybrid drives in particular as a future-proof solution for this application. Moreover, in the version currently favoured by influential engine manufacturers and designers, an electric motor between diesel and gearbox is switched onto the drive shaft. The TDS Plafrix clutch combination, designed and optimised exactly for this application, and made ready for serial production in time for the SMM 2014, represents a cost-effective and weight-optimised solution.

In addition to mounts for the engine required flexible mounting, displacement couplings tailored to this solution and able to release the electric motor both from resulting reaction forces and vibrations possibly transmitted through the housing, are available in Vulkan Couplings portfolio.

In-depth knowledge of the drive system individual components interaction, suitable products for drive system tuning from a single source, and the choice of the right partner, are the base to equip such systems successfully. A major step on the path from a component supplier into a competent system partner in the shipping industry.

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Press contact:

Antje Kurz-Möller | Hackforth Holding GmbH & Co. KG | Heerstraße 66 | 44653 Herne | Tel.: 02325/922-391  
E-mail: antje.kurz-moeller@vulkan.com