

Diary of a Paint Supervisor



IN PREVIOUS ARTICLES ABOUT PAINT MATTERS (TYR ISSUES 83, 84 and 92) we introduced 'paint management' as an important function in new build yards and repainting projects. Some new build and repaint yards have implemented successful and cost-effective paint-management systems, while others are still struggling with serious and costly paint issues before and after delivery.

In the above-mentioned articles we listed the typical tasks and functions of a paint manager and the positioning in the organisation. Now we take matters a step further by following the activities of an independent paint supervisor on a repaint contract in the form of a diary. While this is obviously a fictitious project, the incidents and challenges are based on real-life experiences during the many projects that CCS has managed.

DAY 1: Got a call from Captain Hook asking whether we could help him sort out some paint problems that he is facing at the start of a repaint contract. After a short discussion it was decided that an immediate visit was essential.

DAY 2: Met Captain Hook in the yard and went through the paperwork (contracts and specifications). The selected yard had offered the lowest price, but the other offers were not based on the same scope of work and had different exclusions. Captain Hook decided to move on with the selected yard because there was no alternative left at this stage. An evaluation of the documents made it clear that there was no detailed planning or any clear indication of manpower allocation per section. Called a meeting with the yard to discuss the planning and sort out various technical issues not covered in the specs, including removal of

caulking, doors and hatches, addressing rubber seals, removal of margin planks, etc.

In addition, the contract does not specify quality criteria in terms of gloss, orange peel, etc, while the warranty only contains very general terms. Unfortunately, as the contract has been signed some time ago, no specific warranty clauses can be included. We have to work with what we have and final acceptance will be based on subjective grounds.

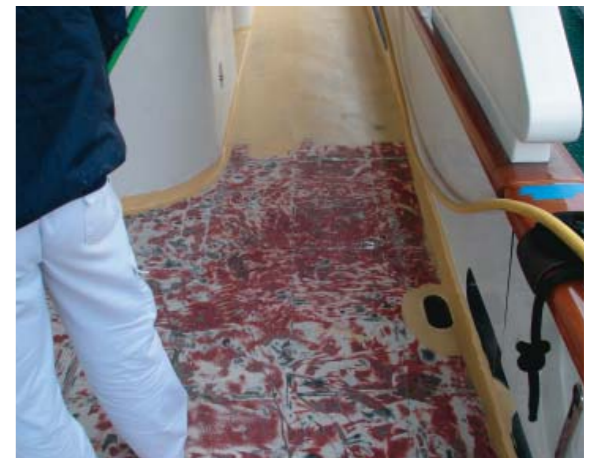
DAY 3: The yard has produced a plan, but this still gives no indication of how much manpower the sub-contractor has allocated for the different areas. The basic technical issues were covered with the exception of the temperature of the coating environment. Although the weather forecast remains good, colder weather is anticipated towards the end of the project. Heaters have not been budgeted for, so the yard and sub-contractor have been asked to come up with a solution to avoid possible delays.

In the afternoon the sub-contractor produces a manpower plan. It is now clear at the start of the project that the sub-contractor is short of ten workers who are held up on another project. After putting some pressure on the yard, the sub-contractor agrees to transfer five personnel over from that other project. Captain Hook compromises by giving the yard an extra week to finish the project. We agreed that the work will be followed by his first mate, with CCS being available for telephone consultations. Next visit planned for day 8.

DAY 8: Sub-contractor is making good progress with all preparations. Although the plastic of the tent seems a bit thin, sub-contractor states that this has been budgeted for and never given a problem before. Yard has yet to present a solution for the anticipated lack of heating towards the end of the project. Carried out overall inspection of the underwater hull and noticed signs of detachment of the anti-corrosive coating system. Suggested calling in the paint supplier's representative to get his opinion and advice; meeting scheduled for tomorrow.

DAY 9: Meeting with yard, sub-contractor and paint supplier's representative. Determined adhesion problem source of anti-corrosive system and concluded that spot-blasting of affected areas is necessary. Yard has been requested to submit a price quotation for this work. Paint representative has been asked to recommend a suitable repair system and an anti-fouling suitable for the anticipated cruising area with a three-year dry dock interval. Next visit day 13.

DAY 13: Inspected the conditions and progress. Noticed that the air conditioning on the vessel had been switched off to avoid sanding dust entering and contaminating the interior of the vessel. Temperature inside the vessel had risen to an unacceptable level so advised captain and yard to set up a ventilation system that provides clean fresh air from outside the working area. At the same time a slight overpressure should be created to avoid foreign matter entering the vessel when doors are opened. Working conditions



At the start of diary (top two images);
Work in progress....



inside the vessel improve dramatically thanks to this simple action. We also noticed that there was no separate crew access door in the tent, forcing the crew to walk through a dirty environment when coming and going. Yard agreed to modify the tent accordingly.

DAY 14: Today the representative of the management company was negotiating with the yard to reduce the planning by four weeks. After the meeting we pointed out that this would be impossible without compromising the quality. Agreed to set up another meeting with the yard to have a general discussion about the possibilities of reducing the time needed for completion.

DAY 15: Had a successful meeting about the time reduction. Yard and sub-contractor had some effective proposals that would reduce the time needed by two weeks, which was acceptable to the management company's representative.

DAY 16: It is now becoming clear that the company contracted by the yard for scaffolding and tenting is not up to the job. Progress is slow and the plastic is very thin. This will cause delays as the plastic will require many repairs and it is very questionable whether it will be able to stand up to the forecasted strong winds and rain. Yard and contractor are quite confident this will not happen and decide not to take any action.

DAY 20: Spot repairs on the upper deck bulwarks are in progress. Corrosion blisters have been opened and ground out and edges/overlap to the surrounding areas properly feathered. After priming, however, the filler was applied in one layer of approximately two centimetres. Explained to the yard that this would probably create serious air pockets and visible tension lines between old and new sections. Yard and sub-contractor agreed to apply the filler in several layers, eliminating these risks.

DAY 22: Today the black-water tanks were inspected and found to be in a very mediocre condition, with corrosion and delamination. Yard proposed to grit blast the tank and recoat with a local product. We advised not to accept this proposal as recoating a black-water tank needs good preparation and a suitable tank lining. Recommended calling in the paint supplier's representative for advice and specification. Warned the yard that this would require careful planning in relation to other activities and to avoid contamination by the blast dust. Yard agreed to come up with a suitable and detailed plan of action.

DAY 28: Last night high winds and rain have damaged (the tent, allowing rain to soak one-day-old filler. Yard and sub-contractor suggested drying these surfaces with towels and continuing the application process. Called a meeting to discuss a more constructive solution to this problem by reinforcing the tent. Yard argued that this would delay the planning, but also reluctantly agreed that further delays would be avoided by doing a proper repair job now. Contacted the paint supplier's representative, who advised waiting a few days before continuing with the application process.

DAY 34: Tent has been repaired, filler is dry and sub-contractor is preparing to continue the application process. However, much rain has entered the tent and the humidity levels seem to be high. There are no dew point calculators on site so we use our equipment to determine humidity, temperature and dew point. Based on the outcome it is decided to wait for one more day to allow humidity to drop to an acceptable level.

DAY 38: In today's progress meeting we informed all parties that the radar domes were probably coated with an unsuitable coating. Coating of the domes had been sub-contracted to a local contractor at a very low price. Yard promised to investigate and come back with a proposal to solve this issue. CCS's offer to assist in this matter was accepted.

DAY 42: Large areas of the main deck were being prepared for top coating. Tenting was sloppy and without ventilation and filters. We advised the yard and sub-contractor to spend more time on these issues. It also became clear that the contractor planned to finish the sundeck by top coating many small areas. This is unacceptable as it will create many cutting lines in this highly visible area. We asked for a new spray plan, to be made in cooperation with Captain Hook.

DAY 45: New spray plan submitted by the yard and accepted. Inspected new topcoat on main deck and unfortunately it

had to be rejected because of cratering and cleaning marks. Advised contractor to seek advice from paint supplier to optimise and improve cleaning methods and techniques.

DAY 54: Inspected topcoat applications on main deck and sundeck. Due to the lack of agreed quality criteria, the inspection ended in long and heated discussions regarding acceptability of some areas. Finally, CCS suggested re-spraying the sundeck and accepting the rather heavy orange peel on the main deck starboard. This was accepted by all parties.

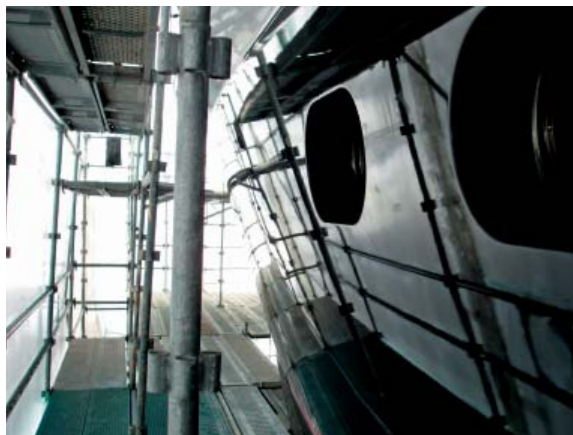
DAY 68: Final overall inspection of the topcoat application and, with the exception of a few small areas, the result was good and accepted by Captain Hook.

DAY 78: Yard presented Captain Hook with a stack of bills for extras, some of which were not covered by a signed acceptance of a price quotation/extra work order. Renegotiated on some of the bills and Captain Hook agreed to sign off.

DAY 79: CCS made a final survey and report with proper documentation for warranty purposes.

We trust the above fictitious diary gives an answer to a question we're often asked: "What does a paint supervisor do?"

Nico Roper and Joop Ellenbroek
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Around day 9 (top);
Halfway through diary (middle top);
End of diary (bottom two images)