Press Release from Halmatic

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Hunting

25th November, 1970.

HALMATIC LTD. IN THE ORKNEYS

A New Glass Fibre Fishing Boat Company At Kirkwall

Halmatic Limited, a company of the international Hunting Group having interests in shipping, oil, aviation, survey and engineering, is now setting up a subsidiary at Kirkwall in Orkney. The new company - to be known as Halmatic (Scotland) Limited - will be engaged in the construction of glass reinforced plastic (GRP) fishing and commercial vessels and other associated GRP products.

After 18 months of negotiations and talks with the White Fish Authority, Highlands and Islands Development Board, numerous fishermen and particularly Orkney County Development Department., whose energies undoubtedly turned the 'tide' in favour of Orkney, the new company may look forward with confidence to a healthy future in both home and overseas markets.

Halmatic's main factory at Havant in Hampshire, is one of the most modern in Europe for the moulding and fitting out of GRP hulls, decks and superstructures up to 85 ft. in length. With over 16 years of experience in the design and production of reinforced plastic vessels, and recent approval of the Statutory Authorities for the application of GRP in fishing vessels the new company will be able to offer the first purpose built and designed GRP fishing boats in the U.K.

The site for the new Company, at Hatston, Kirkwall, an ex-wartime aerodrome and base for Sunderland flying boats, offers immediate potential for the

company's proposed activities, having access to an adjacent slipway and deep water facilities and also scope for future development and expansion of the business.

With substantial backing from the Highlands & Islands Development Board, the Company will make maximum use of the Orcadians' skill and their centuries of experience in sea lore, to exploit a growing worldwide interest in GRP fishing and commercial vessels.

Orkney was chosen as the most favourable site because of its unique position and its ability to provide suitable premises and the skilled labour vital to the mounting of such an operation.

Initially, a limited work force of approximately a dozen locally-recruited personnel will be employed. However, future plans for increased production to meet overseas demands should justify the number of employees being increased to approximately 50 people by 1974.

Throughout the research which has been carried out on the project, the fullest co-operation and involvement of established boat builders with whom the new company will be dealing, has been sought. Halmatic has been particularly encouraged by the favourable reaction from fishermem and boat builders, on the use of GRP for fishing boats and work vessels.

For 1971, the Company is planning the construction of a multi-purpose 25 ton vessel designed by the Glasgow firm of G.L. Watson & Co. Ltd, and, a 36 ft general purpose lobster boat specifically designed for the UK market. Production tooling for these boats will start in January/February of 1971 with the first boats for completion by June/July.

Designs have been chosen offering the maximum flexibility in fishing methods and numerous variations will be available on standard hull forms.

The manufacture of GRP structures demands a high degree of knowledge and supervision in order to produce high-quality laminates and, unlike traditional wood and steel constructional methods, quality and mechanical properties are actually 'built in' by the operators during the construction process. Careful control of working practices are therefore maintained throughout in order to produce structures of optimum strength values.

In order that the locally-recruited personnel may meet these criteria, a 3 month intensive training course will be held at the Company's Havant plant. The course is being arranged in conjunction with the Shipbuilding Industry Training Board at Southampton and intense practical and limited theoretical instruction will be given.

Future projects, now being researched, are a 70 - 75 ft seine netter or purse seiner for UK markets and a 70 - 80 ft shrimp trawler for overseas markets.

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