

PIPELINERS

HALL of FAME NEWS



MISTRAS
A World of NDT Solutions



MISTRAS

"Leading the Pipeline Industry,
One Crawler at a Time"



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From high profile acquisitions to a public offering to multi-million dollar projects, within a year, MISTRAS Group, Inc. has taken the pipeline industry and country by storm.

So where does a company who has broken into territory after territory and created cutting edge pipeline inspection techniques go from here?

Next stop: Canada.

"Canada was just the next logical step for us and the timing was right," said Michael J. Lange, Group Executive Vice President & CEO of MISTRAS Services. "We teamed up with the best internal crawler experts in the region, expanding our technology and giving us the ability to take on any size pipeline, anywhere in the world."

MISTRAS Group wasn't always an

avid participant in the pipeline industry. Starting out as solely an AE manufacturing company under Physical Acoustics Corporation (now the MISTRAS Products & Systems Division), it wasn't until MISTRAS acquired the well-established NDT company, CONAM Inspection and Engineering Services, in 2003 that they became a top contender in the pipeline field.

"After CONAM became part of MISTRAS, the dynamic of the company changed," said Lange. "CONAM had an extensive history in the servicing of pipelines and they were able to take what was once a small east coast regional company and turn us into a major player in the pipeline industry. The increase in technology and geographical coverage led us to more and more opportunities, giving us the chance to keep expanding."

Now operating as the MISTRAS Services Division and with multiple acquisi-

tions and new technologies under their belt, MISTRAS has the power to make a significant impact on the NDT services provided for pipeline inspection and construction in Canada.

Pipelines have been a part of everyday life in Canada since the 1900s. Developed to transport products, crude oil, natural gas, gasoline, aviation fuel and the raw materials for plastics, fertilizers and medicines, they are considered the safest and most efficient means of transporting the products that support the standard of living.

And with a primary focus of providing advanced technology to the pipeline industry, MISTRAS can use their large array of inspection techniques to not only keep these existing pipelines operating and functioning normally, but to be a part of the development and construction of some of the largest pipeline systems being built to date in this country.

"Having one of the largest and newest crawler fleets in North America has certainly helped us in the bidding process for pipeline projects in Canada," said Michael Smith, Field Operations Manager for MISTRAS Services. "We have the ability to undertake numerous pipeline spreads at any given time, with a team of technicians who are factory trained on this equipment. In the unlikely chance a breakdown should occur, we are always fully prepared with each spread being fully equipped with complete back-up and a large assortment of spare parts."

With a combination of internal capabilities (Gamma Radiography and X-Ray Crawlers) and external inspection capabilities (Automated Ultrasonic Systems), MISTRAS' unique blend of technology was one of the reasons they received top priority with the Interpipeline Fund project, a \$1.4 million development for the inspection of 96 miles of pipelines throughout Southern Alberta.

"Being one of the few NDE contractors to fully equip and staff all three spreads at once on this project, put us a step ahead of the rest and just further puts us in the category of a single source provider," said Smith. "With the job consisting of one supervisor, three x-ray mainlines and seven external x-ray tie-in units, we were able to use our x-ray technology, including the X-Ray Crawlers, to complete a job in a timely manner with very few obstacles."

MISTRAS' use of X-Ray Crawlers has led them to stand out in the pipeline inspection crowd. The crawler produces high quality panoramic radiographs of circumferential butt welds in new pipelines from 6 inches to 60 inches. These units are designed and proven, both onshore and offshore, to work as a fully self contained, self powered exposure vehicle. Because a weld can be read in only seconds the X-Ray Crawler, not only saves a company time and money, but shorter exposure times and an x-ray method allow MISTRAS to use smaller exclusion areas and still maintain a level of safety that exceeds all regulatory demands.

"Not many NDE contractors have the capabilities, like MISTRAS does, to use x-ray technology on pipelines," said Smith. "We can take pipelines as small as 6 inches and as big as 60 inches and provide our client with a better quality radiograph than any other technology could. This is why we can take on the size projects that we do."

Covering more than 35 miles of pipelines, MISTRAS continued to put their X-Ray Crawlers to use. They worked with Spectra Energy and AUX Sable in extreme weather conditions ranging from 49 below zero (-45C) temperatures to severe mud in order to complete these projects. They performed high production main line inspection, combining gamma radiography technology with the use of the crawlers.

Most recently, MISTRAS used their one of a kind method on a \$1.2 million inspection project with Statoil Hydro-Conklin. Faced with tremendous challenges, MISTRAS had to approach this project differently than ones in the past.

"We had to equip a mainline unit with both an internal x-ray crawler as well as an internal gamma crawler to meet the client's specifications for the two different sizes of pipe. In addition, all six tie-in units were equipped with two external x-ray tubes and an external gamma source, thus saving the client more money," said Smith. "This is what we are all about. We work with our clients 24/7 to develop solid relationships in order to provide them with the most advanced services, the best equipment and the most qualified technicians available."

From X-Ray Crawlers to Gamma Radiography to Automated Ultrasonic Systems, the technology MISTRAS has employed in the past year not only sets them apart, but paves the way for newer technology from them in the future.

"Breaking into the Canadian territory has given MISTRAS new exposure and opportunities," said Lange. "The information and technology we have gained from working with our experts in Canada not only gave us the ability to work on extensive pipelines in this region, but gave us new and improved technology to make us stand out in the U.S. We will continue to gain the knowledge and manpower needed to keep growing and advancing in the pipeline field."

And as MISTRAS continues to spread their roots across Canada, expanding their 68 locations across 16 countries and catering to their thousands of dedicated employees, there's only one question left to ask:

Where to next, MISTRAS?

By: Celia Scarlata, Marketing Services Associate for MISTRAS Group, Inc.

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