

e-loop scoops drilling industry safety award at first attempt, vindicates R&D in service loop protection

The igus e-loop, a heavy duty energy chain for drilling machinery, has won an international award recognising its design to protect cables/hoses and operators on oil & gas platforms.

igus has returned a winner at the prestigious International Association of Drilling Contractors (IADC) NSC Safety Awards in Aberdeen for the innovative e-loop, a clever product that combines the advantages of a plastic energy chain with a high tension pull rope.

e-loop claimed first place in the associate member category at igus's first attempt at the IADC North Sea Chapter (NSC) awards on Friday 25 March. The category recognises technical or operational initiatives to reduce risk and increase safety. The e-loop is an articulated and ruggedised cable assembly protector to replace existing top drive service loops used by drilling operators. Service loops have several design and operational defects that can cause unplanned downtime, incur cost and create a risk to human safety.

On onshore and offshore drilling operations, hanging service loops can get snagged and caught, come under strain with no external support, they can swing in the wind and potentially strike equipment and personnel. For these reasons they can present a safety risk.

Take the strain

Traditional service loops are protected with only a hydraulic hose sleeve or casing. e-loop uses strong, polymer inner links to protect the hoses and cables, with a rubberised polyurethane outer link to absorb impact/shock. The e-loop offers the ability to combine several service loops into a single e-loop system.

e-loop not only protects the energy and data cables and hoses in a neat, robust and flexible chain, it is also designed specifically to transfer the pull forces in the loop to the mounting brackets and the chain (super)structure. Consequently, the cables are completely relieved of strain, do not incur stress damage and fail far less frequently than service loops with no protection.

Service loops have no mechanism to stop cables over-extending their bend radii. The e-loop restricts the bend radius, extending the life of cables/hoses within the system, meaning less downtime is needed for repair, and reducing time working at height.

Launched in 2019, e-loops are already in action on over 40 land drilling rigs and The e-loop is now installed on a North Sea jack-up rig.

High level recognition at the first attempt

It is rare to win an award on debut among international and well-established competition in a safety critical industry like oil & gas. The judges saw the potential of e-loop, to both reduce operational risk to people and to extend the life of unprotected, and expensive, service loops.

“We are delighted to receive this award in recognition of the igus e-loop’s innovative design,” said Stuart Willison, Industry Specialist, offshore oil and gas at igus UK. “It indicates the confidence the offshore drilling industry has in igus products and services. The e-loop enable drilling contractors to save huge amounts of money on top drive service loops, by replacing individual cables and hoses as required, rather than replacing full-service loops. And it also enables a huge time and cost saving by helping to reduce downtime. This while increasing safety and reducing risk”

Justin Leonard, e-chain director at igus UK, said “I am delighted that our product development has been recognised in this way. igus engineers have put much work into solving this specific problem, which has been recognised with an award by the renowned IADC – it shows the e-loop has a strong place in the drilling industry.”

Footnote

IADC NSC Safety Awards

e-loop won the associate member category that recognises technical and/or operational initiatives to reduce risk. Entries must exhibit several key priorities in their product development, including Robustness and durability, Modularity, Safety, Cost efficiency, and Simplicity.

The IADC Safety Awards is a long running awards programme run by the 49-year old IADC and is open to companies globally. Previous winners include, among others, Borr Drilling, Westerton Access and Maersk Drilling.

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Caption:

Image: igus e-loop receives IADC award

Stuart Willison, Industry Specialist oil and gas at igus, receives the IADC NSC 2022 Associate Member award from Darren Sutherland, chairman of the IADC North Sea Chapter, for the igus e-loop. (Source: Prime Event Management)

Image IMAGE 2 ECS_AP_e-loop_offshore3

igus e-loop fitted to drilling rig demonstrating that it both protects and supports the pull strain of cables in a top drive service loop. This extends their life, reduces downtime and saves operators' costs.

The terms "igus", "Apiro", "chainflex", "CFRIP", "conprotect", "CTD", "drygear", "drylin", "dry-tech", "dryspin", "easy chain", "e-chain", "e-chain systems", "e-ketten", "e-kettensysteme", "e-skin", "e-spool", "flizz", "ibow", "igear", "iglidur", "igubal", "kineKIT", "manus", "motion plastics", "pikchain", "plastics for longer life", "readychain", "readycable", "ReBeL", "speedigus", "triflex", "roboLink" and "xiros" are legally protected trademarks in the Federal Republic of Germany and if necessary also internationally.