



Solent Towage

Working with Tugs

Saturday 8th September 2007.

It's 04:30 hrs in the morning, and the Tenax is leaving Fawley outward bound to the rendezvous point four miles South of the Nab Tower, to meet the Norwegian VLCC "Evi Knutsen".

This escort of 20 nautical miles back to Esso Fawley is much the same as any other, but with a slight difference. On board the Evi Knutsen is a certain Mr Michael Caine who is to be filming firstly on board the VLCC and later in the day on board the Tenax.

To put your minds at rest, this is not the Michael Caine of Hollywood fame, but a cameraman working for a company called Videotel. This company has for years supplied nautical colleges and shipping companies throughout the world with educational, safety and training videos.

The intended programme, "Working with Tugs" is being made to show the working practices and procedures, hazards and dangers associated with towing operations.

The emphasis was on the working practices of the Ship's crews, how they handled the tow line when connecting and disconnecting and also highlighting some of the more unsavoury practices that could ultimately endanger the Tug crews. The use of weighted heaving lines and letting the tow line go unchecked were just two of the important issues raised.

Filming from the VLCC took place at intervals during the escort inwards, looking at the Tenax during the turns, disconnecting from escort mode and working in tandem with the Thrax in docking push-pull mode.

At 1045, with the Evi Knutsen safely alongside, it was the turn of the Tenax to be the filming platform. All the crew on board were either actively taking part in the filming or assisting in setting the stage for the various scenes to take place. It was not until 18:30 that the final shots were taken and the cameraman was satisfied that he had sufficient material to be able to complete this film.

Life is not easy being film stars, but the crew of the Tenax certainly made an impression on Mr Caine.

We now await to see the finished article sometime in October.