

CONVERSATION

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Please tell us how you became involved in the wind energy industry.

In 2007, I sought a career that was exciting, challenging, and different from my previous years serving in the military. At that time, the wind energy industry was all three of those and then some. Transitioning from the military to wind was tough because of the infancy of the industry and the multiple growing pains between the European companies transitioning to the United States market. However, this experience has given me an appreciation and the perspective of how the industry has grown over the last nine years. Having a strong background in operations from working previously as a field technician, site manager, regional manager, and quality manager, the transition to sales at Lighthouse Global Energy

was smooth. I am excited to be with Lighthouse Global because I still feel like a part of the operations side through our customer interactions and through the distribution of the parts they need to help their wind farms produce high availability and reduce downtime.

How was Lighthouse Global Energy started, and how did it make its way into the wind energy industry?

Lighthouse Global was created from Texas Aerospace Services, a leading aerospace component repair facility established in 1967 in Abilene, Texas. In 2013, the company decided to expand its experience in overhaul and repairs from the aerospace industry into the wind energy industry. Being strategically located in Abilene with close proximity to the largest wind farms in North America allowed Lighthouse Global to provide component repairs and distribution solutions for our customers' most complex needs.

Tell us about the repair services Lighthouse Global offers the wind energy industry and what the company does to combat costly downtime.

We offer a range of complex repair services from pitch systems to yaw systems. To minimize downtime,

Lighthouse Global inventories replacement parts to allow quick turnaround times on the repair services. We also work with the customers to identify usage rates to minimize delivery and downtime.

Could you give us an example of how you've worked with a customer to solve their specific problem?

Being transparent with our customers in communication generates trust, which is something we strive for at Lighthouse Global. For example, a customer came to us with a brake coil to repair. We notified our motor repair division and scheduled a couple of onsite meetings to identify the customers' expectations and failure rates. This repair was not our normal type of repair, so we utilized our machine shop capabilities to fabricate specialty tooling for winding and testing the coils. Once we completed the overhaul and testing of the coils, we delivered to the site for onsite testing. In the end, we were able to decrease the lead time of the unit, reducing turbine downtime and giving our customer approximately 50-percent cost savings versus new.

What are some of the advantages of working with Lighthouse Global?

Lighthouse Global understands some of the tough wind farm challenges

that keep our customers up at night. We strive to deliver replacement parts on time; whether it's overhaul repairs, new parts, or machine work, our goal is to eliminate and reduce the customers' downtime. Lighthouse Global's partnership with component OEMs strengthens our repair and distribution to deliver original equipment parts and repairs. The benefit of partnering with OEMs is the technical support and staying current with component upgrades that we pass along to our customers.

What sets these services and the company apart from some of its competitors?

Aligning our goals with our customers' expectations gives us the ability to service their needs and requirements. We believe in communicating with each customer on a one-on-one basis to identify their unique requirements and situations. Through our distribution partnerships, repair/overhauls, machine shop services, and motor repair division, we can offer more in-house support to minimize our customers' downtime.

Tell us about Lighthouse Global's manufacturing capabilities.

Lighthouse Global has fabricated everything from oil containments to specialty wind tooling for the industry. Our in-house machines and manufacturing capabilities include waterjet cutting, lathes, mills, drilling, gearhobber, saws, pressing, welding, and grinding.

What are some issues wind farm owners and operators face when using or purchasing used or refurbished units?

Long lead times and shorter warranty periods. Additionally, not all owner and operator units are economically repairable. Lighthouse Global con-

tinues to establish partnerships with component OEMs, and our in-house engineers communicate with them to develop final performance testing on all repairs. Working with the OEMs provides us with the opportunity to replace the non-repairable units with new units.

What can the wind energy industry expect from Lighthouse Global moving forward?

We are committed to providing solutions to our customers in the areas of repair services and distribution of new components. We will continue to improve our processes through solid engineering practices and a commitment to high quality.

What is your view on the future of the wind energy industry, including Lighthouse Global's role in it?

The industry has high energy right now due to the growth in new construction, and that will continue to grow with the recent production tax credit (PTC) extension. One certainty is that with the increasing age of installed turbines, the components' failure rate will increase as well. Lighthouse Global is committed to bridging the gap on new replacement parts through partnerships and warehousing while offering high-quality repairs when buying new is not an option. Lighthouse Global's research and development department's sole function is to evaluate new repairs and develop procedures and test equipment. This ensures that all repairs delivered to the wind farms are repaired and tested to the customer's approval and specifications. ↘



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