

# Rigged up like a hotel

## GANGWAY

■ The Floatel Superior has a 38.5m bridge that extends to about 7.5m more, allowing the vessel to remain connected to another rig in severe weather.

## LIVING QUARTERS

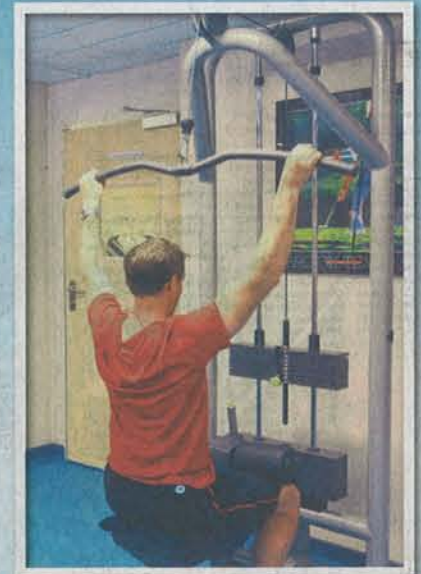
- Houses 440 single-bed cabins and recreational areas such as a gymnasium, a sauna, an Internet cafe and a cinema.
- Each cabin has air-conditioning, a bathroom and telephone/IT/TV connection facilities.
- Made in Indonesia.

## HELICOPTER DECK

- Total diameter: 27.4m



Each cabin (above) comes with a window that looks out to sea.



A gymnasium where users can build up a sweat working off calories (above, right).

## UPPER HULL

- Parts of it are made in Singapore and Thailand.



The Floatel has an airy mess-hall that can seat 220 people (above).

The 100-seat movie theatre is a great place to relax after dinner (below).

## COLUMNS

- Four support columns were built in China.

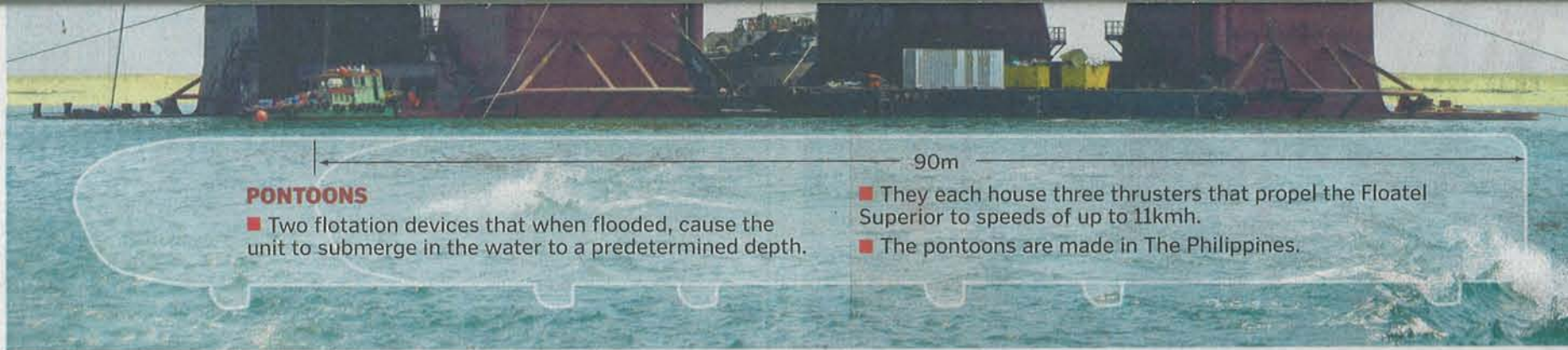


90m

## PONTOONS

- Two flotation devices that when flooded, cause the unit to submerge in the water to a predetermined depth.

- They each house three thrusters that propel the Floatel Superior to speeds of up to 11kmh.
- The pontoons are made in The Philippines.



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GRAPHICS: MIKE M DIZON PHOTOS: CHEW SENG KIM and MIKE M DIZON

It cost \$437 million and took two years to build. The Floatel Superior may not look like much on the outside, but it provides hotel-like accommodation for oil-rig workers

**tay suan chiang**

**T**he sparse, small one-man cabins of the Floatel Superior, a floating accommodation rig, may bear little resemblance to those of cruise ships. But for oil-rig workers, they are welcome comfort of a decidedly superior standard.

Each of the 440 cabins comes with

a single bed, an ensuite bathroom, a desk, a wall-mounted television set and a window with views of the sea.

The home-at-sea even has its own sauna, movie theatre, gym and medical clinic.

The Floatel Superior is a new rig built by local firm Keppel Fels, a subsidiary of Keppel Corporation, for Floatel International, an accommodation and construction support

vessels company.

Such floating "hotels" are often chartered by oil companies to house their drilling rig workers and attached to the rig by a bridge.

Floatel Superior's manager Tommy Rommersjo, 52, says the single-man cabins are more comfortable than what other vessels at sea offer. "Usually, there could be two or even four men in the same cabin. Two men would have to wait outside the room while the other two changed."

The structure, which cost US\$310 million (S\$437 million) and took two years to build, is undergoing tests in the waters off Tuas.

It is the world's first newly built

North Sea-compliant floating hotel in more than 20 years.

Floatel site manager Jens Rasmussen, 54, explains it can operate in both tropical and freezing North Sea waters, and amid waves 30m high.

Such rigs typically operate only in either tropical or cold waters, so "being able to operate in two vast weather environments means better charter opportunities".

The Floatel, as the name suggests, oper-

ates like a hotel that is afloat. But where hotel guests arrive by cab or bus, Floatel guests come by helicopter, landing on a helipad, before heading to the arrival lobby to check into their cabins.

Continued on facing page



Floatel Superior's manager Tommy Rommersjo (above) likens it to a cruise ship, but without a pool. ST PHOTO: CHEW SENG KIM

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Images of various sofa and coffee table options.



Currently managed by Australian chef Daniel Suryanto (above), the kitchen whips out a different menu every day. The spread sometimes include salads, poached prawns, steak and a variety of fruit (right). ST PHOTOS: CHEW SENG KIM



Unlike a hotel where guests arrive via cab or bus, rig workers get to the Floatel Superior by helicopter, landing on its helipad (left).



Located on the highest floor of the Floatel Superior, the command control room (right) is where the main action on the rig takes place.



## Like living on a cruise ship

From facing page

Instead of in-house restaurants, there is a mess-hall that seats 220. A catering company provides three meals daily.

The kitchen is currently managed by Australian chef Daniel Suryanto, 45.

The menu changes daily. On the day that Life! visited, there was a buffet spread of salads, poached prawns, steak and vegetables. Dessert was Haagen-Dazs ice cream.

Seven 50-tonne containers of food are flown in every two weeks and stored in freezers and chill rooms. Mr Suryanto proudly tells Life! that the equipment on board is better than that of a hotel's.

"A defrosting room thaws food in a quick 30 minutes, rather than taking hours," he says. "And no more peeling potatoes by hand as I have an automatic peeler here."

Mr Rasmussen, a 30-year veteran in

the ship-building industry, says there are about 25 accommodation rigs in the world and their average age is 25 years.

On March 20, the Floatel Superior will head to East Timor, having been chartered by global energy company ConocoPhillips Australia.

"I'm looking forward to that day but will be sad to see it go," says Keppel Fels project supervisor Firdaus Rahim, 30, who has worked on the rig since Day One.

The Floatel will take about two weeks to travel from Singapore to East Timor.

It will have a 65-man crew - a mix of Swedes, Filipinos, Indonesians and Malaysians.

For Mr Rommersjo, who has been at sea for 37 years and who has worked on cargo ships and cruise liners, life aboard the Floatel could not be better.

"It is just like a cruise ship. All that is missing is a pool," he says with a laugh. [taysc@sph.com.sg](mailto:taysc@sph.com.sg)