

The Amateur Yacht Research Society

Some Members' Projects

Offshore Wind Power using Small Floating Generators.

Slade Penoyre & Fred Ball

Slade and Fred are investigating the possibility of providing offshore wind power to the national electrical grid much more cheaply than this can be done from present offshore wind farms with huge seabed-mounted generators. They propose to use small floating generators moored offshore in very large ("car industry") numbers, building perhaps 2 million per year to reach and maintain a fleet of 20 million. Each generator unit would be a steel or plastic catamaran about 12 metres long by 12m beam, carrying a wind turbine of 9 or 10m diameter rated at 15 or 20 kW. The total annual output of this fleet would be about twice the electrical energy the UK uses at present.



They are now working with two 1/4 scale versions of their proposed design, 3m long by 3m beam steel catamarans carrying standard commercially available wind turbines. Tests in September 2007 on extremely exposed moorings off Atlantic College, between Porthcawl and Barry on the north side of the Bristol Channel, showed satisfactory behaviour in moderate winds but major structural problems with the windmills in force 6. They hope to get at least one of the generator units rebuilt and out at sea again there in January 2008.

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