Acadian ventures out

Separate division to handle offshore work

John Sullivan
LAFAYETTE — Acadian Ambulance announced Thursday a new division that will handle the firm's offshore contracts with the oil and gas industry.

Richard Zuschlag, Acadian A mbulance chairman and chief executive officer, said the new company will be called Acadian Integrated Services. Ed Mury, an 18-year veteran of Acadian Ambulance and a native of New Iberia, was named as president.

"This is a big step for us," Zuschlag said. He said the new company will give a new level of service to the offshore oil and gas industry.

Acadian Integrated Services will also have a new computer system to help its paramedics offshore.

A Web site called PetroPort provides a single database for safety, environmental, medical data and services and is now operational and being used by the company.

The new company will have its headquarters in the Acadian Ambulance corporate offices on Kaliste Saloom Road and will start with a $2 million annual budget. Mury said AIS will have 100 paramedics, safety coordinators and managers.

"We expect to add another 50 jobs within the next couple of months," Mury said. "Within 24 months, I think we will be able to add another 100 to 150 jobs."

Acadian Ambulance has contracts to provide personnel to about 100 rig sites in southern Louisiana, with more than 80 of them on offshore platforms.

Zuschlag said the new company will offer services that include on-site health and safety services; risk management analysis; workplace security; and on-site administrative support, as well as regular training for workers and training for first aid and disaster response.

"We had our first contract with the offshore corporate offices and the demand has been growing ever since," Zuschlag said. "However, since then, the role our personnel have played has been changing just like the oil and gas industry."

Zuschlag said the company at first provided emergency medical personnel who took care of serious injuries or stabilized accident victims until they could be airlifted back to a hospital.

The role of their personnel includes everything from helping with minor medical problems, teaching first aid and helping out the rig crew by being cross-trained in dispatch or technical support roles.

"The oil companies have always put dollars into maintenance programs to keep their machines up and running," Mury said. "Now, we are seeing that some type of commitment from the companies to their employees, and that is one of the things that our personnel have to be ready to help with."