

Heesen Enhances Strategic Vision with Appointment of Captain Mike Rouse

Heesen has appointed Captain Mike Rouse as Strategic Advisor, bringing to the shipyard a rare blend of senior command experience and deep technical expertise. His decades at sea as a professional captain, combined with extensive involvement in complex new-builds and major refits across Northern Europe, position him to bridge the gap between operational reality and advanced yacht engineering. His arrival builds on the strong technical foundation established by the current leadership team and signals a more integrated, future-focused approach to product development.

Rouse's background spans hands-on command of large yachts, oversight of multiple new-build projects at leading Northern European shipyards, and years of work as a respected owner's representative. This combination gives him a unique understanding of the practical demands placed on modern superyachts and the evolving expectations of owners, captains, and crew.

In his new role, he will work closely with the board and Heesen's technical departments to evaluate emerging technologies, refine quality standards, and embed operational feedback into early design and engineering processes. This collaboration strengthens Heesen's position at the forefront of Dutch yacht building.

"Bringing Mike into the organisation marks a progressive step in our pursuit of excellence," says Jeroen van der Meer, CEO of Heesen. "His operational insight, combined with our engineering capability, enhances our ability to deliver yachts that are technologically advanced and perfectly aligned with the realities of contemporary yachting. His contribution will support our technical teams as we evolve our product range and enter a new chapter of innovation."

Rouse's appointment creates a direct feedback channel between life at sea and the shipyard floor. By introducing operational thinking at the earliest stages, Heesen aims to optimise technical spaces, improve crew flow, and ensure long-range capability is considered from the outset.

This includes identifying strategic partnerships with innovative suppliers to guarantee the highest levels of reliability across all onboard systems.

"In superyacht construction, the difference between a good yacht and a great one often emerges only after thousands of miles underway," Rouse says. "My goal is to ensure those operational nuances are embedded from day one. I look forward to working with the engineering teams to champion practical innovation and uphold Heesen's reputation for uncompromising Northern European quality."

His remit will also extend to Heesen's in-house luxury interior company, where he will advise on the intersection of high-concept design and maritime durability. This holistic approach ensures that every Heesen yacht delivers both aesthetic refinement and long-term resilience, supporting the shipyard's ambition to shape the next generation of performance and design."