Compagnie Maritime Monegasque (CMM), approached Damen to discuss options for fulfilling the requirement of Petrobras in Brazil for Fast Oil Spill Response Vessels. CMM has worked with Damen since it first began activities in the Brazilian E&P sector, and had previously bought a Damen PSV 3300 for long term charter to Petrobras. Now it is looking to extend its relationship with Brazil’s national oil company as the latter embarked on a round of contingency planning. Petrobras was seeking a pyramid of oil spill response vessels combining slower, larger capacity vessels with faster, smaller ones capable of reaching spills rapidly and containing them ahead of the main force arriving. The strategy was to have its entire operational area covered by these first responders on rolling standby. Damen and CMM discussed in detail with Petrobras their aims and possible solutions, and it was established that five, specially modified, Damen FCS 5009 vessels would be ideal. Factors in this decision included their top speed of approximately 25 knots, excellent seakeeping and the fact that they could be readily adapted both for the mission and for compliance with Brazilian regulations and Petrobras’ own rules.

Each vessel has to be capable of remaining at sea for fourteen days at a time, and Petrobras required that each have twin recovery tanks with flat walls, 66m³ in capacity. The layout of the main decks also required rearrangement to take additional accommodation mission specialists, and Petrobras specified a full suite of navigation and communications equipment plus specialist oil detection equipment. Damen partnered with oil spill recovery specialists Norlense for the recovery systems, comprised of floating booms fitted on each side of the vessel to collect and direct oil of up to 50,000 centistokes viscosity into floating collection chambers. Discharge is at 60m³ per hour with full crossover between port and starboard.

Based on the Damen FCS 5009 platform Damen has been able to deliver the five Fast Oil Spill Response Vessels within a year.