

WIRELINE

ISSUE 32 - SUMMER 2015

UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL

Securing a sustainable
long-term future for the
UK Continental Shelf
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PRIDE IN PRODUCTION *p26*

Exploring the remarkable journey of three decades of gas production at Morecambe Bay and looking forward to the new opportunities and challenges ahead

IN THE SPOTLIGHT *p31*


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MAKING A REAL DIFFERENCE *p35*

Safety Awards 2015 – celebrating the outstanding people and companies helping to create safer working environments



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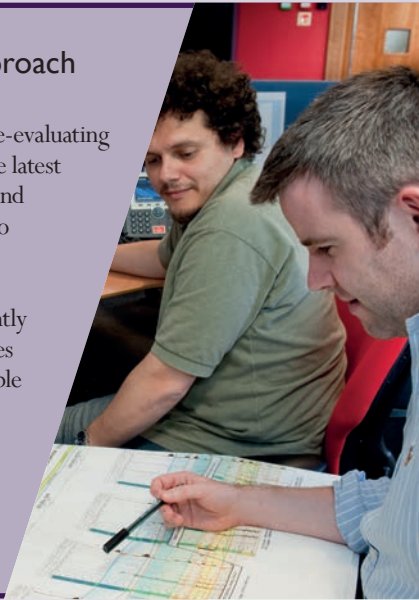
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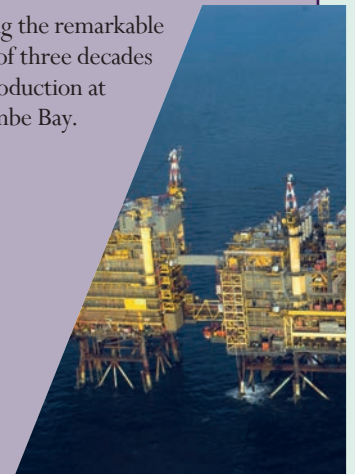
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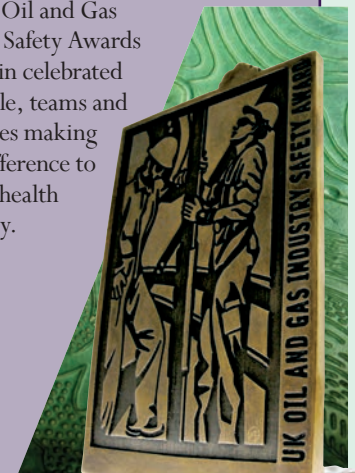
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I am really pleased to be taking on the role of Oil & Gas UK's chief executive. I look forward to meeting our many members across the operator community, the oil and gas supply chain, and throughout the country, to ensure that we focus and align on the key challenges and opportunities facing us.

While the industry continues to face considerable pressure where difficult decisions are having to be made, we have to continually remind ourselves of the huge remaining potential still to unlock – with billions of barrels of oil and gas to play for.

Tax reforms announced in the UK Government's 2015 Budget and the setting up of the new regulator, the Oil and Gas Authority (OGA), will provide a stronger foundation for regeneration of the North Sea. In this issue of *Wireline*, OGA's chief executive Andy Samuel provides a valuable update on the regulator and its priorities (p23).

I firmly believe the OGA is a critical catalyst for the work being done to sustain offshore activity, and the inclusion of the Energy Bill at the State Opening of Parliament on 27 May was welcome. This Bill will formally establish the OGA as an independent government company and will provide the full set of tools and capabilities that the new regulator will need to do its job effectively and efficiently. We hope government will bring forward this legislation as soon as possible and look forward to working with the OGA and government to promote and develop a sustainable future for our sector.

The onus is now on industry to deliver safe cost and efficiency improvements. The focus has to be on co-operation and ensuring that even the most difficult issues are resolved by working together rather than in discord from entrenched positions.

That's why my priority for Oil & Gas UK will be first and foremost looking at what we can do to help companies safely drive efficiency. It is good to see that progress is being made in a number of areas, as outlined in our news section (p5).

Furthermore, as we look further into the future, industry is taking steps to recalibrate its geological knowledge of the UK Continental Shelf (p15) in order to encourage

THE OIL AND GAS AUTHORITY p23

exploration that is vital to the sustainability of the basin. We need to make use of state-of-the-art seismic technology to target untapped resources in mature and frontier areas more accurately and also help discoveries without development plans become ripe for investment.

While we've seen in recent months companies going through tough times, as we celebrate 50 years of what has been a British industrial success story (p8), I hope many are in agreement that we have the skills, tenacity and aptitude for co-operation to turn our industry around. Our spotlight in this issue on three decades of gas production at Morecambe Bay (p26) certainly shows that there is much to be proud of and much to play for.

Deirdre Michie,
Chief Executive,
Oil & Gas UK

Wireline is published by Oil & Gas UK, the leading representative organisation for the UK offshore oil and gas industry.

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I. INDUSTRY TAKES CONCERTED ACTION TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY

Industry efforts to tackle its costs and improve efficiency were highlighted at Oil & Gas UK's breakfast briefings on 6 May and 19 May in Aberdeen and London, respectively. Over 550 delegates heard why pan-industry collaborative action is needed to secure a sustainable future for the UK Continental Shelf and about the steps that industry has already taken around the deployment of its people, improving operational efficiency, logistics collaboration, simplification and standardisation, and late-life asset management.

Oonagh Werngren, Oil & Gas UK's operations director, says: "Tax reforms announced in the UK Government's 2015 Budget and the establishment of the new regulator, the Oil and Gas Authority, have laid the foundations for the regeneration of the North Sea and the industry is now building on this by delivering the cost and efficiency improvements required to secure its long-term future."

Progress has been made in the following areas:

- **Survey of daily rates paid to independent contractors** – consultancy firm, Mercer, will carry out this survey three times a year to enable companies to benchmark their rates against the market. First results will be available to participants in July.
- **Best practice in delivering planned shutdowns of offshore installations** – an Oil & Gas UK work group is collating information on best practice in delivering planned shutdowns during the summer maintenance period to help further improve production efficiency. The document will be published this summer.
- **Sharing spare part inventories** – Oil & Gas UK has established a database of spare part inventories across the sector, which will allow companies to source replacement equipment quickly and efficiently with the aim of reducing production downtime. Nine oil and gas operators have already logged their inventories of spare parts and examples of success are emerging – a pump exchange between two operators enabled well production to continue for 18 weeks, avoiding a 13-week lead time for delivery of the replacement pump.
- **Control of work and training processes** – Step Change in Safety is carrying out a mapping exercise of control of work and training processes to identify priority areas where standardisation will achieve improvements in efficiency. The findings will also guide Step Change in Safety in addressing duplication of standards related to safety-critical roles and tasks in its four traditional work streams (Helicopter Safety Steering Group, Human Factors & Competence, Asset Integrity and Workforce Engagement).
- **Barriers to adopting new technology** – Oil & Gas UK and Decom North Sea have appointed Arup to identify the barriers that currently prevent implementation of new technology to manage late-life assets. Guidance on the best available practices to identify, qualify and adopt new technologies will be published in early autumn.
- **Helicopter audits** – Oil & Gas UK is encouraging oil and gas operators to adopt a standard approach to preparing and undertaking audits of helicopter operators. This is in response to the Civil Aviation Authority's recommendation to reduce the audit burden. An online portal on the Oil & Gas UK extranet provides access to numerous auditing tools, which is being trialled by industry specialists.
- **Cross-sector efficiency study** – The Oil and Gas Industry Council has commissioned PwC to study the measures taken by other industries to improve efficiency. Through interviews and research, the Cross-Sector Efficiency Study aims to identify the characteristics that drive efficiency in high performing sectors, namely aerospace, automotive, chemicals and rail, and propose tangible practices that can be transferred to oil and gas operations.

More information on the drive to improve cost and efficiency is available at www.oilandgasuk.co.uk/efficiencies



UK North Sea oil and gas operators are funding a £60 million search and rescue helicopter service over five years to cover parts of the central North Sea

2. INDUSTRY TO FUND SEARCH AND RESCUE HELICOPTER SERVICE

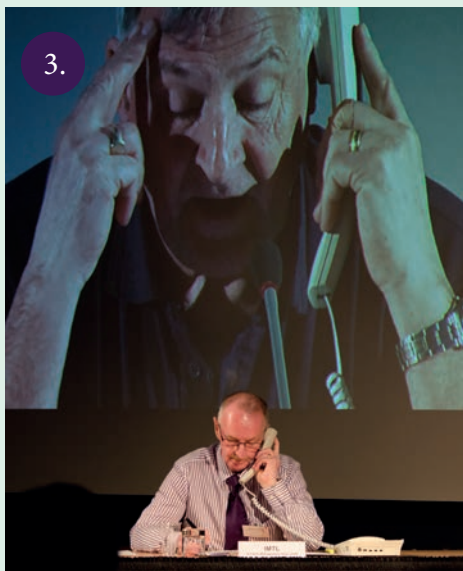
UK North Sea oil and gas operators are funding a £60 million search and rescue (SAR) helicopter service over five years to cover parts of the central North Sea. The service, operated by Bond Offshore Helicopters, will supplement a new national SAR provision launched by the Department for Transport. It will ensure existing industry rescue and recovery standards and capability are maintained following changes to the national SAR provision and removal of the Jigsaw helicopter, provided for additional rescue and response cover on a goodwill basis from BP's Miller platform, which is being decommissioned.

Robert Paterson, Oil & Gas UK's health, safety and employment issues director, comments: "This is a fine example of industry collaboration and underlines that, at all times, the safety of the workforce is our top priority."

For more information, contact Robert Paterson on rpaterson@oilandgasuk.co.uk.



1. Oonagh Werngren, Oil & Gas UK's operations director, chaired the cost efficiency breakfast on 6 May in Aberdeen



3.

3. EMERGENCY RESPONSE TESTED AT EPOL SEMINAR

Police Scotland, the Marine Coastguard Agency and the Royal Air Force were among the participants in the Emergency Preparedness Offshore Liaison Group's (EPOL) first emergency response seminar on 19 March in Aberdeen. The event highlighted the key roles and responsibilities during an incident and its aftermath, as well as the need for co-operation.

A mock scenario involved a crane dropping a ten-tonne container as it was being lifted from a supply vessel onto an oil producing platform. The incident unfolded to include fatalities and serious injury, the shutdown of the fictitious platform and an oil spill from a subsea pipeline hit by the container, which had plunged into the sea. Delegates with real-life responsibilities in emergency response were involved in the role play.

Watch video clips from the EPOL seminar at <http://bit.ly/EPOLseminar>.

4. EU OFFSHORE SAFETY DIRECTIVE COMES INTO FORCE THIS JULY

The single biggest change to affect domestic offshore health, safety and environmental management in many years comes into force in July as the EU Offshore Safety Directive becomes UK law. Ahead of this, Oil & Gas UK held a seminar in Aberdeen on 19 May where senior industry managers heard about the key regulatory changes coming into effect. Speakers included senior representatives from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC), with industry case studies illustrating how companies have incorporated the new requirements for safety case submissions, well notifications and oil pollution emergency plans.

Oil & Gas UK has also worked with its members to provide comments on the draft interpretive guidance from the HSE and DECC for the Safety Case Regulations. Final supporting interpretive guidance will be available in July.

View the presentations from the EU Offshore Safety Directive seminar at <http://bit.ly/EUoffshore>. For more information, please contact Robert Paterson on rpaterson@oilandgasuk.co.uk.



4.

Wendy Kennedy of the Department of Energy & Climate Change addressed delegates at the seminar on 19 May



5.

5. POSITIVE STEP FORWARD FOR OFFSHORE MEDIUM COMBUSTION PLANT DIRECTIVE EXEMPTION

Following joint efforts from Oil & Gas UK, its members and the International Association of Oil & Gas Producers (IOGP), the European Parliament's Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee has agreed a report that supports an exemption for offshore turbines from the requirements of the Medium Combustion Plant Directive. The exemption will now be considered in dialogues, discussions between the European Council, Commissions and Parliament.

The Directive – which seeks to limit emissions of certain pollutants into the air from medium combustion plants – is a critical issue for the UK offshore oil and gas industry. Without an exemption, costly retrofits of turbines would be required, potentially rendering some installations uneconomic. This could accelerate closures, decommissioning and job losses. However, the industry is hopeful that the exemption for offshore turbines will remain in place.

Mick Borwell, environment director at Oil & Gas UK, comments: "This is a very positive forward step, made possible as a result of collaboration between many Oil & Gas UK members and the IOGP. We will continue to engage with UK Members of the European Parliament and thank them for their support."

For more information, please contact Mick Borwell on mborwell@oilandgasuk.co.uk.

6. SUPPORTING LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE FISHING INDUSTRY

Oil & Gas UK has published the sixth edition of its *Guidelines for Liaison with the Fishing Industry on the UKCS*. There is a long history of liaison between the two sectors. Oil and gas operators must appoint a fisheries liaison officer (FLO) to interact with fishing organisations on issues relating to exploration, production and decommissioning that can have an impact on fishing activities.

Mick Borwell, Oil & Gas UK's environment director, says: "Our new publication provides significantly updated advice on the FLO role, which includes providing data for FishSafe – the website and companion app that charts oil and gas structures for the fishing sector. The guidelines should help operators in their relations with the fishing industry and will be of interest to new and existing FLOs."

The publication comes after Oil & Gas UK hosted a fisheries awareness trip to Peterhead and Fraserburgh to give FLOs more of an insight to the fishing industry.

The guideline is available to download at <http://bit.ly/FLguidelines>



Delegates visited Peterhead fish market as part of the Fisheries Awareness Day



7. NEW ADVICE FOR OIL SPILL RESPONSE

Oil & Gas UK has launched two new publications providing advice on the response to oil spills and the techniques that may be deployed.

The *Oil Spill Response Effectiveness in UK Waters Guidelines* look at the different oil types and geographical areas of UK waters and consider whether factors such as wind speed, visibility, precipitation, temperature and tidal state affect seven different oil spill response options. They indicate potential response techniques, although all decisions would be made in an actual event.

Louise O'Hara Murray, environment manager at Oil & Gas UK, adds: "The EU Offshore Safety Directive (OSD) obliges operators to provide an assessment of the effectiveness of their oil spill response strategies. The guidelines will enable operators to meet these requirements and quote the OSD's findings directly in their own oil pollution emergency plans without having to do or fund any further work."

Oil & Gas UK has also published an oil spill response toolkit for onshore staff involved in delivering strategies for tackling oil spills at sea. The guide is broken down into individual toolkits for the different methods – containment and recovery offshore and the use of aerial, subsea and vessel dispersants.

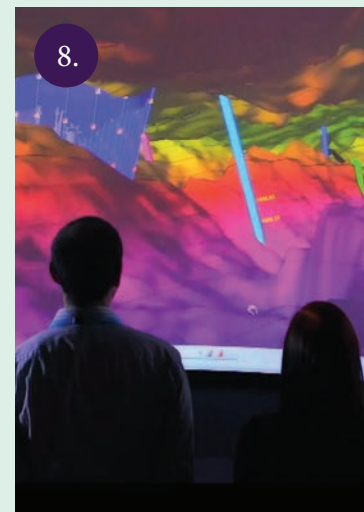
The publications are available to download at <http://bit.ly/PublicationS>. For more information, please contact Louise O'Hara Murray on lmurray@oilandgasuk.co.uk.

8. UNDER-EXPLORED AREAS ARE FOCUS FOR GOVERNMENT-FUNDED SEISMIC SURVEYS

The PILOT Exploration Task Force has recommended the Rockall Trough in the Western Hebrides and the Mid North Sea High, located off the east coast of the UK, for seismic survey, following the government's decision to provide £20 million of funding to the Oil and Gas Authority to help stimulate exploration in under-explored areas of the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS). The government's aim is to acquire the data this year, which will become available to industry in 2016.

Oonagh Werngren, Oil & Gas UK's operations director, says: "The seismic surveys play an important role in re-evaluating how industry can use the latest seismic technologies and geophysical learning to unlock unexplored areas of the UKCS. The ultimate goal is to generate new exploration drilling targets and showcase the North Sea as an investment destination."

For more information, please contact Karis Vieira on kvieira@oilandgasuk.co.uk. Also see p15 for an article on how industry is taking steps to re-evaluate and recalibrate its geological knowledge of the UK Continental Shelf.



9. CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION

Oil & Gas UK has commissioned an animation to celebrate 50 years of oil and gas exploration and production and promote the offshore oil and gas sector as a great industrial success story for Great Britain. The two-minute animation, launched at the Oil and Gas Industry Conference on 17 to 18 June, is available to its members as a useful and unbranded tool to introduce non-specialists to the industry. Oil & Gas UK would encourage industry to share the positive messages on social media so it can reach as wide an audience as possible.

For more information, please contact Helen Jackson on hjackson@oilandgasuk.co.uk.



10. UK WELL SERVICES CONTRACTORS REPORT STEADY BUT SLOWING DEMAND

Demand for the expertise of well services contractors operating in UK waters remained steady last year, according to figures in Oil & Gas UK's *Well Services Contractors Report*, which looks at how the sector fared in 2014. These companies, which support the UK offshore oil and gas industry throughout the life cycle of well operations, reported gross revenue of \$3.24 billion (£1.97 billion) in 2014, representing a small increase of one per cent on the previous year.

Oonagh Werngren, Oil & Gas UK's operations director, adds: "Throughout the first half of 2014, it was clear that well services contractors continued to benefit from the high level of investment in the UK Continental Shelf that occurred in 2013. In the latter half of last year, however, a number of companies reported a slow-down in the demand for their services and expect this trend to continue in 2015, with respondents predicting that the oil price fall will have a negative impact on drilling activity."

The report is available at <http://bit.ly/wellservices2015>



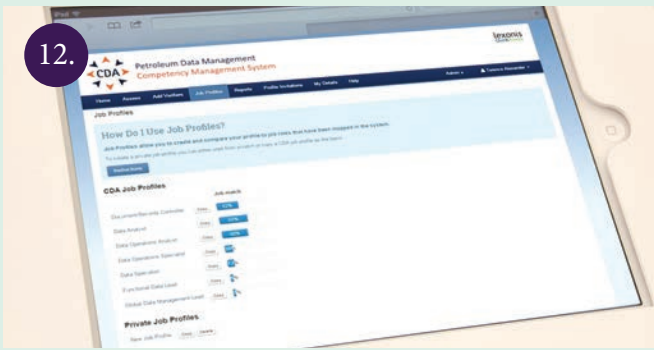
Image © iStock.com/mikeuk

11. EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE: REPORTING TEMPLATES

The independent administrator of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) in the UK, Moore Stephens, will shortly issue reporting templates to collect data from oil, gas and mining companies quantifying their upstream tax payments to HMRC on a cash-paid basis for the 2014 calendar year.

Companies will have six weeks to provide this information. They will also be asked to sign a waiver allowing HMRC to release confidential taxpayer information to Moore Stephens, which will allow the two data sets to be reconciled. The UK has until April 2016 to produce its first EITI report.

For more information on EITI, visit <http://bit.ly/UKeiti>.



12.

12. NEW FEATURES ADDED TO CDA'S COMPETENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Common Data Access (CDA) Limited, a subsidiary of Oil & Gas UK, has added two new features to its Competency Management System (CMS) – a free-to-use portal to enable geoscience data managers to plan personal development and career progression.

The new job profiles section allows users to browse generic job profiles (created by CDA) or map their own job profiles to data management competencies – an element that has potential application in the recruitment sector. Users can also now invite people to view their CMS profile, which would be ideal when job hunting or benchmarking a profile against a data management team.

For more information on CDA's Competency Management System, please contact Terry Alexander on tal Alexander@cda.com.

14. INDUSTRY INCREASES COMMITMENT TO THE SUPPLY CHAIN CODE OF PRACTICE

The latest Supply Chain Code of Practice (SCCoP) compliance survey reports a 31 per cent increase in the number of companies signing up to the code since 2013. While more UK oil and gas sector companies are committed to improving efficiency, there's still significant scope for transforming commercial processes.

Oonagh Werngren, Oil & Gas UK's operations director, says: "The code provides major purchasers, operators and contractors, as well as suppliers providing goods and services, with guidance to improve business performance, eliminate unnecessary costs and boost competitiveness. However, we need to encourage greater take-up of this shared industry resource if we are to tackle the fundamental behaviours driving cost escalation on the UK Continental Shelf and deliver the cost and efficiency improvements the industry requires to secure its long-term future."

The Supply Chain Code of Practice compliance survey is available to view at <http://bit.ly/SupplyCCoP>. For more information, please contact Taiwo Olaoya on tolaoya@oilandgasuk.co.uk.



15.

15. SPEAKERS ANNOUNCED FOR OFFSHORE EUROPE 2015

SPE Offshore Europe has announced a line-up of international speakers for its 2015 conference from 8 to 11 September in Aberdeen. Physicist and TV presenter, Professor Brian Cox, joins industry speakers such as Jon Lay of ExxonMobil, Keisuke Sadamori of the International Energy Agency, Rob Hull of Halliburton and Tony Durrant of Premier Oil.

Specialists from Africa, Asia and North America will join colleagues from the UK and Europe to present over 100 technical papers. This year's conference, themed 'How to Inspire the Next Generation', will focus on pushing the boundaries of innovative new technology and pioneering approaches, as well as addressing industry's role in raising awareness among those who have yet to enter the workforce.

Find out more and register at www.offshore-europe.co.uk.



13.

13. PROMOTING CAREERS IN OIL AND GAS

OPITO, alongside industry partners, has launched two online tools to raise awareness of the careers available and skills required to work in the oil and gas industry.

The Oil & Gas Skills Navigator is a digital library that provides tools, links and information on careers, companies, education, training and the sector itself and is aimed at school pupils, graduates, employers and those looking for training information. It has been developed in response to a recommendation in the Oil and Gas Industrial Strategy for a centralised online skills portal.

Meanwhile, the Skills Connect tool helps ex-military personnel to identify roles best suited to their existing skill sets/requirements.

Find out more at www.oilandgasskillsnavigator.co.uk and www.opito-skillsconnect.co.uk.



14.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

NEW OIL & GAS UK BOARD AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE COME TOGETHER AT BOARD AWAY DAY

Oil & Gas UK's Board and its new chief executive Deirdre Michie met for its annual Away Day in Aberdeen on 14 May, following the announcement of a number of new appointments to the Board (see box-out below). Existing Board member Neil McCulloch, president North Sea at EnQuest Plc, has also been named as the new vice chair representative for the operator community, whilst Terry Savage, corporate relationship director at Global Energy Group, is the vice chair representing the contractor community.

The Away Day, chaired by Oil & Gas UK co-chair Trevor Garlick, BP's North Sea regional president, gave the Board time together as a collective group, especially the eight new members joining and meeting for the first time, to focus on the priorities for Oil & Gas UK and develop alignment on its strategic objectives. At the head of discussions was the need for Oil & Gas UK to help drive stronger pan-industry action on cost and efficiency, noting that there is still a huge prize to be won if the sector could deliver sustainable cost efficiency measures for the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS). The organisation will be formulating its proposals as part of an overall review of strategic objectives and priorities for 2015/2016.

Deirdre Michie, Oil & Gas UK's chief executive, says: "The low price of oil and high cost of operating on the UKCS present our industry with a great challenge. That is why, as the leading trade association for the UK's offshore oil and gas industry, we are very fortunate to have the guidance of a talented Board. I believe that by working together, this sector will become stronger, safer and have a brighter future."

NEW BOARD MEMBERS**Joining the Board this spring are:**

- Andrew Thomson, Managing Director, Offshore North Sea, Aramark
- Chris Bird, Managing Director, MOL Energy UK
- Dave Stewart, CEO, Wood Group PSN
- Gunnar Breivik, Managing Director, Statoil Production UK
- Matt Betts, UK Vice President, Halliburton
- Neil Clyne, Operations Director, Transocean Drilling UK Limited
- Paul Goodfellow, Upstream Director UK & Ireland, Shell Exploration & Production
- Pete Jones, Managing Director United Kingdom, TAQA

Oil & Gas UK would like to take this opportunity to thank the following representatives leaving Board for their commitment and service to the industry:

- Adrian Rose, Managing Director, Transocean North Sea
- Glen Cayley, Shell Upstream International
- Gordon Ballard, Chairman and Country Manager, Schlumberger UK Limited
- James Edens, Vice President and Managing Director, CNR International UK Ltd
- Martin Rune Pederson, Managing Director, Maersk Oil UK
- Mike Skitmore, UK Business Unit Manager, Premier Oil
- Robin Watson, Chief Executive, Wood Group PSN
- Susan Elston, Vice President Strategic Development, Sodexo Remote Site Scotland Limited

**NEW MEMBERS JOIN OIL & GAS UK**

We are pleased to welcome the following companies that have joined Oil & Gas UK since the last issue of *Wireline*:

Andrews Kurth (UK) LLP, Athens Group Technology Assurance Services Limited, Autodesk Ltd, Conbit, Cresent, DISA Global Solutions Ltd, Eigen Limited, Global Resources Management Ltd, Goshen Health Solutions, Helideck Certification Agency Ltd, Heli offshore Ltd, io oil & gas consulting, MODS Management, Ocean Kinetics, ServGroup Ltd, Scottish Carbon Capture & Storage, StepChange Global Consultancy Ltd and TCO In-Well Technologies UK Ltd.



Business development executive, Mark Mullins, is committed to ensuring that Oil & Gas UK membership is tailored to members' needs so please contact him on mmullins@oilandgasuk.co.uk with any queries.



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MANAGEMENT



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PROCESS SECURITY

Dates for your diary

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EVENTS

23 to 24 September
Legal Conference
Crieff, Scotland

4 November
PILOT Share Fair
Aberdeen

5 November
Oil & Gas UK Awards
Aberdeen

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17 to 19 November
Offshore Decommissioning Conference 2015
St. Andrews

SEMINARS

30 June
Supply Chain Seminar
Aberdeen



29 September
Security Seminar
Aberdeen

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1 October
Occupational Health Seminar
Aberdeen

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25 November
Environmental Seminar
Aberdeen

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MEMBERS-ONLY EVENTS

Members' Speed Networking

- 30 June and 14 October – London
- 28 October – Aberdeen



TRAINING COURSES

3 September and 10 September
Effective Use of Master Deed
London and Aberdeen, respectively



15 September and 17 September
Infrastructure Code of Practice, Regulatory Framework and Practical Commercial Negotiations
London and Aberdeen, respectively

7 to 8 October
Fundamentals in Oil and Gas
Aberdeen

9 November
Introduction to Industry Guidelines on Well Life Cycle Practices
Aberdeen

BREAKFAST BRIEFINGS

Aberdeen Breakfast Briefings

- 2 July – What comes first – leadership or co-operation?
- 9 September – The Economic Report
- 6 October
- 8 December



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London Breakfast Briefings

- 16 September – The Economic Report
- 1 December

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www.oilandgasuk.co.uk/events



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Wednesday 7 – Thursday 8 October 2015



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WEDNESDAY 4 NOVEMBER 2015

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A fresh approach

For five decades, successful exploration, appraisal and development have provided the essential foundations for sustaining production on the UK Continental Shelf.

Now, operating in a mature basin that still has tremendous potential, the industry is re-evaluating how it can best use the latest seismic technologies and geophysical learning to pinpoint commercial opportunities more accurately and efficiently and convert discoveries into economically viable developments. *Wireline* reports

The UK offshore oil and gas industry is taking steps to re-evaluate and recalibrate its geological knowledge of the UK Continental Shelf



Oil & Gas UK's 2015 *Activity Survey* reported the discovery of 55 million barrels of oil equivalent (boe) of technically recoverable reserves on the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS) in 2014, with hydrocarbons found in seven of the 14 exploration wells drilled. The majority of the exploration wells targeted accumulations of less than 20 million boe and most of the discoveries were small and some are not currently considered to be commercially viable. Developing these successfully will require new technologies to improve efficiency and reduce capital expenditure.

These figures provide an illuminating comparison to the period from 2004 to 2008 when the sector was drilling an average of 35 exploration wells per year and discovering an average of around 400 million boe.

Oonagh Werngren, Oil & Gas UK's operations director, says: "Estimates from the Department of Energy & Climate Change are that between 12 and 23 billion boe remain to be recovered from the UKCS. And Wood Mackenzie estimates that there are currently more than 300 discoveries without development plans

containing nearly 3.9 billion boe. So the challenge is to unlock the remaining exploration targets. We also need to focus on how some of the known discoveries could become commercially viable developments if we are to exploit the potential of the UKCS within the lifespan of existing infrastructure.

"The industry needs to deepen, expand and share its knowledge base and use state-of-the-art seismic technology to target untapped resources more accurately, while at the same time finding smarter ways to help current undeveloped marginal discoveries become ripe for investment."

She continues: "Stimulating the use of the latest practices, including new broadband seismic technology, will enable us to acquire top quality seismic data that penetrate deeper into the subsurface and deliver exceptionally detailed and higher resolution images of complex geological structures. More widespread application of this technology will greatly contribute to our existing knowledge of the UKCS' hydrocarbon resources.

"And we must re-evaluate and revisit mature areas, working collectively to find

larger targets. The last time a discovery larger than 100 million boe was made in traditional sandstone reservoirs was in 2008 when Culzean was discovered.

"Finally, we believe we can work together to sharpen our focus on under-explored or 'frontier' areas of the UKCS, tackle rising exploration drilling costs, and find cost-effective ways to improve the quantity and quality of subsurface information available to industry."

Exploration drilling of new frontier areas, such as fractured basement reservoirs in the west of Shetlands at Lancaster in 2009 and Whirlwind in 2011, has been encouraging. These discoveries indicate the potential for 200 million-plus barrel accumulations of recoverable oil.

Fractured basement comprises mostly granite formations where hydrocarbons have migrated along extensive fractured networks. Sir Ian Wood's report on the *UKCS Maximising Recovery Review* identifies it as one of nine frontier areas with potential, described in the review as "new plays" (see box right).

Re-evaluate and recalibrate

The industry is taking steps to re-evaluate and recalibrate its geological knowledge of the UKCS. Much of this is being undertaken through the Exploration Task Force (ETF), which was set up in 2012 under the auspices of the government-industry forum PILOT.

“ We must share high quality data more effectively, make the most of new technologies and recalibrate our collective knowledge of the basin. ”

Example of fractured basement on the Isle of Lewis. This outcrop area was used as a direct template (analogue) to model geological processes in Hurricane Energy's Lancaster field, a frontier area west of Shetland



To collectively deepen understanding of the basin, the ETF is working on the 21st Century Exploration Road Map – an updateable source of digital geological maps and related information, including seismic and well data, for key areas of the UKCS. This work aligns with the Wood Review's recommendation that there should be more focus on developing a shared and systematic analysis of UKCS prospectivity and geology.

Nick Fretwell, geoscience director at Total E&P UK, says: "There is little doubt that significant resources remain to be discovered and recovered in the mature areas as well as across frontier regions. The sector must improve its understanding of the basin to focus capital in the right place and to investigate how to target commercially viable hydrocarbons more effectively in mature areas."

FRONTIER AREAS FOR EXPLORATION

- West of Hebrides
- Carboniferous rock beneath the central North Sea, East Irish Sea and southern North Sea
- Western Graben margin
- Fractured basement
- Sub-basalt and cretaceous sands
- High CO₂ gas
- Triassic west of Shetlands
- English Channel and South West Approaches
- Permian in the Irish Sea

The ETF has launched two projects to contribute to the 21st Century Exploration Road Map – an in-depth study of the Palaeozoic deeper plays and an analysis of exploration and appraisal wells drilled in the Moray Firth and central North Sea (CNS) areas over a ten-year period from 2003 to 2013.

The British Geological Survey (BGS) is leading the Palaeozoic study. A large number of companies are contributing subsurface information, including rock analysis, regional distribution of reservoirs, seismic data and biostratigraphy. In the first phase of the project, the data will provide new insight into the prospectivity of the Carboniferous and Devonian rocks in the CNS.

Team leader Bob Gatfliff explains: "We are currently concentrating on the CNS – an area believed to hold the largest potential resource. Our approach is to search

“**The sector must improve its understanding of the basin to focus capital in the right place and to investigate how to target commercially viable hydrocarbons more effectively in mature areas.**”

deeper and wider than previous studies and encourage greater collective input from across the industry.”

The BGS team is encouraging more companies to participate whether they are oil and gas producers or other parties with a vested interest; there are plans to extend the study beyond the CNS to include the Orcadian basin in the northern North Sea and the Irish Sea.

Meanwhile, the new regulator, the Oil and Gas Authority (OGA), is steering the post-well analysis project, managed by Christian Mathieu, who brings with him international exploration experience from Total. With industry participation, the OGA is analysing the reasons for drilling failures ending in dry wells, as well as successes.

Christian says: "Twenty-eight companies are helping to gather data for analysis of 97 exploration and appraisal wells. This means reviewing the pre-drill geological and geophysical description of a prospect, including source rocks, hydrocarbon migration pathways and reservoirs, and comparing it to the post-drill well results to increase our understanding of the factors that prevent successful drilling.

"We have been able to identify a number of common trends, including limited access to properly processed seismic data, a lack of high quality interpretations of the data, inadequate planning and failure to share knowledge.

"We believe this can be improved by encouraging good practice in sharing knowledge, greater use of peer reviews, and promoting deeper analysis of seismic data and techniques to model and compare geological processes (analogues) that influence the generation and evolution of subsurface structures."

The post-well analysis study will shortly move into the next phase with a series of multi-company seminars focusing on specific wells. Participants will be invited to present case studies for peer review following the same spirit of openness and knowledge-sharing exhibited at Oil & Gas UK's annual exploration conference in February.

Pitfalls, peaks and progress

Oil & Gas UK, in association with PILOT, has held an exploration conference, titled 'Pitfalls, Peaks and Progress' for the past two years.

Delegates attend to learn from their peers about what contributes to exploration success and failure. A presentation at this year's conference from Hurricane Energy's CEO, Dr Robert Trice, described the drilling of the UK's first one kilometre-long horizontal well into the Lancaster discovery, in the fractured basement reservoir on the west of Shetland. This, as mentioned, was successful in finding significant volumes of hydrocarbons and reveals the potential of the frontier areas.

Digging deep

Key to industry efforts is the work of Common Data Access (CDA) Limited, a subsidiary of Oil & Gas UK. As a central resource for sharing, distributing and releasing seismic and well data, as well as managing the risks related to compliance, data loss and intellectual property >

protection, CDA has helped save industry costs of up to £256 million over the past 20 years. Chief executive, Malcolm Fleming, adds: “CDA is participating in the 21st Century Exploration Road Map studies and raising awareness of where our services can contribute to current knowledge of the subsurface.”

Glen Cayley, currently exploration advisor to the OGA on secondment from Shell U.K. Limited, explains how the UK Government is also supporting the fresh approach to exploration. He says: “The industry welcomed the government’s decision to make £20 million of funding available for the OGA to commission seismic surveys to help rejuvenate exploration interest in under-explored areas.”

The ETF recommended two priority areas to the OGA – the frontier region of the mid-North Sea High and the Rockall Trough, for which only sparse seismic information currently exists. Modern 2D seismic technology will be used to secure

more detailed images of subsurface geology and geophysical properties to improve industry understanding of these areas.

The team at OGA has moved swiftly to set these surveys in motion and invitations to tender for the work were posted at the beginning of May. The aim is to begin acquisition of new data in July to take maximum advantage of the summer and to deliver the final processed data sets by the end of March 2016.

Technology matters

To promote discussion around modern seismic technology and new thinking about exploration on the UKCS, the OGA is also working with Oil & Gas UK to organise a multi-company seismic seminar. The purpose of the event is to bring together industry expertise, share knowledge on a range of exploration projects, and showcase innovative technologies such as ocean bottom seismic and ocean bottom cable that have been used successfully in other hydrocarbon provinces to help unlock

some of the more challenging areas on the UKCS.

Oonagh Werngren concludes: “Timing is critical. If we are to achieve a sustainable long-term future for the UKCS, we must ensure that all the economically recoverable oil and gas resources, both in existing and frontier areas, are fully explored and appraised. Achieving this goal means that we must share high quality data more effectively, make the most of new technologies and recalibrate our collective knowledge of the basin.

“Acting now will enable the industry to maintain its position as the largest investing sector in the UK economy, a major employer of some 450,000 people, and a contributor to the nation’s energy security. The time to get involved is now.” ^(W)



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Introducing Deirdre Michie

Deirdre Michie took the reins as chief executive of Oil & Gas UK on 1 May. Here, she chats to *Wireline* about her priorities for the trade association and tackling the challenges the industry faces.



Q: What is your top priority as chief executive of Oil & Gas UK?

A: First and foremost, I'll be looking at what Oil & Gas UK can do to help companies safely drive efficiency. We want to encourage co-operation to ensure industry delivers as much of the prize for the UK as possible. Oil & Gas UK speaks for the whole of the sector – we work to raise its positive profile and ensure a safe, sustainable and competitive North Sea industry and thriving supply chain. I hope to continue the great work in this area.

Q: What should the new UK Government's priorities be?

A: We look forward to working with the new UK Government, so that together we can promote and develop a sustainable future for the industry. Tax reforms announced in the government's 2015 Budget and the setting up of the new regulator, the Oil and Gas Authority, will provide a strong foundation for the regeneration of the North Sea – and they are both great signs that, in relation to our sector, the government understands our challenges and will work with us in dealing with them. Building on this, I believe that the onus is now on our industry to work together to build

a more sustainable future through safe cost and efficiency improvements.

From a government perspective, establishing and maintaining a strong tripartite approach to maximising the economic recovery of oil and gas from the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS) is of the utmost importance, and we look forward to working closely with government and the new Oil and Gas Authority towards that aim.

“ I'll be looking at what Oil & Gas UK can do to help companies safely drive efficiency. We want to encourage co-operation to ensure industry delivers as much of the prize for the UK as possible. ”

Q: How do you see Oil & Gas UK's role in the tripartite collaboration between the industry, OGA and government advocated in the Wood Review?

A: I believe the role of Oil & Gas UK in supporting this industry's cause has never been more important. We look forward to working with the OGA and government in a tripartite approach to maximise economic

recovery of the UK's substantial remaining oil and gas reserves. I hope that the OGA will be a highly effective catalyst for improvement by enabling full implementation of the *Wood Report* reforms as quickly as possible.



Image © iStock.com/mikeuk



I hope that the Oil and Gas Authority will be a highly effective catalyst for improvement by enabling full implementation of the Wood Report reforms as quickly as possible.

Q: How can we fight most effectively against industry naysayers such as those campaigning for divestment from fossil fuel companies?

A: While the oil and gas industry recognises the drive towards a lower-carbon economy to satisfy the UK's energy needs, this cannot happen overnight; it needs to be managed carefully over decades.

It's not a fight we're looking for, but it's important that we do debate this as it's important that everyone is in possession of the facts. The replacement of coal by natural gas offers the only technically feasible means to dramatically reduce the carbon intensity of the energy stream worldwide in the near to medium term. Given that the Department of Energy & Climate Change predicts the UK will be as reliant on oil and gas in 2030 as it is now, divestment of holdings in oil and gas producing companies and advocating that our indigenous resources should be left in the ground will do nothing to advance their cause – in fact it will leave us more reliant on more carbon-intensive long-haul sources of oil and gas.

We plan to do all we can to support realistic means of reducing the carbon intensity of the global energy stream on a sustainable basis, and in that effort, gas is a key fuel for the future.

Q: What do you see as the industry's biggest challenge over the next five years?

A: Without a doubt, that's the need to tackle our unsustainable cost base by co-operating as an industry to make operations on the UKCS smarter and more efficient.

Global competition for investment dollars means we must safely reduce our cost base. But with remaining reserves harder to reach and existing infrastructure ageing, that is no easy task. Falling prices have intensified and accelerated challenges that were already there.

That is why we are working hard with talented individuals from across our member companies, putting in place pan-industry collaborative action – for example, compiling best practice in delivering planned shutdowns; establishing a database of spare parts held in inventories across the sector; and investigating barriers that currently prevent the industry from implementing new technology in managing late-life assets.

Q: Why did you want to join Oil & Gas UK?

A: It's a great organisation with highly professional people. I am honoured to be representing what is an amazing industry.

Q: How do you think the diverse roles you held at Shell have prepared you for leading Oil & Gas UK?

A: I am hoping they have prepared me well! My career to date has been a really diverse one taking me from commercial to communications, contracting and procurement roles. Given the variety of the issues that this job requires me to deal with – I do think my background and experience will be invaluable.

Q: What has been the most memorable moment in your career to date?

A: Not one particular moment – and this may sound a bit trite – but my best moments tend to be associated with the people I have worked with or for. It's the colleagues who make the difference.

Q: How do you like to spend your time away from work?

A: Walking the dog, going to the gym and socialising with good friends. ☺

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The Oil and Gas Authority

A new, well-resourced, arms-length regulator was one of the key recommendations of the *Wood Report* to maximise economic recovery from the UK Continental Shelf (MER UK). *Wireline* finds out more about the Oil and Gas Authority and its priorities from chief executive Andy Samuel.



Q: The Oil and Gas Authority released a Call to Action reporting on the impact and risks for the industry of the fall in oil price. Can you tell us what your priority areas are and how quickly you are addressing them?

A: The Oil and Gas Authority's (OGA) *Call to Action Report*, which was prepared in response to a commission from the Secretary of State in February 2015, identified two immediate risks resulting from the fall in oil price.

Firstly, the risk of declining profitability in producing fields leading to the premature decommissioning of critical infrastructure. The 'domino effect' caused by removing key assets has the potential to shut down whole areas of the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS), stranding valuable resources. To help avoid this, the OGA is working very actively with infrastructure owners and their partners to facilitate discussions and help find solutions in often challenging commercial situations.

Secondly, the risk that a lack of confidence could result in the failure to secure critical long-term investment in the basin. The £1.3 billion package of measures announced in the 2015 Budget provided a welcome boost to the industry and was well received by investors. It was a great early example of the tripartite relationship, envisaged in the Wood Review, in action and delivering positive outcomes. Alongside this, it's now essential that industry takes steps to create a more competitive cost base and increases efficiency.

With significantly fewer new wells planned in 2015, accelerating exploration is another key priority. We are moving ahead with the £20 million government-funding seismic project, which will acquire new high-quality 2D data from the Rockall Trough and Mid-North Sea High.

This is the first time that HM Treasury has funded seismic acquisition and the data will be made freely available to the industry. At the same time, the OGA is analysing the root causes of exploration failures in recent years – it's vital that we learn from these and make the right interventions.

Q: The OGA has been established as an executive agency with the Infrastructure Act 2015 enshrining the MER UK principles into UK law. How will it change from dealing with the Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC)? And what are the next stages for establishing the OGA as a fully functioning independent regulatory body?

A: The OGA became an executive agency of DECC on 1 April 2015 on our journey to become a government company in summer 2016, subject to the will of Parliament. The *OGA Framework Document* describes our day-to-day operational independence from DECC, the remit of the OGA Board chaired by Sir Patrick Brown and our intention to operate like an independent government company from day one. It also sets out the OGA's role to regulate, influence and promote the UK oil and gas industry in order to maximise economic recovery.

The Energy Bill announced in the Queen's Speech will provide new regulatory powers for the OGA, including the ability for us to participate in meetings with operators, have access to data, provide dispute resolution and introduce a range of sanctions

such as improvement notices and fines up to £1 million. I don't expect to have to use these sanctions often; my strong preference is to work closely with industry to encourage collaboration and facilitate action.

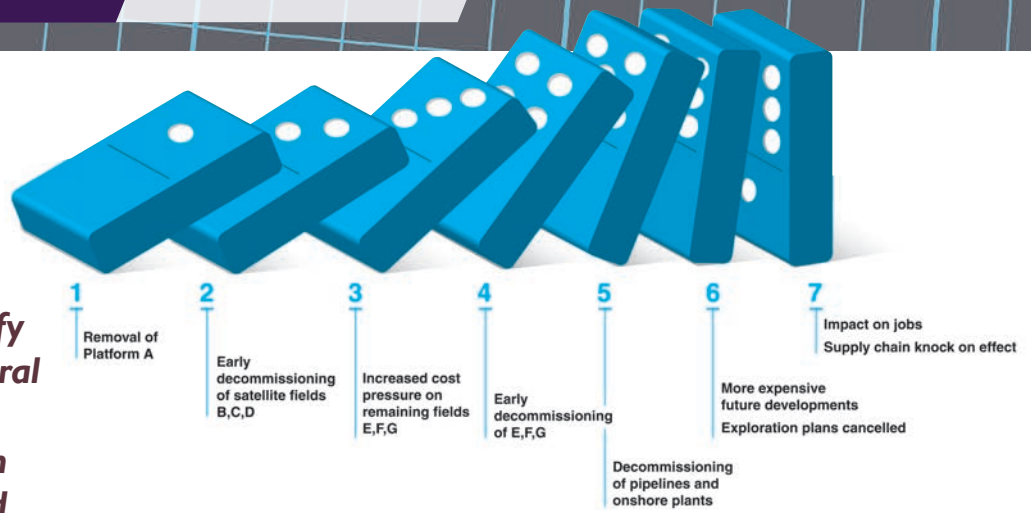
Q: Who makes up the OGA senior team and how is recruitment progressing to strengthen its resources and capabilities?

A: Given the many challenges currently facing our industry, my priority was to move quickly to establish the OGA as a strong and effective regulator. Our new leadership roles attracted significant interest and after a fairly intense period of interviewing, I was delighted to announce the appointment of a high-calibre leadership team in early May.

Joining Simon Toole (Director, Licensing and Legal) and Stuart Payne (Director of Change and Organisational Design) are Gunther Newcombe (Director, Exploration and Production), Angela Seeney (Director, Technology and Projects), Hedvig Ljungerud, (Director, Policy, Performance and Economics) and John Ogden (Chief Financial Officer). >

“ We will continue to develop the organisation in the coming months, increasing our capability but remaining cost-conscious and focused on providing value for money. ”

Now, more than ever, is the time to create a future of collaboration. We have a real opportunity to identify and remove behavioural barriers, set clearer expectations between organisations involved in the North Sea, learn from positive examples and secure leadership commitment to sustainable cultural change.



The Oil and Gas Authority's Call to Action Report illustrates how the 'domino effect' caused by premature decommissioning of critical infrastructure has potential to shut down whole areas of the UK Continental Shelf stranding valuable resources

We also appointed four senior managers to oversee exploration and production activities across the different sectors of the UK North Sea. Reporting to Gunther Newcombe, are Brenda Wyllie (Northern North Sea and West of Shetland), Scott Robertson (Central North Sea), Eric Marston (Southern North Sea and Morecambe Bay) and Nick Richardson (Exploration and New Ventures).

We will continue to develop the organisation in the coming months, increasing our capability but remaining cost-conscious and focused on providing value for money. I've set an overall headcount cap of 179 employees in order to avoid 'mission creep' and the next wave of recruitment activity will take place over the summer period. My intention is to build a strong, diverse and experienced team focused on delivery.

Q: How will the new regulator embrace the spirit of the tripartite approach and make it work in its dealings with industry and government?

A: Making the tripartite approach integral to how we work across the UKCS is the key ingredient in creating a positive future for our oil and gas industry. Establishing and maintaining trust is essential, and this is at the heart of our approach as we seek to facilitate collaborative working between government and industry. The regular PILOT MER UK meetings, alongside the Fiscal Forum and Oil and Gas Industry Council, will fully embrace the tripartite approach.

Given the challenging backdrop for our industry, now, more than ever, is the time to create a future of collaboration. We have a real opportunity to identify and remove behavioural barriers, set clearer expectations between organisations involved in the North Sea, learn from positive examples and secure leadership commitment to sustainable cultural change.

The OGA will be a catalyst for this change and we were delighted to support the Scottish Government's Energy Jobs Taskforce with a unique cross-industry workshop on 22 May.


The event brought together large and small operators and service companies, with offshore staff, unions, journalists, trade associations, academics and others in a conversation on the right culture and behaviours necessary to deliver MER UK.

We began a conversation to identify and remove behavioural barriers and set clearer expectations between the different players involved in the North Sea. While there is a lot of work to do, there was great passion and energy in the room and real commitment to sustainable cultural and behaviour change.

Q: How critical is the relationship with HM Treasury and how are you working with them to build on the recently announced tax changes for the UKCS?

A: Maintaining a strong and constructive relationship with HM Treasury is critical for the OGA and for industry. I think the level of understanding and engagement has been very good in recent months and the positive outcomes in the March Budget are testament to the importance the government places on our industry. Particularly the increased recognition of the wider employment and supply chain benefits the sector delivers for the UK – an area championed by both Oil & Gas UK and Melfort Campbell, author of the Scottish Government's Expert Commission on Oil and Gas. The OGA will continue to act as a trusted advisor to HM Treasury.

Q: How do you see the relationship between OGA and Oil & Gas UK developing?

A: Oil & Gas UK and OGA are already working together very effectively in a number of areas and I'm keen to build on this. As the OGA was being created, Malcolm Webb was a real advocate of a stronger, better resourced regulator and provided really helpful advice. I've had several positive meetings with Deirdre Michie, who shares my passion for simplifying the landscape, focusing on the things that really matter and demonstrating delivery. 

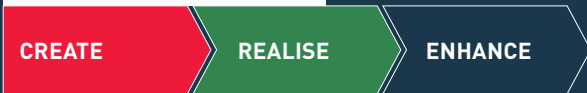


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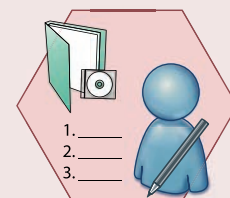
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Pride in production

As the UK celebrates 50 years of oil and gas exploration and production, the Morecambe Bay area reaches its own historic milestone of three decades of gas production, during which time it has made an enduring contribution to domestic energy supply and the economy. *Wireline* looks back on its remarkable journey and looks forward to the new opportunities and challenges ahead.

“The first day of production was all about proving that everything worked – we didn’t produce a lot of gas but we had a real sense of achievement,” reflects Les Hall, implementation engineer at the Barrow Gas Terminals in Cumbria, which processes gas from North and South

Morecambe and the surrounding fields in the East Irish Sea. Les has worked there since 1984 when the terminals were being built. “I remember thinking at the time that we were part of something big,” he says.

Gas reserves in Morecambe Bay off the coast of Lancashire and Cumbria were

discovered by petrophysicist John Bains in 1972, signalling the start of a new era in UK gas exploration and production from beneath the Irish Sea. The rights were acquired by British Gas and construction work on the £1.3 billion onshore and offshore infrastructure began during the 1980s. First gas was



You have to remember that extracting natural gas from our own waters had never been done before on this sort of scale. You get that buzz knowing that everything we push down that pipe is of benefit to people – it's warming their houses, keeping industry ticking over.



Over the past three decades, 6.5 trillion cubic feet of gas has been produced from Morecambe Bay, exceeding the initial estimate reserve of six trillion. New investment has extended operational life to beyond 2020, securing 400 on and offshore jobs

extracted, processed and piped into the National Grid on 9 January 1985. Today, the region continues to heat around 1.5 million homes.

Les joined British Gas in the summer of 1984, having worked as an apprentice in a local shipyard and served in the Merchant Navy as an engineering officer. He describes: "I started working at the gas processing facilities, which were still being built. We were learning as we went along. They weren't automated like they are now; I spent the entire first shift on production day physically opening and closing valves to adjust the flow and temperature."

"I remember the day as though it was yesterday," adds Greg Wood, spares and repairs engineer. "I can still feel the adrenaline when I think about it. You have to remember that extracting

natural gas from our own waters had never been done before on this sort of scale. You get that buzz knowing that everything we push down that pipe is of benefit to people – it's warming their houses, keeping industry ticking over."

Exceeding expectations

Over the past three decades, 6.5 trillion cubic feet of gas has been produced from Morecambe Bay, exceeding the initial estimate reserve of six trillion. At its peak in 1992, the region met 20 per cent of the UK's demand for gas.

Today, operations in Morecambe Bay produce 500 million cubic feet of gas each day and, at their peak, meet around eight per cent of domestic residential demand and about a third of the local area's demand. "The gas fields and the Barrow Gas Terminals are cornerstone assets and have played their part in shaping the UK's energy industry," points out Colette Cohen, senior vice president for the UK and the Netherlands at Centrica Energy, operator of these assets since British Gas was privatised and demerged to form BG Group and Centrica in 1997.

Les believes: "It's the changes and the challenges that have made my career [at Morecambe Bay] so interesting. I have never had the chance to become stuck in a rut. The various roles have been very different, requiring both engineering and softer skills to direct and manage people.

"And training and competency have developed in leaps and bounds. Formal structures allow people to work and develop themselves, whilst keeping themselves, others and the environment safe." Les gained a company-sponsored bachelor's degree in science and technology in 1996.

He is not alone. Gas production in this region has generated thousands of skilled jobs over 30 years, with hundreds recruited locally. Since 1985, 60 apprentices have been trained to become fully qualified engineers at Morecambe Bay, with a wealth of opportunities for graduate engineers too.

Operations manager Stuart Horne, originally from Barrow, started his career in 2002 as a graduate production support engineer, spending more than a decade working in Morecambe onshore and offshore before moving to the company's headquarters in Aberdeen. He reflects: "I learnt a huge amount

during my time there and, right from the outset, experienced a wide variety of operational environments shadowing senior engineers and working on multimillion-pound projects."

Peter Jamieson, offshore installation manager (OIM), who has been working offshore at Morecambe for the last 28 years, adds: "There have been huge changes to the industry in the last 30 years, but what really stands out for me is the family atmosphere. There's a real sense of shared experience that comes from working in such a unique environment."

The journey, however, has not been without its difficult times. On 27 December 2006, Centrica mourned the loss of seven colleagues after a helicopter travelling to a Morecambe Bay platform ditched in the sea.

Bill McKinlay, who was the OIM on duty the night of the incident, says: "We need to make sure everybody who comes offshore gets home safely. Sadly, on the evening of 27 December 2006, we suffered a tragedy here at Morecambe. Every year we remember that event, and as a team it's important for us to reflect on that night and remember our colleagues who were lost."

A new lease of life

In recent years, Centrica has injected new investment into the region. Rhyl was the first new field to be brought onstream at Morecambe Bay in 2013 for a decade. Located 39 kilometres off the coast of Barrow, the field was first discovered in 2009 and produces around 2,800 barrels of oil equivalent per day through the existing North Morecambe platform. The field has extended operational life to beyond 2020, securing 400 on and offshore jobs. Moreover, additional appraisal drilling has confirmed that the Rhyl >



It's the changes and the challenges that have made my career [at Morecambe Bay] so interesting. I have never had the chance to become stuck in a rut.



Over 100 people attended Centrica Energy's 'hackathon' event in March as part of its Unlocking the Portfolio initiative. The aim was to bring together experts across the supply chain to establish new ways of working to meet the cost and efficiency challenges



Spares and repairs engineer Greg Wood (left) and Implementation engineer Les Hall (right) have been working at Morecambe Bay since production began 30 years ago

“There’s a real sense of shared experience that comes from working in such a unique environment.”

reservoir extends further than originally anticipated.

Investment to upgrade the Barrow Terminals is also afoot. In partnership with two UK contractors, Costain and Land & Marine, Centrica’s £84 million project has created 100 new jobs to lay an underground 1.5 kilometre pipeline from the south to the north terminals and to undertake essential maintenance.

There has also been a boost to the local economy, with local construction and engineering businesses providing services and expertise to support the project, which will complete at the end of this year.

Securing the future

Centrica recognises that working closely with its suppliers is crucial to ensure long-term competitiveness, especially in the current climate of high operating costs. Myrtle Dawes, Centrica’s director of projects, is helping to meet this challenge.

She says: “For some, working together might be counter-intuitive – we are all competing businesses after all – but I think now there is an acceptance that we need to be more open. The challenge of operating in a low oil price [but high cost] environment is transforming that lofty ambition into a reality. Industry needs to work together if we want to maximise the potential of the UKCS.”

This is the thinking behind the company’s Unlocking the Portfolio initiative, which hosted a ‘hackathon’ brainstorming event in March this year, bringing together experts across the supply chain to establish new ways of working to meet the cost and efficiency challenges. “Some 80 per cent of our expenditure goes to our

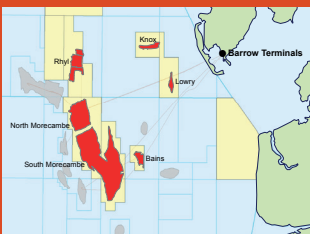
supply chain and working closely with them is vital if we are to drive down costs, drive up efficiency and maintain safety,” insists Myrtle.

The event involved 100 people with all those present being given problems to solve and split into teams to come up with new ideas. The delegates focused on three key areas – new developments, drilling and potential decommissioning projects. Within those, they looked at a number of other themes, for example, plugging and abandoning, extended reach drilling and brownfield modifications. “We also had some more general ‘blue sky’ areas where we talked about how we work,” adds Myrtle.

She continues: “One recurring theme was equipment standardisation. Similar to other operators we can fall into the



MORECAMBE BAY THREE DECADES OF GAS PRODUCTION



Petrophysicist John Bains discovers gas in Morecambe Bay

1972

1974

British Gas buys the rights and drills an exploration well

Construction starts both offshore and at Barrow-in-Furness to develop the fields

1982

Production starts. Huge quantities of gas come ashore at Barrow before being processed and sent into the grid and onto UK homes for the first time

South Morecambe hits peak production, meeting more than 20 per cent of UK gas demand

1985

1992

“Some 80 per cent of our expenditure goes to our supply chain and working closely with them is vital if we are to drive down costs, drive up efficiency and maintain safety.”

trap of buying bespoke items when they may not be required; if we buy in bulk at standard sizes, this will make a huge difference.

“Like most oil and gas companies, we usually have lots of suppliers coming to us saying they can do this or that with new types of technology, and we felt it might be good to turn it around and for us to present suppliers with the problems. From now on, we want to replicate the honest, collaborative approach everyone took during the event in all our discussions with contractors.”

Onwards and upwards

As well as building closer relationships across its supply chain, fostering the development of skilled professionals is key to ensuring that the company can sustain its operations. Since 2009, 48 graduate engineers have been trained in Centrica Energy’s exploration and production business, whilst professionals from other sectors are also sought after for their skill sets.

Christian Reeve joined the team at Morecambe as HSE team lead towards the end of 2014, following a career as an Army apprentice. He spent 11 years as a communications systems engineer in the Royal Signals, covering multiple operational deployments, including Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan. Christian

COMMITTED TO THE NORTH-WEST

“As our teams in Barrow, Heysham and offshore celebrated 30 years of gas production, I started to reflect on our lasting relationships with the communities we call home,” muses Natasha Collins, Centrica’s continuous improvement advisor. Centrica’s teams have forged strong links with the local community, working alongside organisations to raise money for charities and clean beaches and beauty spots.

Morecambe Bay Partnership is one such organisation. Susannah Bleakley, executive director, explains: “Our work is varied to deliver projects around heritage, environment and tourism. We’ve been working with Centrica, and before with British Gas, for over 18 years. And for any charity, a long-term relationship is greatly valued. Centrica staff, for example, have taken part in regular beach cleans and helped us to clear more than 40 tonnes of marine litter and beach debris from our beaches.”

And such strong links have also been forged with local schools. Natasha says: “In Barrow, children grow up with a fantastic environment of offshore platforms and gas terminals, so it’s even more important we take the time to help them understand the technology powering their world and what opportunities might be available once they grow-up – like our own four-year apprenticeship scheme.” A team of Centrica’s engineers have also restored a pond at St Paul’s Primary School in Barrow to help children learn more about the local wildlife.

“When you employ hundreds of people in the local area it’s important to look after your neighbours,” insists Natasha.

left the forces in 2008 and started a career as an HSE advisor, initially in the nuclear power industry.

Christian says joining Centrica “was a different challenge. I deal with a range of issues on a daily basis and I find this keeps me on my toes and interested. My long-term ambition is to continue to develop my leadership and technical skills and progress towards a strategic role within Centrica.”

And with plenty of life left in Morecambe Bay’s gas fields, the teams will be kept busy for several years to

come. Colette is certainly buoyed by the future. “2015 offers an extraordinary opportunity to reflect on how far we’ve come in three decades, from the development and application of new technologies to growing skills and expertise, which have enabled us to extend the life of the gas fields to the present day and for years to come.”

 <http://bit.ly/morecambe30years>



A new gas field in the East Irish Sea is named Bains, an honour bestowed on the grandfather of gas exploration in Morecambe Bay

2001

The Rhyl field is discovered as Centrica works to extend the life of the region further

2009

Centrica Energy mourns the loss of seven colleagues after a helicopter travelling to a Morecambe Bay platform ditches in the sea

2006

2013

Rhyl begins production, extending operational life to 2020 and beyond

An £85 million investment project begins at Barrow Gas Terminals to secure the site’s future

2014

Celebrating 30 years of production at Morecambe Bay

2015



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In the spotlight

Cheryl Newman may once have harboured ambitions to pursue a career in the dramatic arts but she's now in the spotlight for very different reasons. A finalist in this year's Scottish Institute of Directors Awards, she's become a rising star in the field of human resources working in the oil and gas supply chain. *Wireline* finds out more

When Cheryl Newman first joined field development consultancy Ingen Ideas in 2010, it was on a short-term assignment to provide general office support cover.

Fast forward five years and her experience in the UK oil and gas supply chain has certainly been rewarding and full of opportunity. Today, she's a human

resources (HR) manager at the Aberdeen-based business and has played a key role in the company receiving a string of industry nominations and awards.

In 2014, Ingen was twice shortlisted for Oil & Gas UK Awards in the Investment in People and Mentor of the Year categories; its lead field

development engineer Alan Muirhead won the latter. And, most recently, the organisation was the first small company (less than 1,000 employees) globally to receive the Institution of Chemical Engineers' (IChemE) Gold Corporate Partner Award in recognition of its training and development programme and dedication to the chemical engineering profession. >

Cheryl's route into HR and oil and gas, however, was certainly a happy accident.

Spotting the talent

Having enjoyed drama and music at school, Cheryl had originally hoped to forge a career in that arena. She recalls, however, limited options for studying the dramatic arts in Aberdeen in the late 90s and so opted for the closest equivalent – a media and broadcasting course at the city's college.

On realising it wasn't for her, she left in 2000 to take on a support team role with a financial services company, progressing to team leader within two years.

Over the subsequent years, Cheryl continued to work in financial services while she and husband Darren had two children. "I then realised I wanted to look for work that was a bit more sustainable and offered both support and opportunities for career development," explains Cheryl. In the meantime, she took up a short-term position with Ingen and quickly recognised she needed to look no further.

"I'm tremendously proud to be part of such a fantastic company," enthuses Cheryl. "At Ingen, the company leaders have a real ability to identify people with specific talents, which helps to cultivate the culture and generate diverse opportunities. Having experienced this approach personally, I am extremely grateful that this gave me an opportunity to remain with the company."

With a platform to demonstrate her full capabilities, Cheryl began to assume responsibility for some elements of HR.

She explains: "Initially there wasn't a defined HR function within Ingen; the work was spread across various roles, but I was able to demonstrate I could add real value by taking ownership and centralising more and more of the responsibilities. This allowed me to streamline the in-house training, development and mentoring offerings and implement formal procedures and processes for HR activities, ensuring that the company ran more efficiently on a day-to-day basis. I immensely enjoyed the breadth of duties that come under HR and realised that I could help create a positive and pleasant work environment."

As the company continued to grow, from four employees in 2000 to 50 today, the

“**Learning and development shouldn't just be about attending courses. It should encompass all the different attributes that give people new experiences and knowledge – like attending networking events and having the opportunity to deliver their work to clients.**”

need for a dedicated HR service grew with it; Cheryl went on to become HR manager in 2012.

Now leading a team of three, she describes herself as a "HR generalist", dealing with issues from immigration and tax to recruitment and performance management. "That's one of the reasons I find the work so enjoyable and satisfying," she says. "I'm not focused on a specific area but on the bigger picture. It also means I'm able to keep all my skills current because I am constantly involved in so many different elements."

Cheryl completed her HR Management Diploma with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development two years ago and is presently studying for a business honours degree at Aberdeen's Robert Gordon University.

She insists: "It's important to have professional credibility, and to achieve that in HR you need to be constantly developing yourself. When you are dealing with issues that are always evolving, such as employment legislation, you need to be learning all the time and that's a real driver for me."

Positive impact

On assuming the managerial post, Cheryl started shaping further a culture that has been recognised within the industry and beyond. As well as recognition from Oil & Gas UK and the IChemE, Cheryl's strategic leadership was acknowledged when she was shortlisted in the Positive Workplace category at the Scottish

Institute of Directors Awards earlier in the year and, more recently, was nominated for the Press & Journal Gold Awards in the Emerging Industry Leader category.

She says: "There may be a perception that the function of HR can be prohibitive and complicated, but I think that's wrong. For me, it's about linking the company vision and business strategy to provide a satisfying and engaging work experience and pleasant working environment."

"I look upon it as a supporting service, not a prescriptive one, and, through incentives such as mentoring or learning and development, we are seeking to bring value to the individual and the company at the same time, in equal balance."

She continues: "Learning and development, for example, shouldn't just be about attending courses. It should encompass all the different attributes that give people new experiences and knowledge – like attending networking events and having the opportunity to deliver their work to clients."

"It's the same with mentoring – it's done at Ingen all day, every day, because it's not contrived or prescriptive but very open. When people join us they don't simply have an appointed mentor, they build up a knowledge network. They get to understand the strengths, skills and expertise of all their colleagues and know they can call on them at any time for advice on different topics."

Ingen's learning and development programme encompasses a number of elements: training and development plans, skills gap analysis, mentoring, support to gain chartership, continuous professional development courses, professional membership of associations, e-learning modules, and lunch and learn sessions. The company has Approved Company Training (ACT) Scheme accreditation from the IChemE.

It's a culture that has paid dividends. Ingen's retention rates stand at over 96 per cent and all graduates who have achieved IChemE chartership through the company since 2010 have stayed with the business and taken on formal mentoring roles.

Change management

When Ingen was taken over by global industry player Foster Wheeler in 2013, Cheryl says it inevitably prompted concerns from a HR perspective.



Ingen Ideas was twice shortlisted in 2014 for Oil & Gas UK Awards in the Investment in People and Mentor of the Year categories. Most recently, the company was the first small company globally to receive the Institution of Chemical Engineers' Gold Corporate Partner Award in recognition of its training and development programme and dedication to chemical engineering

She explains: "The whole leadership team worked hard to ensure that communication was honest with realistic expectations of what the changes meant to the company. I also encouraged employees to come to me with any questions outwith a group environment and it helped to mitigate any of the concerns. No-one left as a result of the change, and that was a clear indicator for me that the culture here absolutely works."

In the current climate, Cheryl believes even moreso that "HR has to look at the value it generates for the company and the individual – how to ensure the organisation continues to develop people but in an efficient way. For example, using the knowledge and expertise of peers and colleagues within the business through on-the-job mentoring, internal lunch and learns, and a culture that encourages innovation and open discussive communication. The internal ACT Scheme also allows us to bring our engineers to chartership several years faster than conventional methods."

“It’s all about repopulating the industry by sharing the experiences and knowledge we have within the company. We genuinely feel scale shouldn’t be a barrier – small companies like Ingen can make a big contribution.”

Forward thinking

Ingen’s approach means that, despite being a small company, it is playing its part to inspire young people who are contemplating the industry as a career option.

The company promotes chemical engineering – its core discipline – through school work experience and undergraduate summer and industrial placement programmes.

“We look to ensure continuity through our undergraduate placement programmes, with the same people coming through the process and ready to join us with a good knowledge of the business and the wider industry,” explains Cheryl.

“It’s all about repopulating the industry by sharing the experiences and knowledge we have within the company,” she says. “We genuinely feel scale shouldn’t be a barrier – small companies like Ingen can make a big contribution.”

Cheryl hopes her own experience to date – as a young mum who has an enjoyable and successful full-time career while maintaining a healthy work-life balance – will encourage other women to follow suit.

“I also hope it encourages my boys, as they grow up, to take on board the value of working alongside strong and inspiring women in their own careers.” ^W



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Celebrating safety

The UK Oil and Gas Industry Safety Awards once again celebrated the people, teams and companies making a real difference to offshore health and safety. *Wireline* reports

“**T**eam, support and people... help us get through difficult times” – some of the stirring words from inspirational athlete Karen Darke. Her keynote address at the UK Oil & Gas Industry Safety Awards received a standing ovation from the 350-plus guests at the event on 29 April in Aberdeen. The motivational messages from the Paralympian, para triathlete and adventurer couldn't have been more timely for the industry attendees.

A keen runner, climber and outdoor addict, Karen's life changed forever when she fell off a cliff on the Aberdeenshire coast, resulting in paralysis from the chest down. She has since embarked on an extraordinary new life, overcoming physical and mental barriers to complete a series of challenges, including marathons, triathlons, kayaking, sit-skiing and hand-cycling in some of the most inhospitable and hazardous places on the planet.

Les Linklater, Step Change in Safety's executive director, says: “Karen Darke is a challenging and humbling speaker and her talk on 'Making the Impossible, Possible' was simply outstanding. It served as a timely reminder to all of us that we can, in spite of the challenges we may face, overcome the odds through determination and a bit of imagination.”

Robert Paterson, Oil & Gas UK's health and safety director, adds: “Karen hit >

the nail on the head when she said that by operating in environments that are extreme, we are naturally exposed to risk, and whenever we have success in managing those risks we have to celebrate that. That is what our Awards do – honour those people who are working in a sector where the hazards are significant and who are doing their utmost to ensure UK offshore operations are as safe as they can be. Regardless of the difficult times in which we are operating, doing our best for safety must always prevail.”

Jointly organised by Oil & Gas UK and Step Change in Safety, and supported by principal sponsor Maersk Oil, the Awards celebrate the outstanding people and companies helping to create safer working environments – whether through innovative new processes or exceptional individual enthusiasm and personal commitment.



The UK Oil and Gas Industry Safety Awards was held on 29 April in Aberdeen and attended by 350 workforce representatives, safety professionals and industry leaders



The UK Oil and Gas Industry Safety Awards

2015 WINNERS

Safety Leadership sponsored by ABB



Vic Retalic, HSE and security manager at Premier Oil Plc, scooped the Award for Safety Leadership for his creative approach to communicating on health and safety. He draws on the expertise of other industries to examine issues from a different perspective and has even used a cartoonist to capture meeting minutes in a 12-foot long picture. His strong, visible and empowering leadership style has played a key part in driving forward improvements in the UK. The company noted a 60 per cent reduction in recordable injuries in 2014 and, over the last four years, there has been a significant decrease in incidents despite an increase in activity.

Highly commended: David Howard, Deputy Offshore Installation Manager, Wood Group PSN

Safety Representative of the Year sponsored by Petrofac



Karen McCombie, offshore support planner and helicopter admin assistant at Sodexo, received the Award for Safety Representative of the Year for tirelessly promoting safety awareness on the Claymore platform. Her boundless enthusiasm is said to have rubbed off on colleagues. She has increased participation at quarterly meetings and has encouraged management to put safety at the top of boardroom agendas. Karen also represents her offshore colleagues at the Step Change in Safety forum and is co-chair of its G18 group, which shares best practice and learnings. She has created an interactive guide and log book for new representatives.

Highly commended: Graeme Ritchie, Roustabout/Safety Representative, Rowan Drilling UK and Mark Williams, LOLER, Petrofac

Innovation in Safety sponsored by Nexen



BG Group and Amec Foster Wheeler picked up the Award for Innovation in Safety for jointly delivering an industry first – a new technique for removing caissons, the pillars underpinning many North Sea platforms. Expanded foam was pumped down the caisson, fully encapsulating the internal dip pipes and removing the risk of them detaching during the caissons’ removal. This innovation improved efficiency as the pillars were removed in eight weeks, whereas traditional methods would have taken 22. The process holds promise for the future, as BG Group plans to use this technology for the removal of similar caissons on other North Sea assets.

Highly commended: Bob Banks, Mechanical Maintenance Technician, Petrofac



The Awards are cast in bronze by sculptor Marian Fountain



The 2015 winners of the UK Oil and Gas Industry Safety Awards

Workforce Engagement

sponsored by DNV GL



The Bruce Platform Team at BP picked up the Award for Workforce Engagement. The team transformed the platform's safety performance through an ambitious improvement programme. Leaders were coached on how to reward and recognise achievement and daily briefings were revamped to be more inclusive. Today, BP employees and contractors share ideas for safety improvements at specially designed events and take ownership for implementing them over a four-month period. The number of reported work-related employee and contractor incidents resulting in injury or fatality per 200,000 hours worked reduced from 1.15 in 2012 to zero in 2014, a first for the platform since production began in 1998.

Highly commended: Gordon Quigley, HSE Manager, Petrofac, and Krzysztof Madrala, Project Director, Remontowa

Occupational Health and Hygiene

sponsored by International SOS



Lesley Officer, HR manager at Rowan Drilling UK Ltd, won the Award for Occupational Health and Hygiene, for her involvement in the company's Wellness programme to encourage a healthy body mass index (BMI) and an active lifestyle. In conjunction with the company medics and the catering company, Lesley created 'Health Bites' sessions, including well-woman and well-man clinics and events on BMI and flu and alcohol awareness. She also instigated an offshore healthy eating programme, comprising a 'dish of the day' with full nutritional breakdown; healthy eating tips; and ongoing BMI management support on each Rowan rig in the UK sector. The total weight of participants has fallen consistently and Rowan's offshore fleet became the first in the UK sector to be presented with NHS Scotland's Healthy Living Award.

Sharing and Learning

sponsored by BG Group



Neil Clark, CEO at IHF Ltd, received the first ever Award for Sharing and Learning. Human factors are thought to account for 80 per cent of all accidents offshore and Neil's commitment to raising awareness of them as a pivotal ingredient towards changing safety culture on and offshore impressed the judges. For two years, as part of the Step Change in Safety steering group on competence and human factors, Neil led the development of the Human Factors Assessment Toolkit, shaping the 'dashboard' user interface and underlying functionality. Following its launch last year, the toolkit, with its simple traffic light system, is now used across the industry as a consistent framework against which companies can identify human factor 'weak spots' in their operations.

Highly commended: Jim Cameron, Technical Safety Technical Authority, Nexen



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