

# WIRELINE

ISSUE 24 - MAY 2013



## ALL HANDS ON DECK

How industry is addressing the skills challenge *p14*

### **SAFETY FIRST** *p25, p28*

Wireline discovers how workforce engagement helps to transform a company's safety performance and announces the winners of The UK Oil and Gas Industry Safety Awards

### **SUBSEA SERVICES GROWTH** *p22*

The UK subsea services sector is going from strength to strength – find out more about this burgeoning world class supply chain

### **BACKING BROWNFIELDS** *p11*

Michele Eaves, brownfield projects manager at EnQuest, talks about why it's an exciting time to be reviving older fields on the UK Continental Shelf

# Oil & Gas UK PIPER25

18-20 JUNE 2013

ABERDEEN EXHIBITION  
AND CONFERENCE CENTRE

[www.oilandgasuk.co.uk/PIPER25](http://www.oilandgasuk.co.uk/PIPER25)

## A CONFERENCE TO REFLECT, REVIEW, REINFORCE AND RE-ENERGISE

Oil & Gas UK is to hold a major offshore safety conference this summer to mark the 25th anniversary of the Piper Alpha disaster.

The conference will bring together people from across the oil and gas industry to reflect on the lessons learnt from the tragedy, review how far offshore safety has evolved and to reinforce industry commitment to continuous improvement.

With Piper Alpha as a central theme, the conference will also explore broader safety issues and will feature high profile international speakers from a diverse range of backgrounds.

### Papers will be presented on the following topics:

- Safety management systems and control of work
- Major hazard management and safety technology
- Human and organisational factors
- Emergency preparedness and response

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### Conference Quick Facts

- 10 Plenary Speakers
- 54 Topical Presentations
- 30 Exhibitors
- 700 Attendees

Don't miss your chance to be  
involved in this unique event

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#oilandgasukevents  
#PIPER25



### REGULARS

#### 5 News Round-up from Oil & Gas UK

Includes news on the launch of the UK Government industrial growth strategy for oil and gas, efforts to enhance engagement between industry and the education sector, and an update on the restoration of the Piper Alpha Memorial Garden, plus much more.

#### 9 Membership Matters

New companies join Oil & Gas UK's ever expanding professional network.

#### 10 Dates for Your Diary

Network with industry colleagues and gain valuable insight into the sector's hot topics.

*“Safety has advanced massively and so has the sophistication of design, hardware and technology as we advance into deeper waters and take on greater challenges in terms of pressures and temperatures.” p22*



### FEATURES

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Moving to Aberdeen while still a student, Michele Eaves was exposed to the career opportunities offered by the UK oil and gas industry. It opened up a whole new world that she had never before considered. Twenty-five years on she is now brownfield projects manager at EnQuest. Michele talks to *Wireline* about her experiences and enthusiasm for the future.

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The UK subsea services sector plays a key role in exploiting the full potential of the UK Continental Shelf. GE Oil & Gas and EPC Offshore reveal their thoughts on the strengths of the sector and the part they play in this world class supply chain.

#### 25 Workforce engagement on safety

Petrofac and Maersk Oil UK talk about their efforts to engage with their workforces to enhance safety performance and improve company culture.

#### 28 In the spotlight

The winners of the UK Oil and Gas Industry Awards are announced, including for a new award for workforce engagement.

## A warm welcome to our 'new look' magazine

Although it looks different, the real change is in the content of our magazine, where we place greater emphasis on the activities of our members in this dynamic industry.



*"I think it is an industry which many more would enter if only they were aware of the potential and appreciated what it has to offer." p11*

### QUICK LINKS

Look out for this symbol in the magazine and scan the QR code with your handheld device for easy direct links to online material. Download the QR code reader from your app store.



The UK offshore oil and gas industry has had some great news so far in 2013 – operator investment in new developments and existing assets and infrastructure is at an all time high (p5) while our high performing supply chain reports plans for growth (p6).

This all translates into thousands of jobs being created across the UK, increased tax revenues arising from oil and gas production, and growing exports from our burgeoning supply chain.

Our industry is dynamic and varied. With this in mind, we have changed *Wireline* to better reflect the activities of the range of companies and the people within them who are part of the Oil & Gas UK family and are helping to shape the future growth of our sector.

This first issue of our 'new look' magazine puts a spotlight on the UK subsea services sector (p22) and profiles brownfields project manager at EnQuest, Michele Eaves (p11) – both play an absolutely vital role in helping to extract the maximum potential from the UK Continental Shelf.

We also explore the efforts being made by companies both to tackle the skills gaps faced by industry (p14) and to transform safety culture and performance (p25).

Without the continuing concerted effort on the latter, the UK would not have the robust safety regime that it has today. The winners of the recent UK Oil and Gas Industry Safety Awards (p28) are a testimony to the innovation in this area.

Against this hive of activity, there need to be strong support measures in place for the industry to ensure continued success. The launch of the UK Government-industry strategy for oil and gas (p20) aims to provide just that.

A new campaign, 'Energising the Nation's Future with Oil and Gas', has also kicked off to raise awareness of the sector's importance to the UK economy, innovation and energy security (p18). So please don't just sit back. Be part of the debate and show your family and friends that you are 'Proud to be in Oil and Gas!'

NEW  
INDUSTRY  
GROWTH  
STRATEGY  
p20

**Malcolm Webb,**  
Chief Executive,  
Oil & Gas UK

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

We want to hear your views on our magazine so please send us your feedback as well as ideas for future articles to Rupal Mehta, editor, on [rmehta@oilandgasuk.co.uk](mailto:rmehta@oilandgasuk.co.uk).

**Editor**  
Rupal Mehta, Oil & Gas UK

**Contributors**  
Bill Phillips, Chris Walker, Elaine McClarence, Graeme Smith, Lucy Gordon, Sally Hatch and Trisha O'Reilly

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The Design Team at Oil & Gas UK

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**Oil & Gas UK**  
the voice of the offshore industry

Oil & Gas UK  
6th Floor East  
Portland House  
Bressenden Place  
London SW1E 5BH

020 7802 2400

[www.oilandgasuk.co.uk](http://www.oilandgasuk.co.uk)

twitter   
[@oilandgasuk](https://twitter.com/oilandgasuk)



1.

(L-R) Vince Cable MP, business secretary; Edward Davey MP, energy secretary and Michael Moore MP, Scottish secretary, at the launch of the industrial strategy for oil and gas



2.

Tax relief for decommissioning costs was confirmed in the 2013 Budget

### 1. STRATEGY FOR GROWTH UNVEILED

The UK Government's industrial strategy for growth of the offshore oil and gas sector and its supply chain was launched at Oil & Gas UK's Aberdeen office on 28 March. The document is the culmination of a joint industry and government effort, which has involved extensive consultation with the supply chain, operators and key stakeholders. One hundred and fifty people attended the launch and a Q&A session led by Vince Cable MP, business secretary; Edward Davey MP, energy secretary; Michael Moore MP, Scottish secretary; and Gordon Ballard, co-chair of Oil & Gas UK and chairman of the BIS Industry Council.

See p20 for an interview with Vince Cable on the strategy, which is available to download at [www.oilandgasuk.co.uk/news.cfm](http://www.oilandgasuk.co.uk/news.cfm).

### 3. INDUSTRY GIVES BOOST TO ECONOMY

Investment in new developments and existing assets and infrastructure on the UK Continental Shelf was at a record high in 2012 at £11.4 billion, reports Oil & Gas UK's *Activity Survey*. This figure is expected to increase further over 2013.

The positive news follows tax changes designed to encourage growth, resulting in thousands of jobs being created across the UK and an expected rise in oil and gas production and associated tax revenues in the coming years. Exploration activity is also forecast to increase over the next three years with 130 wells estimated to be drilled.

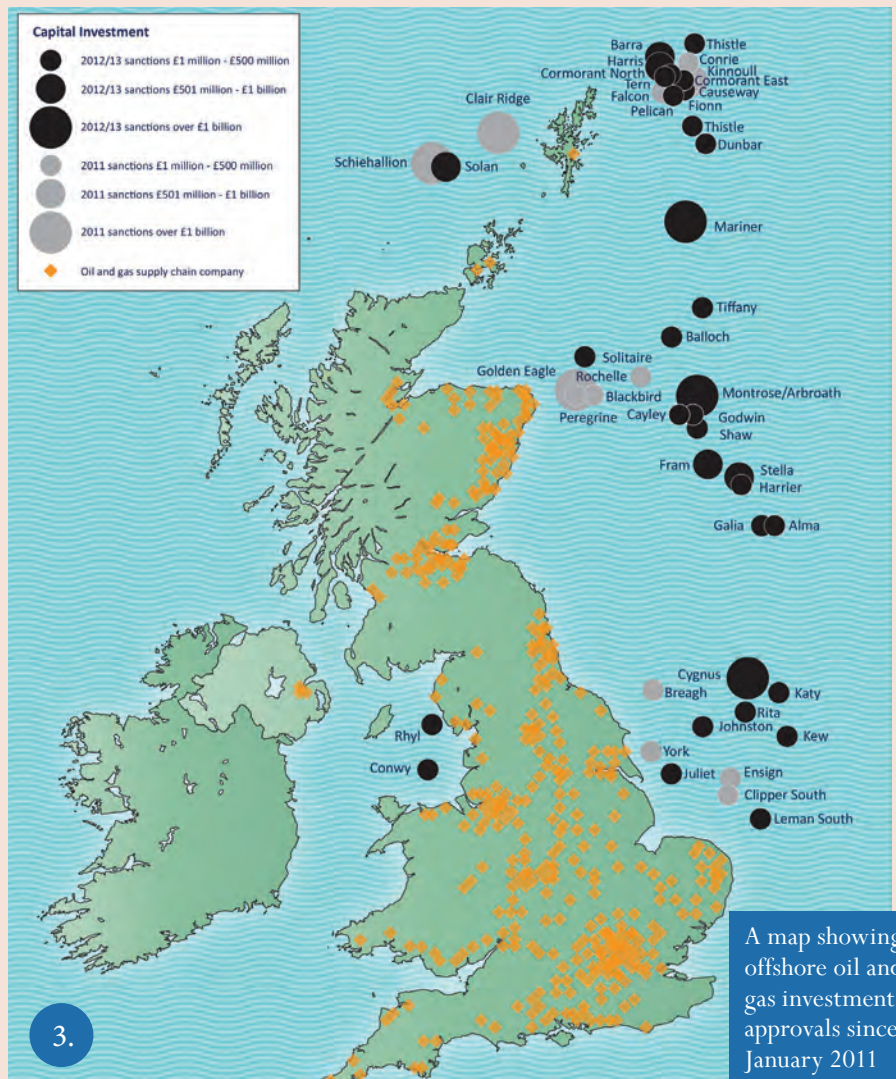
The full report is available to download at [www.oilandgasuk.co.uk/forecasts.cfm](http://www.oilandgasuk.co.uk/forecasts.cfm).

For more information, please contact Mike Tholen on [mtholen@oilandgasuk.co.uk](mailto:mtholen@oilandgasuk.co.uk).

### 2. BUDGET 2013 – KEY BUSINESS IMPACTS

The 2013 Budget confirmed certainty on tax relief for decommissioning costs, following two years of constructive engagement between Treasury and industry. This will speed up asset sales and free up capital to boost investment and production. The Chancellor has also announced a fall in the main rate of corporation tax to 20 per cent from April 2015 and a positive change to the research and development tax credit regime.

If you are a member of Oil & Gas UK and would like further information, please contact Claire Ralph on [cralph@oilandgasuk.co.uk](mailto:cralph@oilandgasuk.co.uk).



A map showing offshore oil and gas investment approvals since January 2011

#### 4. ENCOURAGING COLLABORATIVE ENGAGEMENT WITH SCHOOLS

Around 100 Oil & Gas UK members and stakeholders came together on 7 March at an Education Summit. The objective was to consider how more schools in the UK could be reached with a consistent message about the importance of STEM subjects and the opportunities they open up for building an exciting career in the sector.

The event was run by Oil & Gas UK in conjunction with OPITO, and both organisations are now working together to take forward the actions that arose from the discussions. These objectives are: establish and evaluate the work with schools already in place, identify which companies and schools wish to participate collaboratively, develop a central repository for resources and a focal point within the industry, and create better guidance for teachers and careers advisors.

*The presentations given at the summit are available to view at <http://bit.ly/XATIsy>. For more information, see the spotlight on skills below.*

#### SPOTLIGHT: SKILLS

##### PROACTIVE APPROACH

The Education Summit on 7 March (see story above) is just one element of a broader strategy, endorsed by Oil & Gas UK's Board, to help address the industry's demand for skilled personnel.

The programme was launched in September 2012 with a Skills Summit, with the aim of achieving better cooperation and pooling of resources within industry to address the skills gaps.

*For background to the strategy, please visit [www.oilandgasuk.co.uk/peoplepower.cfm](http://www.oilandgasuk.co.uk/peoplepower.cfm) or contact **Alix Thom** on [athom@oilandgasuk.co.uk](mailto:athom@oilandgasuk.co.uk).*

*Also see p14 of this issue for more on our members' efforts to address the skills demands.*



4.

Oil & Gas UK and OPITO are exploring how to improve engagement with schools about the career opportunities available within the industry. Image courtesy of OPITO

#### 5. OILFIELD SERVICES REPORTS GROWTH

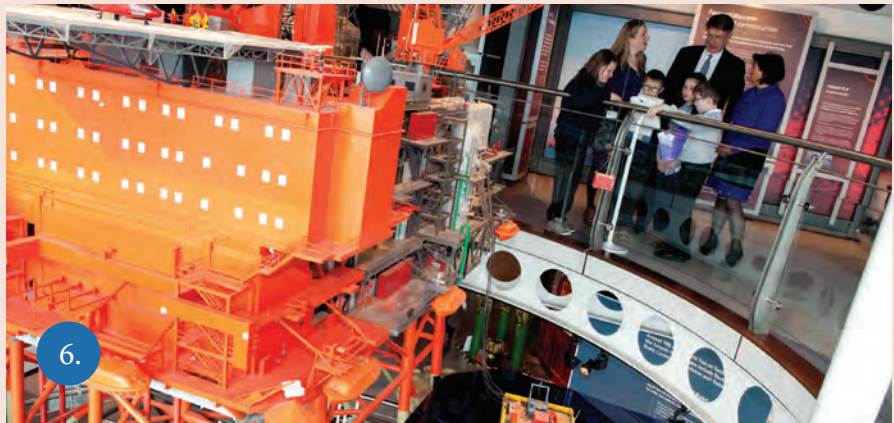
A review of the £27 billion UK oilfield services industry reveals a sector in robust health. The report from Ernst & Young outlines how three quarters of the supply chain companies surveyed, in conjunction with Oil & Gas UK, plan to increase their workforce by an average of ten per cent over the next two years, with 90 per cent envisaging an increase in revenues.

Ally Rule, a partner at Ernst & Young and the report's author, says: "The segment continues to outperform most other UK industrial sectors. The UK...is recognised as a global leader."

*The report is available to download at <http://bit.ly/10Eb31K>. Also see p22 for a focus on the strengths of the UK's subsea services sector.*



5.



6.

New exhibits relating to UK oil and gas are on display at the Aberdeen Maritime Museum. Image courtesy of Norman Adams, Aberdeen City Council

#### 6. NEW OIL AND GAS DISPLAYS AT ABERDEEN MARITIME MUSEUM

Exhibits on UK oil and gas have been unveiled on three floors of the Aberdeen Maritime Museum. Oil & Gas UK coordinated donations of over £500,000 from its member companies to bring the exhibition up to date. It includes an improved education suite and a 3D film tour of the Tern Alpha platform.

Meredith Greiling, curator of maritime history at Aberdeen City Council, says: "What we have now is a fantastic resource for schools and families based in Aberdeen as well as a great experience for visitors to the region."

*For more information, visit [www.aagm.co.uk/Venues/aberdeenMaritimeMuseum/amm-overview.aspx](http://www.aagm.co.uk/Venues/aberdeenMaritimeMuseum/amm-overview.aspx).*

## 7. RESTORATION OF THE PIPER ALPHA MEMORIAL GARDEN

The Piper Alpha Memorial Garden in Aberdeen's Hazelhead Park is being primed to ensure it is in full bloom by the 25th anniversary of the disaster in July. Donations from the industry have helped to ensure that the costs of the restoration are met, with Aberdeen City Council carrying out the work. The Pound for Piper Trust, founded to raise money for the garden, will continue fundraising to ensure the garden thrives for many years to come as a memorial to all those who lost their lives and as a place for quiet contemplation and reflection.

*For more information about The Pound for Piper Memorial Trust and how you can help fundraise, please visit [www.poundforpiper.co.uk](http://www.poundforpiper.co.uk).*

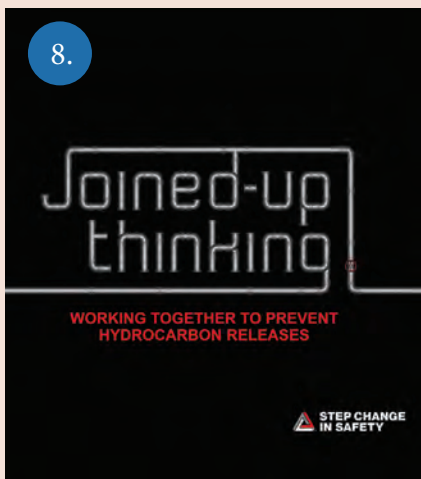


Carol Banks, Pound for Piper founder, and Geoff Holmes, CEO of Talisman Sinopec Energy UK Limited, at the Piper Alpha Memorial Garden

## 8. TACKLING HYDROCARBON RELEASES THROUGH 'JOINED-UP THINKING'

A new series of information packs from Step Change in Safety brings together best practice in behavioural factors, asset integrity, competence and workforce engagement to help companies prevent hydrocarbon releases. The Joined-Up Thinking initiative involves packs being issued every second month throughout 2013, covering themes such as major accident hazards and safety-critical elements, small bore tubing, reporting and learning lessons, pipework, control of work and joints.

*For more information, please visit [www.facebook.com/JoinedUpThinking](http://www.facebook.com/JoinedUpThinking) and also see p25 of this issue for more on our members' efforts to engage their workforce on safety.*



## 9. EUROPEAN COMMISSION AGREES ON OFFSHORE SAFETY DIRECTIVE

Oil & Gas UK welcomes the agreement from the European Commission that an EU Directive on offshore safety is the best way to raise standards across Europe to the high levels already present in the North Sea.

Oil & Gas UK has worked tirelessly on behalf of our members to highlight the very real damage that an EU Regulation could have done to workers' safety. The UK industry looks forward to working closely with the Commission to help disseminate North Sea experience and good practice across Europe by ensuring that the Directive is appropriately worded.

*For more information, please contact Robert Paterson on [rpaterson@oilandgasuk.co.uk](mailto:rpaterson@oilandgasuk.co.uk).*



(L-R) Onagh Werngren, operations director at Oil & Gas UK; Trevor Garlick, regional president for BP North Sea; Michael Moore MP, Scottish secretary; and Douglas Craig, chairman and managing director of Craig Group

## 10. NEW EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND RESCUE VESSEL

One of BP's vessels has been released for emergency response in waters around Scotland in a new agreement between industry and the UK Government. The vessel, the Grampian Frontier, operates west of Shetland and owner North Star Shipping is working with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency to ensure that the crew and equipment are able to respond in the interests of the wider community. Involvement of the Frontier builds on the government's commitment last year to fund an emergency towing vessel in waters around Scotland for the duration of the current spending review until 2015.

*For more information, please contact Ashley Shackleton on [ashackleton@oilandgasuk.co.uk](mailto:ashackleton@oilandgasuk.co.uk).*

## 11. INDUSTRY TO WORK CLOSELY WITH THE NEW POLICE SERVICE OF SCOTLAND

Positive industry collaboration will continue with the police force within its new structure as Police Scotland. From 1 April, all regional forces have been combined into one, with the force headquarters based in Tulliallan Castle in Fife. The emergency planning and offshore policing unit will however remain in Aberdeen.

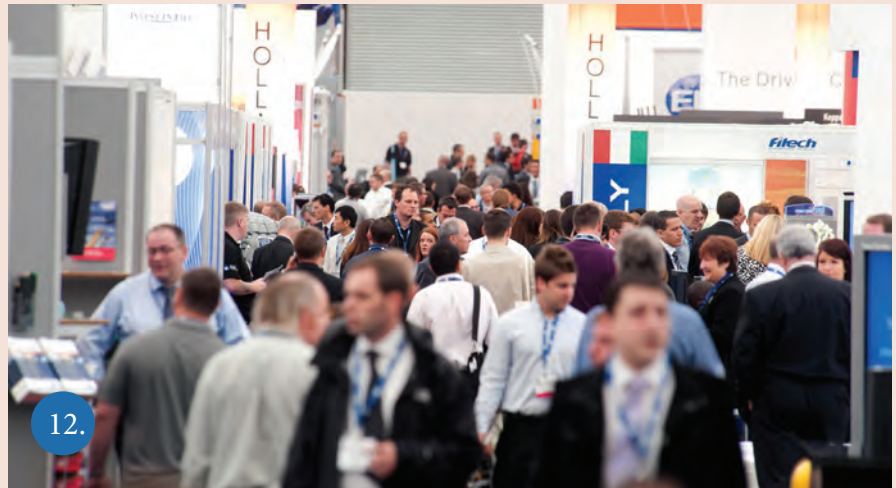
Superintendent Colin Brown, of Emergency, Events and Resilience Planning (North) at Police Scotland, says: "The police service in the north east of Scotland has grown alongside the energy sector over the past 40 years and we have forged exceptionally strong relationships through joint training, exercising and, sadly, in responding to live incidents. This has been recognised by the Police Scotland Command Team, which is keen to build on existing relationships and to identify and share good practice in the north east of Scotland and across the remainder of the country as the new service continues to mature."

He adds: "I am delighted that the work of the Energy Industry Liaison Unit, led by Inspector Fay Tough, will continue, and that in conjunction with the industry at all levels we will work towards keeping people safe within our offshore community."

*For more information, please contact Robert Paterson on [rpateron@oilandgasuk.co.uk](mailto:rpateron@oilandgasuk.co.uk).*



Left: Superintendent Colin Brown, of Emergency, Events and Resilience Planning (North) at Police Scotland  
Right: Inspector Fay Tough will lead the Energy Industry Liaison Unit



Offshore Europe also includes an exhibition with over 1,500 exhibitors expected

## 12. TOP SPEAKERS CONFIRMED FOR OFFSHORE EUROPE 2013

Attendees at SPE Offshore Europe 2013 will hear the views of top industry executives, government ministers and discipline specialists. The event, running in Aberdeen from 3 to 6 September, is chaired by Oil & Gas UK's chief executive Malcolm Webb and is free to attend.

The panel sessions will respond to the conference theme of 'the next 50 years'. Malcolm says: "The offshore oil and gas industry has an exciting and important future ahead of it. The conference will embrace commercial, employment, operational, safety and environmental aspects, as well as the policy and regulatory framework in which the industry operates."

*For more information and to register, please visit [www.offshore-europe.co.uk](http://www.offshore-europe.co.uk).*



## 13. PROMOTING BEST PRACTICE FOR WELL OPERATIONS

The second edition of Oil & Gas UK's *Guidelines on Relief Well Planning* is now available. The publication provides good industry practice from around the world and refers to the plans for relief wells that operators must submit to the Department of Energy and Climate Change as part of the Oil Pollution Emergency Plan. The second edition comprises guidance for an expanded range of relief wells, including subsea wells.

Oonagh Werngren, Oil & Gas UK's operations director, explains: "Safety is the top priority for the offshore sector and well operations are a vital part of our industry which is why Oil & Gas UK members are committed to continually reviewing and improving safety and performance in all aspects of well practices."

*The guidelines are available to download free of charge as a pdf for members at [www.oilandgasuk.co.uk/publications/viewpub.cfm?frmPubID=425](http://www.oilandgasuk.co.uk/publications/viewpub.cfm?frmPubID=425). There is a charge for non-members.*

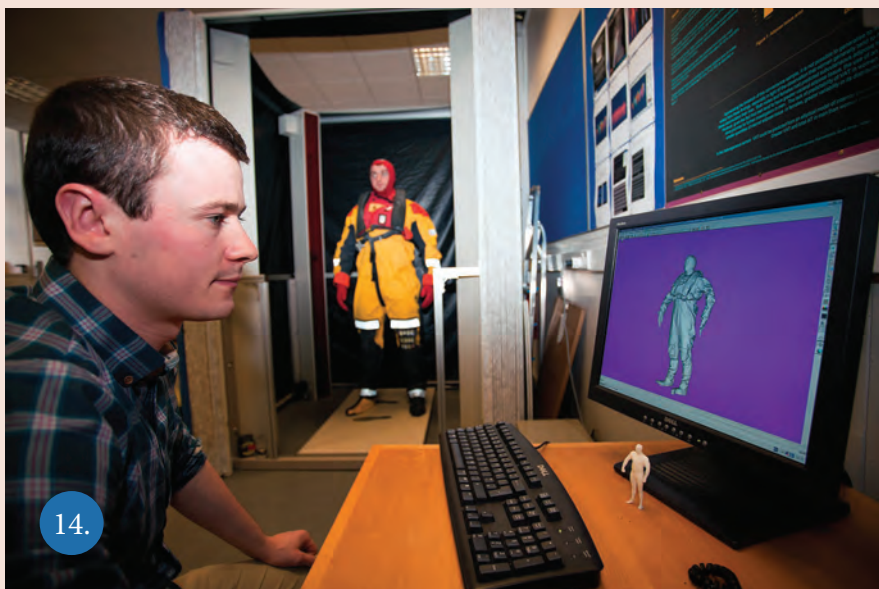


#### 14. ENHANCING OFFSHORE ERGONOMICS AND SAFETY

Groundbreaking research to measure the body sizes of a sample of 600 offshore workers with 3D scanners has been launched in Aberdeen to inform the future design of safety equipment, survival clothing and space requirements on offshore installations. The work will also inform emergency helicopter evacuation procedures.

The research, which will generate an ongoing capability for measuring the size and shape of the offshore workforce, is the first of its kind for 25 years and is being led by Robert Gordon University's Institute of Health and Welfare Research in collaboration with experts from Oil & Gas UK.

*For more information, please contact Robert Paterson on [rpaterson@oilandgasuk.co.uk](mailto:rpaterson@oilandgasuk.co.uk).*

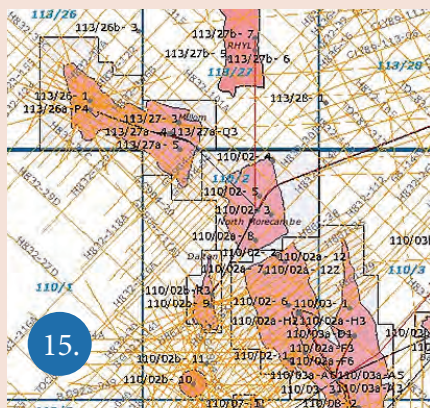


Student Robert Ledingham is working on the study at Robert Gordon University

#### 15. COMPETENCY BENCHMARKING FOR OIL AND GAS DATA MANAGERS

Common Data Access Limited (CDA), the UK oil and gas industry's shared data management service, is leading an international project to pilot an online competency profiling system for data managers. The system will help to develop competency benchmarks that assist in recruiting, assessing and certifying data managers with a view to defining a global industry professional standard.

*For more information, please contact Malcolm Fleming on [mflaming@cdal.com](mailto:mflaming@cdal.com).*



Sample image showing well and seismic data and infrastructure and licensing information – just a small selection of the complex data types managed by Common Data Access Limited

#### MEMBERSHIP MATTERS



Eddy Winters, membership manager, is committed to ensuring that our member benefits are tailored to members' needs.

*Please contact Eddy on [ewinters@oilandgasuk.co.uk](mailto:ewinters@oilandgasuk.co.uk).*

#### NEW MEMBERS

Oil & Gas UK is delighted that its membership has now grown to 342 companies, ensuring that the organisation flourishes as the leading representative body for the UK oil and gas industry.

Membership is open to companies of all types that are active on or offer services to the UK Continental Shelf. We are pleased to welcome the following companies who have joined Oil & Gas UK since the last issue of *Wireline*.

ABB Consulting, Absoft, Addleshaw Goddard LLP, AdvSafe, Aveva Solutions, Amor Group, Axiom Process, BAE Systems Detica, British Safety Council, Company Net, Corven Consulting, Dearson Tools, Epeus Ltd,

ERA Technology, ERM, First Oil, Harland and Wolff Heavy Industries Ltd, Harmonic, Health and Safety Laboratory, Heerema Fabrication Group, Infotechnics, InterMoor Ltd, KPI Bridge Oil, Lexonis, Mindsafety Ltd, MMI Engineering, MyCelx Technologies, NYA International, Ovivo UK Ltd, Paradigm Flow, Prosafe Offshore Ltd, QTEC Global Services, Raytheon Anschuetz GmbH, Regent's College, Risk Management Solutions, Safetec UK Ltd, Schneider Electric, SEMCO Maritime, Stena Drilling, Superior Wild Well Energy Services (Wild Well Control), Tata Consultancy Services, The Highland Group, Torkington Engineers Ltd, Trilogy Environmental Services, UPB Ltd, Wellton Energy and Z-Subsea Ltd.

## Dates for your diary

Raise your company's profile and be better informed about the important issues of the day by attending Oil & Gas UK's industry-leading events.

For further information, please visit [www.oilandgasuk.co.uk/events](http://www.oilandgasuk.co.uk/events)

 	<p><b>BOOK ONLINE NOW</b></p> <p>18 to 20 June  <b>Piper 25</b>  Aberdeen</p> <p>Principal sponsor</p> 	<p><b>PREVIEW</b></p> <p>This major three-day offshore safety event will mark the 25th anniversary of the Piper Alpha disaster. The conference will reflect on the lessons learnt from the tragedy, review how far offshore safety has evolved since and reinforce industry commitment to continuous improvement. There are opportunities for companies to exhibit at the event.</p>
	<p>2 July  <b>Supply Chain Seminar</b>  Aberdeen</p> <p>In association with the Chartered Institute of Purchasing &amp; Supply</p> <p>Sponsored by</p> 	<p>This is an opportunity to hear from contractors and operators about how they are working to deliver value-added solutions in major UK North Sea projects within the ever present constraints of cost, quality and schedule. Attendees will also hear from representatives of other industries on how they are obtaining the best value for money.</p>
	<p>6 November  <b>PILOT Share Fair</b>  Aberdeen</p> 	<p>At Share Fair, attendees are the first to hear about the latest business development opportunities from major operators and contractors who unveil their 18 month forward plans. Members of the supply chain can also make valuable contacts by participating in one-to-one sessions with potential clients.</p>
	<p>7 November  <b>Oil &amp; Gas UK Awards</b>  Aberdeen</p> <p>Principal sponsor</p> 	<p>The annual Oil &amp; Gas UK Awards ceremony is a stunning showcase for the industry's brightest talent. This glittering event gathers over 600 people from across the sector to celebrate the winners' achievements.</p>
	<p><b>BREAKFAST BRIEFINGS</b></p> <p>26 June 27 August 8 October 3 December  <b>Aberdeen Breakfast Briefings</b></p> <p>Sponsored by</p>  <p>9 July 18 September 21 November  <b>London Breakfast Briefings</b></p> <p>Sponsored by</p>  	<p>These breakfast briefings kick-start the day with opportunities for learning, sharing of ideas, lively debate and networking – all in time to be back for a full day in the office.</p> <p>The breakfasts regularly attract senior oil and gas industry figures, influential members of the business community, and local and national politicians.</p>
	<p><b>MEMBERS ONLY EVENT</b></p> <p>12 July  <b>Speed Networking</b>  London</p> <p>SCAN FOR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION</p>  	<p>Not familiar with speed networking? It's a unique event format that provides a great opportunity to meet a lot of new contacts in a short period of time. You will have five minutes to talk on a one-to-one basis with your networking partner and then it's time to switch to the next person.</p> <p>Following the speed networking session there will be an open networking lunch.</p>



Michele Eaves, brownfield projects manager at EnQuest, has 25 years of experience in engineering, manufacturing, project management and construction in the UK offshore oil and gas industry

## Flying high

Michele Eaves' dream as a young girl of being an air hostess couldn't be more removed from her current role as brownfield projects manager at EnQuest. At what is a particularly interesting time for brownfield developments on the UK Continental Shelf, *Wireline* catches up with Michele to find out more.

**M**ichele Eaves is excited about her future in the UK's offshore oil and gas industry. And why shouldn't she be? She is after all at the vanguard of the effort to ensure that as much as possible of the UK's oil and gas reserves are recovered.

With between 15 and 24 billion barrels of oil and gas still available, the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS) has a lot of potential and maximising economic recovery from existing fields, or brownfields, is a key part of the story.

One of the projects Michele is currently working on as brownfield projects

manager at EnQuest is a £169 million programme of investment to extend the life of the Thistle oilfield. This secured a brownfield tax allowance in February following changes to the fiscal regime by the UK Government.

With work on such mammoth projects, Michele's childhood aspirations of being

an air hostess may have changed but she is certainly flying high in the oil and gas industry. Her career in the sector spans 25 years with broad experience in engineering, manufacturing, project management and construction.

### **A whole new world of oil and gas**

While Michele hadn't contemplated entering the oil and gas industry, she notes that both her parents were engineers and so in reality it was probably inevitable that she would end up in the profession. She started her career as a mechanical engineering apprentice in 1985 at McEvoy-Willis in Stroud, Gloucestershire. The firm manufactured oil and gas wellhead equipment and was subsequently acquired by Cameron. She was the only female on the programme.

Circumstances conspired in the end, leading her to the European oil capital, Aberdeen. Michele's husband was offered a job in the city while she was studying for her honours degree in mechanical

engineering at Brunel University in London in the late 1980s.

"When I arrived [in Aberdeen] I discovered a whole world of opportunity," she says. "I think it is an industry which many more would enter if only they were aware of the potential and appreciated what it has to offer."

She recalls: "When I graduated in 1991, I think that I was one of only two or three of the 60 of us who actually went into engineering; I was immediately offered a job with Ingram Cactus as a design engineer for wellhead systems. The nature of the degree is such that you can migrate to different areas and a lot of my fellow students went into banking, accounting and other sectors where there appeared to be more opportunity to develop."

Michele says one of the problems is that "people don't see the new technology era we are in in engineering and particularly in oil and gas". She believes "it's critical that we change this perception and ensure students realise the potential, variety and opportunity this industry offers".

### **Adding value**

Michele then joined Vetco Gray in 1992 as a design engineer and progressed to project management, eventually becoming responsible for securing and ensuring the delivery of all new subsea and surface equipment for the company.

"The transition from engineering to project management was fairly natural for me," says Michele, "but admittedly required a change in mindset, where my focus had to change from looking at the detail to looking at the bigger picture".

*"I think it is an industry which many more would enter if only they were aware of the potential and appreciated what it has to offer."*



The Late Life Extension Project at EnQuest is giving a new lease of life to the Thistle oilfield

## LATE-LIFE EXTENSION

**A NEW LEASE OF LIFE FOR THISTLE**

The Thistle Late Life Extension project is at the heart of a strategy to recover around 35 million barrels of oil from the Thistle and Deveron fields.

The project is a reversal of fortunes for a platform which was previously heading towards the end of production.

The first phase of the programme started in 2010 with a rig reactivation project which enabled a return to drilling and restoration of production to over 8,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day in 2012.

Key features of the current phase managed by Michele Eaves include:

- A major power upgrade by installing a 30 megawatt turbine to ensure reliable power generation primarily to support water injection
- Creation of a fit-for-purpose simplified process plant
- A new process control and safety system
- Multi-faceted topsides integrity work including installation of new cranes, creation of equipment landing areas and maintenance work
- Focused work to maintain the integrity of the Thistle jacket, which was installed in 1976



She also worked for Wood Group PSN before moving on to Petrofac, which led her to work for Lundin who owned some of the assets that now belong to EnQuest. In 2007, she became project manager for all the facility engineering works on Thistle and when EnQuest took over the asset in April 2010 she continued in the same job but switched employer. In May 2012, she then took on the role of brownfield projects manager.

“The job started to change dramatically because EnQuest was looking longer term at what we were doing with existing assets and how to get the best out of them,” notes Michele. “Production [on Thistle] was declining and was approaching a point when it may have ceased. With the Late Life Extension project, we expect to see

As well as her technical expertise, Michele’s communication skills are therefore crucial in managing such a large project. “It’s an interesting blend of engineering and project delivery, while managing both people and expectations,” she says.

In turn, the Thistle project is safeguarding 500 existing jobs and creating almost 1,000 new ones by opening up opportunities across the wider UK supply chain.

Michele explains how EnQuest is working with companies in places like Newcastle, Manchester and Stockton on Tees, drawing on extensive experience in engineering from throughout the UK.

*The current phase of the Thistle Late Life Extension project involves £169 million of investment, safeguarding 500 existing jobs and generating 1,000 new ones across the UK supply chain.*

the life of the field extend for another decade (see box above).”

Michele manages the current programme of life extension, overseeing project planning, the budget, engineering requirements and offshore construction. She leads a team of 28 and manages around 300 contractors.

This makes it an exciting time to work on the UKCS – rejuvenating mature fields using innovation and technical expertise and contributing to the UK economy and energy security overall. “There are a great number of brownfield opportunities and Thistle is a prime example,” Michele enthuses.

**Professional satisfaction**

For someone who makes multi-million pound decisions, it is most satisfying for Michele to see the team’s efforts come to fruition, for example, with the successful installation in August 2012 of a new 30 megawatt power generation turbine on the Thistle platform. And she takes pride in seeing younger members of her team develop in their capabilities, mentoring the next generation of engineers.

Her story is therefore an important example of the exciting, challenging and rewarding careers on offer in the oil and gas sector and she enthusiastically promotes the lifelong potential which the industry offers young people.

She says: “I can honestly say I love my job and the fact that no two days are ever the same just makes it even more enjoyable. The future looks very exciting indeed.” <sup>W</sup>

*For more information, please visit [www.enquest.com](http://www.enquest.com).*

*For advice on how to make the most of the brownfield allowance, please contact Oil & Gas UK’s fiscal policy manager Claire Ralph on [cralph@oilandgasuk.co.uk](mailto:cralph@oilandgasuk.co.uk).*



Apprentices are trained in welding at the Nigg Skills Academy. Image courtesy of Derek Gordon Photography

## Growing the talent pool

The UK offshore oil and gas industry needs a steady and rising flow of skilled people to allow it to continue to make its significant contribution to the growth of the UK economy and energy security for decades to come. *Wireline* speaks to some of Oil & Gas UK's many member companies which are taking a proactive approach to meet this demand.

“It is vital that everyone helps to address the skills [challenge] that the industry is facing...to ensure the sector continues to prosper for generations to come and to maintain the UK's position as a global leader,” asserts Allan Cairns, CEO of Fabricom Offshore Services.

Fabricom is one of a number of companies that are investing in skills development to meet the growing demand for experienced professionals. For example, in September 2012, Fabricom consolidated its previous activity with the launch of the Fabricom Offshore Services Academy

in Newcastle and Global Energy Group also launched its Nigg Skills Academy in March that year.

Wood Group PSN's Re-engineer programme, meanwhile, focuses on retraining experienced engineers and technicians from other sectors.

Apprentices at one of Fabricom Offshore Services Academy's in-house training facilities



### In training

Fabricom is a specialist engineering company for the oil and gas industry, including brownfield engineering, procurement, construction and project management services. With offices in Aberdeen, Newcastle upon Tyne and Teesside, the company has grown since its establishment in 2007 and now boasts more than 320 employees in the UK.

Its Academy aims to produce the engineers and leaders of the future, helping to consolidate Fabricom's position and enable sustainable growth by bringing in new graduates, apprentices and individuals who are looking to upgrade or diversify their skills. The scheme also offers existing staff continued training, support and guidance to advance their careers.

By the end of 2013, the company expects to have more than 50 people recruited to the Academy and anticipates taking on at least a further 12 apprentices or graduates each year.

Elaine Roy, learning and development manager at Fabricom, says: "The Academy has been developed by engineers for engineers to provide a fully integrated set of programmes for training, learning and development. The focus is on engineering, project management, and execution and support services. Staff training, learning and development are central to the continued success and long-term sustainability of our business."

She continues: "The apprentice and graduate schemes are foundation programmes and have some prescribed skills and knowledge requirements that we use to focus training and development." Normally four years in duration, these schemes are in the

process of being accredited by leading UK professional engineering associations and offer class-room based and practical training including in the work environment.

### Re-engineer

Expanding the available talent pool to meet growing demand is also the purpose of the career conversion programme run by Wood Group PSN. The Re-engineer scheme aims to train a new generation of offshore maintenance

*"Staff training, learning and development are central to the continued success and long-term sustainability of our business."*

technicians by looking outside the industry for candidates with at least 10 years' practical experience, including a relevant apprenticeship, evidence of professional development and leadership skills.

More than 50 people have participated in the programme since its inception in 2006 and it is particularly popular with, though not restricted to, people from the armed forces.

Mike Riungu, of the company's Global Talent Development team, explains: "Re-engineer gives us the facility to transition seasoned professionals from outside the industry who otherwise may have been refused a chance to enter the sector."

He adds: "The programme selects accomplished, adaptable and motivated people who are not only willing to learn, but understand the value of developing the skills of the next generation. We therefore end up with people who are technically competent as well as qualified and experienced to provide future leadership."

Oil & Gas UK's 2012 Demographics Report revealed a gap in the number of offshore employees in the mid-career range, which to some extent is a symptom of the industry's success, as personnel developed in the UK are in demand internationally. Programmes like Re-engineer help to address this shortage.

Wood Group PSN aims to ensure that the number and type of technicians trained meets the needs of its customers and its own medium-to-long-term resourcing strategy. Since the first programme was developed by Production Services Network (PSN) Ltd, in partnership with the Engineering & Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB), the course content has evolved to reflect the changing safety requirements, business needs and qualification standards. >

Training occurs in two phases: eight weeks of instructor-led training at the TTE Technical Training College in Middlesbrough, where students face a mix of classroom and practical instruction (including time on a simulated processing plant), followed by a work-based assignment supported by a mentor and the company's Training & Competence Management Team. Within a period of 18 months, a student is expected to gain an SCQF Level 7 Diploma in Mechanical, Electrical or Instrument & Controls Maintenance.

### Building blocks for skills development

The Nigg Skills Academy aims to address skills demand in different disciplines – fabricating, pipefitting and welding – and was established following Global Energy Group's purchase of the Nigg Yard in the Scottish Highlands in October 2011.

The Yard is a large-scale fabrication site developed in the 1970s for the North Sea oil and gas industry but it has largely lain dormant for the past ten years. Rejuvenation of the site, which houses one of the world's largest dry docks, reflects increased demand for Global Energy's capabilities and has the potential to create thousands of jobs.

Within the offshore oil and gas industry, Global Energy specialises in fabricating bespoke subsea hardware and topside production facilities and the company foresaw potential restrictions to its own growth in not having sufficient skilled people at its disposal.

The Nigg Skills Academy is an industry-led facility that was created with funding from the Scottish Funding Council, Skills Development Scotland, and the Highlands and Islands Enterprise to support what was the old training school at Nigg Energy Park. It will provide skilled personnel for Global Energy as well as other companies.

*“Re-engineer gives us the facility to transition seasoned professionals from outside the industry.”*

Alastair Kennedy, chairman of the Academy and stakeholder relations director at Global Energy, notes that thanks to the Yard and the Academy, “[Global Energy] is now having success in bringing in work that would otherwise have been lost to foreign shores”.

The Academy offers a Modern Apprenticeship in Fabrication and Welding. This is a 16-week intensive course and every trainee must thereafter be employed to continue their qualifications. “We work alongside their employers to ensure we are delivering training to suit their needs,” says Alastair. The Modern Apprenticeship qualification is completed alongside a National Certificate which is delivered in partnership with North Highland College.

The scheme has proved highly sought after with more than 4,000 applicants for 104 places in 2012. Alastair is confident that the number of places will be matched this year, with a further 40 as part of a work scheme Global Energy runs with JobCentre Plus to provide unemployed people with intensive welder training. “Given the economic climate, this is a wonderful opportunity,” he enthuses.

Furthermore, the investment all these companies are making in skills development lays the foundations for long and successful careers in the industry, as Alastair points out, “many of the senior people in companies worldwide started in fabrication shops as welders”. >



Wood Group PSN's Re-engineer programme has attracted recruits from the Royal Air Force, the Royal Navy and Armed Forces. (L-R) Nick McCann (now senior global acquisition manager at Wood Group PSN), Dougal Slater (project engineer) and Rob Carter (project engineer)



## TESTIMONIALS

## IN THE PROGRAMME – WHAT PARTICIPANTS OF THESE SKILLS ACTIVITIES SAY...



**Jordan McGovan,**  
Fabricom Offshore Services  
Academy

Jordan McGovan, 21, joined Fabricom Offshore Services in 2008 as an apprentice and is now undertaking a Master of Engineering in Instrumentation and Control at the University of Teesside with the support of the new Academy. He has already gained a BTEC National Certificate in Mechanical Engineering and a BTEC HNC in Electrical and Electronic Engineering.

Jordan was attracted to Fabricom as he saw it “as a chance to come on board with a growing firm”. He also enjoys the high level of autonomy which the company encourages while always having the support of a team around him when he needs it. Jordan’s ambitions are to take his chartered exams and to become a lead engineer.

“Fabricom has built a strong foundation for me to achieve my career goals and I look forward to developing my role within the business,” he says.



**Dominic Boyd,**  
Wood Group PSN Re-engineer  
Programme

As an ex-military serviceman, Dominic Boyd took the opportunity to move into the oil and gas industry through Wood Group PSN’s Re-engineer programme in August 2011.

He says: “It offered proper and thorough training in instrumentation, coupled with a supervised transition to the industry”. Dominic is now an instrument and control maintenance technician at Wood Group PSN working on Ithaca Energy’s Beatrice platform.

He believes military personnel provide the industry with “a ready-made skilled workforce, suitably equipped for offshore [and so] it is refreshing that with Re-engineer those skills are recognised”.

Certainly Dominic is comfortable with the decision he has made. “In fact, I often wish I had made the transition earlier!”



**Mike Dunn,**  
Global Energy Group’s Nigg Skills  
Academy

One successful applicant to Global Energy Group’s Nigg Skills Academy is Mike Dunn, who spent ten years as a postman before joining the Modern Apprenticeship scheme in April 2012.

In his early 30s with a young family, Mike feels that the Academy has given him the opportunity to provide them with a long-term future.

“It is definitely a great opportunity for anyone not wanting to take a traditional academic route through universities,” he says.

Many people on Mike’s course are younger than him and he feels that they are being equipped for a long career with a skilled trade. “The skills that we are learning cover a variety of areas and we are constantly being challenged and moved around between different projects to ensure we are adaptable and that our skills are easily transferable.”

*“We are now having success  
in bringing in work that would otherwise  
have been lost to foreign shores.”*

*For more information, please visit  
[www.niggskillsacademy.com](http://www.niggskillsacademy.com),  
[www.fabricomoffshore.co.uk/academy.aspx](http://www.fabricomoffshore.co.uk/academy.aspx)  
and [www.woodgroup-psn.com/  
careers/re-engineer.aspx](http://www.woodgroup-psn.com/careers/re-engineer.aspx).  
Also see p6 of this issue for more on  
Oil & Gas UK’s work on meeting the  
skills demand.*



View an inspiring short film about the UK oil and gas industry at [www.energisingthenationsfuture.co.uk/getinvolved](http://www.energisingthenationsfuture.co.uk/getinvolved).

# Energising the Nation's Future with Oil & Gas

Oil & Gas UK has launched a new campaign to raise public awareness about the UK offshore oil and gas industry's contribution to the economy, innovation and energy security. *Wireline* finds out how we can all show that we are 'Proud to be in Oil & Gas'.

The oil and gas industry is by some margin the single largest industrial contributor to the UK economy. In addition to its economic contribution and its role in protecting energy security, the industry is also a world-class driver of innovation in UK science, technology and engineering

across the oil and gas operating community, supply chain and related industries. The oil and gas sector also creates and sustains an impressive number of skilled and valued jobs.

Unfortunately, these facts are not well known or understood outside the key oil and gas hubs. >



## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

**HERE ARE SOME EASY STEPS TO GETTING INVOLVED:**

- Sign up to join the campaign at [www.energisingthenationsfuture.co.uk/joinus](http://www.energisingthenationsfuture.co.uk/joinus) and be in with a chance of winning one of five Samsung Galaxy Tablets.
- Send an email to [proud@oilandgasuk.co.uk](mailto:proud@oilandgasuk.co.uk) telling us why you're 'Proud to be in Oil & Gas' – attaching an image reflecting you at work if possible.
- If you're on twitter, follow the campaign [@ProudtobeOandG](https://twitter.com/ProudtobeOandG) and tweet using [#ogproud](https://twitter.com/hashtag/ogproud).
- Take every opportunity to let your industry contacts know about the campaign and encourage their participation.
- If you work in communications, community/external affairs or policy, you can integrate our 'Energising the Nation's Future' messaging and media activity into your corporate communications. Request the campaign toolkit from [proud@oilandgasuk.co.uk](mailto:proud@oilandgasuk.co.uk).
- Look out for updates on the campaign from Oil & Gas UK, for example, regional events to take place around the country and the 'Innovation Nation' debate planned for October.


**What is 'Energising the Nation's Future'?**

Oil & Gas UK launched a campaign called 'Energising the Nation's Future' at an event in Aberdeen on 30 April to an audience of hundreds. The campaign aims to showcase the industry's contribution and importance to the UK economy, innovation and skilled job creation.

The success of the campaign relies heavily on the involvement of oil and gas employees across the UK, offshore or onshore in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, and working in large multi-national oil and gas companies to engineering or manufacturing SMEs. With your help we can gather the information and stories we need to remind everyone

just how important our industry is to the UK.

**How can I get involved?**

Join Energising the Nation's Future, and help Oil & Gas UK raise awareness about our industry's contribution and ensure we attain the support and recognition we need to thrive as a sector, now and in years to come. 

*"The success of the campaign relies heavily on the involvement of oil and gas employees across the UK".*

**Bid to highlight North Sea economy contribution**

The Scotsman

**Energising the Nation's Future**

The Journal

**Successful sector 'must be proud'**

The Press and Journal

**Call to be proactive on perception**

The Press and Journal

# A strategy for growth

Business Secretary Vince Cable MP catches up with *Wireline* following the launch of the UK Government's strategy for growth of the oil and gas industry and supply chain.



**Q:** In your view, what is the UK Government's role in supporting the growth of the industry?

**A:** The strategy we have just published (see p5 for more details) is a joint industry/government commitment to drive the industry forward. This is about partnership in maintaining a fiscal regime which continues to attract investment on the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS) and ensures a fair return for taxpayers through to working on skills, technology and finance issues. There is real scope to build together more growth into the industry, especially in the supply chain.

**Q:** With regard to the government's recently published oil and gas strategy, what would success look like?

**A:** This is the first challenge for the Oil and Gas Industry Council. They have committed to publishing success measures based on the strategy. I am sure they will be looking at some metrics linked to domestic and international growth as well as technology development and UKCS recovery rates.

**Q:** How do you see the oil and gas supply chain evolving in the coming decades?

**A:** We need a better understanding of the supply chain. I want to see UK businesses competing across the board. It's no secret that I have been disappointed that major fabrication contracts have gone overseas. We must address this as well as build on the industry's many strengths. The industry clearly has a lot to add to less mature sectors such as offshore renewables and carbon capture.

**Q:** How can the government help to encourage more exports from the oilfield services sector?

**A:** UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) has a network of over 100 offices overseas. Industry needs to use UKTI more and UKTI needs to reach out more to industry. The UKTI's high value opportunities programme, which received an additional £140 million in the autumn statement, will focus on where there is the best fit with UK capability and the appetite to engage with the UK supply chain, such as in Australia, Brazil, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Libya and Saudi Arabia.

*“There is real scope to build together more growth into the industry, especially in the supply chain.”*



One hundred and fifty industry leaders, politicians and other stakeholders attended the launch of the oil and gas strategy on 28 March in Aberdeen



The sector strategy for growth was produced following extensive consultation with the supply chain, operators and stakeholders

**Q:** With growth across the economy remaining elusive, what work is the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) doing to support innovation and R&D in the oil and gas sector?

**A:** I am pleased that the Technology Strategy Board has reintroduced oil and gas to its programme and I know that the Research Councils want to do more with the sector on the back of the strategy. Industry also needs to push itself more to access some of the support available, where relevant, for areas of research we are supporting: big data, space, robotics and autonomous systems, synthetic biology, regenerative medicine, agri-science, advanced materials and energy storage.

**Q:** What is BIS doing to reduce red-tape as a means of encouraging economic growth and innovation?

**A:** Reductions identified through the Red Tape Challenge and implemented by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) will result in £52 million of savings over the next 20 years. Some £45 million will come from the simplification of chemical regulation requirements offshore and the provision of better information through DECC's oil and gas website.

DECC is also improving a range of oil and gas-related regulations, including those that relate to efficient exploitation of oil and gas extraction. These deregulatory measures, when combined with simplifications to the European Emissions Trading Scheme and the Carbon Reduction Commitment regimes, will help businesses save around £400 million over 20 years.

**Q:** What's the most fascinating innovation you've seen accomplished by the UK oil and gas industry?

**A:** There are many but you have to be impressed by the sector's approach to safety and the environment. Its work over the years to reduce injuries and leakages make our industry a global leader.

*"The industry offers some of the most exciting jobs, in the UK and overseas, across a range of disciplines."*

**Q:** Why do you think there is a lack of awareness amongst Britons of the size and importance of our world class oil and gas industry? Does it concern you?

**A:** Government has been rightly focussed on decarbonising our economy. The industry itself recognises that to some extent it has been on the back foot in relation to presenting good news stories. The strategy gives us all a foundation to address this, to ensure the public is fully aware of the importance of hydrocarbons and to help the sector attract the best talent.

**Q:** Would you recommend the oil and gas industry as a career choice for a young woman? Why?

**A:** Absolutely. The industry offers some of the most exciting jobs, in the UK and overseas, across a range of disciplines. The perceptions of jobs being dirty, low tech and

offshore are hugely outdated. It is also reassuring that the current graduate intake of women for many UK companies is close to 30 per cent and rising all the time.

**Q:** Energy policy is becoming increasingly politicised; how do you ensure that decisions taken by government are evidence-based, tested and measured?

**A:** Electricity Market Reform (EMR) will help attract the investment to replace our ageing energy infrastructure with a more diverse and low-carbon energy mix. The *EMR White Paper* suggested that up to £110 billion of investment will be needed by 2020 alone. DECC's impact assessment for EMR provides clear and transparent analysis of the costs and benefits to both government and the wider economy.

*The industrial strategy for UK oil and gas is available to download at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-oil-and-gas-industrial-strategy-business-and-government-action-plan](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-oil-and-gas-industrial-strategy-business-and-government-action-plan).*

*Also see p18 for information on a new campaign to raise awareness about the sector's contribution to the UK economy.*





Members of the EPC Offshore team (L-R): Anthony Quick, project management leader; Peter Kirkbride, chief operating officer and Keith Wallace, CEO

## From strength to strength

Where there's a will to exploit the full potential of the UK's oil and gas resources, there's most certainly a way. The UK subsea services sector plays a key role in this endeavour and has established itself as a burgeoning world class supply chain. *Wireline* reports on the activities of two companies in the field – GE Oil & Gas and EPC Offshore.

2012 saw some bold moves by the subsea arm of equipment and services supplier GE Oil & Gas. Celebrating 30 years of its Oil & Gas Centre of Excellence in Montrose, Scotland, the company started work on a £9 million project to double the size of the machining facility, with a view to

creating 40 new jobs in the process. It also announced plans to commission a project management and systems engineering hub in Bristol, creating a further 200 jobs, and its Subsea Production Control Systems Centre of Excellence, in Nailsea, Somerset, saw an investment of £3 million to expand capabilities.

*“The decision to expand our capabilities and invest in new facilities in the UK was an easy one.”*



Construction has begun on a £9 million project to double the size of GE Oil & Gas' Montrose facility, expanding its capabilities. All Rights Reserved GE Oil & Gas 2013

These activities are in direct response to the increased demand for the company's subsea products and services, a trend that it expects to continue as confidence in the UK offshore oil and gas industry grows.

"The decision to expand our capabilities and invest in new facilities [in the UK] was an easy one," notes Phil Mason, senior vice-president of subsea services at GE Oil & Gas. "There's been a shift in terms of industry confidence in the fiscal regime [due to new tax allowances] and confidence breeds confidence. We can see the plans of our customers (the oil and gas exploration and production companies), in terms of their capital and operating expenditure over the coming years, and when you see their confidence in placing bets in this region then you can follow that lead."

GE recently relocated its global headquarters for subsea systems to Aberdeen. "All of our centres of excellence for subsea systems are in Europe – the technical powerhouse resides here, so it made the decision to relocate our headquarters to Aberdeen a straightforward one," says Phil. "At the same time, we work very hard to share best practice across our global organisation. We're structured to share technology and product development out of our UK subsea centres of excellence."

*"There's a progressive, 'pushing the boundaries' philosophy across the sector. There are big prizes to be won and people are motivated to respond to those."*

As operators plan nearly £100 billion in fresh investment on the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS), these growing and proven capabilities of UK subsea specialists will help to deliver new value from a mature region. The sector will support exploration and production activities in ever deeper waters and in marginal fields that were once beyond the technological reach of the offshore industry.

#### **Pushing boundaries**

For Keith Wallace, CEO of EPC Offshore, the driving force behind the success of the UK subsea sector is clear.

"There's a progressive, 'pushing the boundaries' philosophy across the sector," he says. "There are big prizes to be won and people are motivated to respond to those."

Keith has been involved in subsea services for 30 years and he notes that "things have changed beyond recognition". He recalls that "deepwater development was not even on the horizon in the late 1980s and early 90s. Safety has advanced

massively and so has the sophistication of design, the hardware and the technology as we advance into deeper waters and take on greater challenges in terms of pressures and temperatures.

"That in turn has created a great environment for companies to develop and produce niche products and specialist services in an ever more complex operational environment."

Maintaining a 'can do' attitude, says Keith, is critical. "It's about finding a way to make a project work. You need to be prepared to engage positively with people and if there's a real desire to do something then it can be done."

#### **Best foot forward**

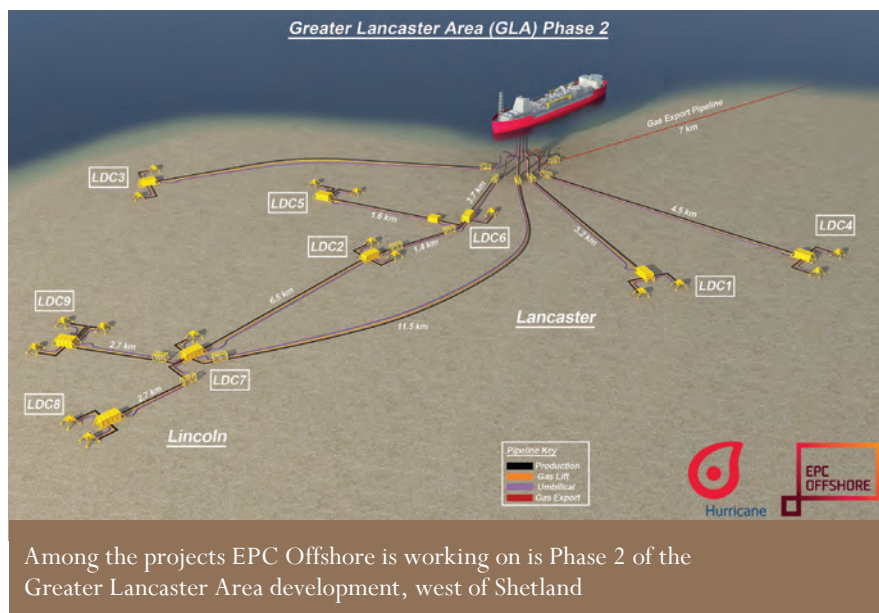
EPC Offshore, a development engineering and project management specialist, has grown from a two-man operation at its inception in 2009 to an established business with a workforce of 85 in offices in Aberdeen and London. Plans to create 40 more jobs were announced in April. >

The firm works with small-to-medium-sized oil and gas exploration and production companies to progress projects to sanction and final delivery. The financial crash of the late 2000s changed the economic environment around the industry – capital became difficult to access and the sanctioning of projects became tougher. EPC believes it is important to help its clients to present robust investment decision-making material to their stakeholders.

Subsea is not its sole point of focus, but it is central to its activities, and EPC recently won the Subsea Company of the Year Award at the Subsea UK Business Awards.

“It’s a very buoyant market,” says Keith. “Much of the world’s subsea capabilities were born in the North Sea. It’s a massive powerhouse of capability, knowledge and technology. Recent development activity in the west of Shetland is a case in point – if it can be done in that hostile environment, it can be done anywhere.”

The firm is involved in some big UKCS projects, including a contract to select the optimum concept for the development of Hurricane’s Lancaster field in the west of Shetland area. EPC now manages a total of around £500 million worth of sanctioned development budget.



Among the projects EPC Offshore is working on is Phase 2 of the Greater Lancaster Area development, west of Shetland

The business is eyeing further growth via investment in people, facilities and software – it is, for example, looking to add a process engineering capability to widen and deepen its concept development offering. It is also looking to expand beyond the UKCS.

Keith says: “I firmly believe it’s crucial for new entrants on the UKCS to have the support of specialist companies to bolster their performance in areas such as supply chain engagement and liaison with regulatory bodies. If the fundamental aim is to get much of the remaining potential to a sanctioned state, that element is crucial.”

### Strength of the supply chain

Phil agrees and points to a firmly-established supply chain environment in the UK as central to the sustainable success of the industry.

“Technology is of course a crucial factor, but sometimes we undervalue the mature supply chain that we have in this part of the world,” says Phil. “If your supply chain is not robust and delivering the quality and reliability levels that are required, then everything falls down.”

He adds: “Ours is a mature and predictable supply chain, something that’s not always a feature of other energy regions.”

GE’s subsea systems arm anticipates a stable pipeline of green-field projects as well as brownfield programmes driven by improved oil recovery initiatives. It also foresees more projects arising from existing infrastructure.

All these opportunities are set to augment its existing portfolio, which includes a contract to provide production equipment, control systems and services for Nexen Petroleum’s Golden Eagle development; this could total \$170 million over the development’s life.

So as the capabilities and investment in the subsea sector grow, Keith is certain that the UK will retain its status as “the global centre of subsea knowledge and capability”. <sup>(W)</sup>

For more information, please visit [www.ge-energy.com/about/oil\\_and\\_gas.jsp](http://www.ge-energy.com/about/oil_and_gas.jsp) and [www.epcoffshore.co.uk](http://www.epcoffshore.co.uk).

GE Oil & Gas celebrated 30 years of its Montrose facility in 2012. All Rights Reserved GE Oil & Gas 2013







## Workforce engagement on safety

The Workforce Engagement Toolkit from Step Change in Safety aims to help companies measure and improve their engagement on safety and is the culmination of efforts right across the industry. *Wireline* profiles two companies rolling out the toolkit to their staff.

**W**hen Step Change in Safety launched its Workforce Engagement Toolkit, it marked a watershed moment for the oil and gas industry.

It has long been recognised that a workforce that is fully engaged in the

safety effort and that is encouraged and supported by leaders to air their views is fundamental to creating a good safety culture. The toolkit aims to help transform the way companies interact with staff and in this way improve safety.

It comprises practical guidance and a survey tool to enable employers to

measure workforce engagement on safety at individual sites and then identify areas for improvement and facilitate solutions.

Here, we talk to two companies who are actively engaging in this effort. >

## PETROFAC OFFSHORE PROJECTS & OPERATIONS

Petrofac has enjoyed a long and close association with Step Change in Safety. In late 2011, two of the company's duty holder installations – Kittiwake (central North Sea) and Northern Producer (northern North Sea) – participated in the pilot of Step Change's Workforce Engagement Toolkit during its development phase.

The company will now roll out the toolkit across its sites in the southern North Sea, using promotional material to engage the workforce before the survey is carried out later on this year. Petrofac will also repeat the survey on Kittiwake in 2014 in order to gauge how things might have changed since 2011.

Nikki Morris, HSSE improvements advisor, is Petrofac's focal point for Step Change. She says: "The results of the workforce engagement survey pilot were very interesting and we are taking the time to analyse them and put appropriate plans in place. We discovered that some of the areas highlighted – such as safety leadership training and guidance for leaders on how to be more visible and engaging – we are doing already."

As part of her role, Nikki identifies how best to implement Step Change material internally. She does this by either cascading the information throughout the organisation or by embodying Step Change's principles within in-house campaigns to ensure the values are fully integrated into daily work and understood.

She explains: "We have a number of initiatives in place to encourage worker

involvement and in all of them we try to integrate and reference Step Change material, our own internal safety initiative, Horizon Zero (which aims to eliminate all incidents), our eight 'Golden Rules' for safety and our Petrofac leaders' guide to safe operations."

She adds: "Our safety leadership training events involve all levels of leadership, including elected safety representatives, offshore installation managers and supervisors onshore."

The company holds several of these events each year. They involve practical training on intervention and effective leadership and are designed to give leaders the tools and techniques to tackle behavioural issues associated with safety performance and culture.

Another initiative is Safety Net which is specifically aimed at elected safety representatives. These sessions combine elements of team-building and exercises designed to foster collaborative working. The scheme also includes technical refresher sessions and meetings designed to share best practice.

The company's workforce engagement campaign is also supported through distribution of quarterly packs, called 'Consequences', which comprise presentations, promotional material and other prepared material to tackle current or recent organisational or industry issues. They cover a variety of topics on process and personal safety, health and environment.



Nikki Morris, HSSE improvements advisor at Petrofac, takes every opportunity to see how best to apply Step Change's principles internally

Nikki explains: "The packs have created a library that anyone can use at their worksite. They also help our elected safety representatives in putting together presentations. The packs go out to all sites around the world and are designed to be flexible so that managers can use them however they best see fit."

Step Change's latest initiative, Joined-Up Thinking, is now also being promoted throughout the organisation. This comprises a series of information packs on different strands of safety, such as process safety and behavioural factors, and, in turn, complements Petrofac's 'Consequences' campaign. >



As part of Petrofac's Safety Net initiative for elected safety representatives, a treasure hunt was organised at Deeside Activity Park in Scotland. The objectives were to enable the reps to exercise and further develop skills in communication, joint decision-making, cooperation, teamwork, strategic thinking and time management

## CASE STUDY

## MAERSK OIL UK

Maersk Oil UK's Global Producer 3 (GP3) installation has been at the centre of a remarkable transformation, which has seen improvements to both safety and production performance.

Back in 2009, the GP3 floating production storage and offloading (FPSO) vessel had production efficiency of around 60 per cent and experienced four lost-time incidents (LTIs) during that year. However, strong leadership, crew participation and a forward-thinking approach to workforce engagement has led to a reduction in the number of injuries and hydrocarbon releases across the company.

In 2012, GP3 was named the safest FPSO for personal safety in the UK North Sea in the McKinsey & Company Production Performance Database 2012 benchmarking survey. Production efficiency has increased to over 90 per cent, with no LTIs – reinforcing the fact that safety and business efficiency can go hand-in-hand.

Behind this success is the widespread adoption of Maersk Oil UK's two safety programmes – Safe to Go and Incident-Free – which have played a key role in



Maersk Oil UK's Global Producer 3 (GP3) installation has seen improvements to both safety and production performance thanks to a forward thinking approach to workforce engagement, involving strong leadership and crew ownership of the strategy



GP3 offshore installation managers Andy Edwards and Peter Hepburn see personal visibility and approachability of leaders as essential to transforming an installation's safety culture

addressing the human factors influencing safety culture and behaviours.

Safe to Go involves leadership training, safety culture and behaviours coaching, the introduction of behaviour observation cards, and weekly meetings between the offshore installation managers (OIMs) and different representatives from all departments and workforce groups to discuss how individuals can contribute to improve safety performance.

The Incident-Free programme, meanwhile, sets the expectation that every activity can be completed without incident and encourages intervention to prevent potentially unsafe situations.

In addition, the GP3 installation piloted Step Change's Workforce Engagement Toolkit in 2012. The results of the survey were used to understand how GP3 was performing and to create an action plan to enhance workforce engagement.


From the outset, there was great enthusiasm from GP3's OIMs, Peter Hepburn, Andy Edwards and Steve Keay, who encouraged safety representatives to get involved in the activities. Openness is central to the success story of GP3's turnaround; the OIMs made themselves visible and approachable and encouraged staff to raise safety concerns and support the culture of engagement and staff ownership of the solutions.

Managers, supervisors and safety representatives have become 'safety coaches', asking questions rather than simply directing, which has built trust

among the workforce and helped foster a constructive safety culture on the vessel. All crew members are now being encouraged and supported in coaching others.

Niels Petersen, Maersk Oil UK's operations director, says: "Key to the GP3's success is the leadership provided by the OIMs. They have combined safety leadership and the Incident-Free ethos with a real focus on production excellence. We now all need to focus on sustaining this level of success."

He adds: "The Step Change Workforce Engagement Toolkit helped us to measure how well we were doing. We believe that good communication leads to better workforce engagement and a culture where individuals are empowered to take responsibility for themselves and their colleagues. We plan to re-run the toolkit survey with a view to using the results to inform our next steps."

When asked about the one thing that leaders should do to replicate the positive changes seen on GP3, Peter Hepburn says: "Think about the language you use and the impact this has on the team. The right language can help develop common understanding and shared belief." 

*For more information on the toolkit, please visit [www.stepchangeinsafety.net/about/workgroups/WorkforceEngagementToolkit.cfm](http://www.stepchangeinsafety.net/about/workgroups/WorkforceEngagementToolkit.cfm) or contact Les Linklater, team leader, on [les@stepchangeinsafety.net](mailto:les@stepchangeinsafety.net).*



The UK Oil and Gas Industry Safety Awards ceremony was held on 24 April in Aberdeen attended by 500 workforce representatives, safety professionals and industry leaders

## In the spotlight

The UK Oil and Gas Industry Safety Awards once again shone the spotlight on the top safety performers. *Wireline* reports

The winners of the UK Oil and Gas Industry Safety Awards were announced at an awards ceremony in Aberdeen on 24 April, where around 500 people – including workforce representatives, safety professionals and oil and gas industry leaders – gathered to celebrate and pay tribute to the finalists.

Jointly organised by Oil & Gas UK and Step Change in Safety, the awards were established in 2010 to celebrate

the outstanding people and companies helping to create safer offshore working environments – whether through innovative new processes or exceptional individual enthusiasm and personal commitment.

This year saw the launch of a new prize category to reward workforce engagement, honouring a worksite or installation which has actively embraced better engagement with its staff on safety.



*“The awards have brought to the fore an inspirational group of people and organisations.”*



The 2013 winners of the UK Oil and Gas Industry Safety Awards

In addition, the Ideas in Safety prize returned for a second year, with a cash prize of £5,000 for an individual or team which has come up with an original idea to prevent hydrocarbon releases.

Awards were also given out on the day to recognise safety leadership, safety representatives, up-and-coming professionals in the field of safety and companies which have established innovative safety processes or techniques.

Keynote speaker Grahame Smith, general secretary of the Scottish Trades Union Congress, presented the winners with their prizes.

Oil & Gas UK's health and safety director, Robert Paterson, says: "The awards have brought to the fore an inspirational group of people and organisations. The winners, and indeed everyone nominated, are doing great work to keep the safety of our people at the forefront of our industry."

He continues: "It's important that we continue to celebrate our great achievers. This year the safety awards have been the biggest and best yet with a record number of entries and people attending the ceremony."

Step Change in Safety team leader, Les Linklater, adds: "This year we expanded the awards to include a new category which recognises effective workforce engagement. Worksites which have good

engagement with employees tend to have better safety records and far fewer accidents. Therefore, it's right that we recognise the companies that are setting the standard so that others can learn from them."

### The winners

- The **Brent Delta Decommissioning Team** won the first ever **Award for Workforce Engagement**, sponsored by Fairfield Energy Limited (see box on next page).

- **Petrofac's Control of Work Team** picked up the prestigious **Ideas in Safety Prize** and a cheque for £5,000 (see box on next page).

- **Kent Lanier**, rig manager at Rowan Drilling UK, won the **Award for Safety Leadership**, sponsored by Chevron North Sea Limited, for transforming the safety culture on the Rowan Gorilla VI rig.

- **Marc Brankin**, scaffold chargehand on the Brent Decommissioning Project, scooped the **Award for Most Promising Individual**, sponsored by Draeger Safety UK Limited. Marc was one of the first platform personnel to embrace the MindSafety programme and volunteered as a coach, leading by example and inspiring his colleagues to come on board.

- **Scott MacDonald**, offshore electrician with Archer, won the **Award for Preventative Safety Action**, sponsored by ABB Consulting. He devised a solution to address the risk of working near exposed live terminals which were internal to the brake system control panel.

CHC's **Tony Bull** also received a **special commendation** in this category as captain of the flight from Aberdeen to the West Phoenix drilling rig, which had to make a controlled landing on water when the aircraft systems indicated failure of the main gearbox lubrication system.

- **Nicky Elphinstone**, a steward with Aramark on Total's Elgin platform, scooped the **Award for Safety Representative of the Year**, sponsored by BG International Limited. Nicky has been a safety representative since 1994 and has played a key role in campaigning for developmental training for offshore safety representatives.

- **Stork Technical Services and bSolutions @ Banff and Buchan College** picked up the **Award for Innovation in Safety** (Company Award), sponsored by Talisman Sinopec Energy UK Limited. Together they developed a training course to provide an industry-recognised standard for temporary refuge testing. >

## AWARD FOR WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT

**WINNER – THE BRENT DELTA  
DECOMMISSIONING TEAM**

This new award is for an individual, worksite, installation or company which has actively embraced engagement with its workers on safety matters and shown how this commitment has contributed to an improvement in safety performance.

When Shell's Brent Delta platform stopped production in December 2011, efforts were made to improve safety performance and create the right conditions for decommissioning. Considerable investment was made to highlight that Shell still viewed the asset as important and that the workforce should be proud to be part of its final chapter.

A three-year construction campaign began by tidying up the ageing platform and creating an office space to help team integration and create a more professional working environment.

The MindSafety programme for achieving behavioural culture change was also introduced to the 500 people involved in decommissioning Delta. Trainers travelled offshore to deliver the programme and engage with the crews.

The scheme has been a success with the total recordable case frequency (the number of injuries per million hours worked) reduced from around seven to two in 18 months.

The target this year is zero, which would mark a remarkable turnaround and make it one of the safest installations on the UK Continental Shelf.

*See p25 for more on our members' efforts to engage the workforce on safety.*



## THE IDEAS IN SAFETY PRIZE

**WINNER – PETROFAC  
CONTROL OF WORK TEAM**

This award is for an individual or team who has an original idea for reducing or preventing hydrocarbon leaks. This can be an invention, a new method or process, or even an unproven idea with great potential.


Following a number of incidents in which control of work (CoW) was identified as a root cause, rather than simply bolstering the permit to work system, Petrofac looked at how its workforce was operating and what improvements could be made.

By involving the workforce at all levels onshore and offshore, a bespoke, industry first, CoW training programme has been developed.

This involves a holistic approach focusing on personal responsibility and an understanding of the role everyone should play at all levels of the worksite.

**Key measures include:**

- New 'toolbox talk' forms to improve pre-job planning
- A CoW standard to ensure a better understanding of responsibilities
- Hazard spotting aids for the workforce
- More robust incident isolation procedures
- An electronic CoW programme developed in partnership with Mintra Training Portal Limited

Petrofac's investment in time and resources – not to mention the commitment of everyone in the team – has paved the way for this CoW programme to become an industry standard. The e-learning element is already being adopted by other companies and Mintra has opened a new facility to deliver the scheme. 



*For more information, please visit [www.oilandgasuk.co.uk/events/uk\\_oil\\_and\\_gas\\_industry\\_safety\\_awards.cfm](http://www.oilandgasuk.co.uk/events/uk_oil_and_gas_industry_safety_awards.cfm). Grahame Smith's keynote lecture is available to download.*

# Oil & Gas UK *Awards*



**OIL & GAS UK AWARDS 2013**  
THURSDAY 7 NOVEMBER  
ABERDEEN EXHIBITION AND CONFERENCE CENTRE

**NOMINATIONS LAUNCHING 27 JUNE 2013**

FURTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE ONLINE AT  
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