



Upstream industry gives scientists access to offshore data

The ideal observation point from which to measure sea level, waves, currents, sea temperature, conductivity, air temperature, air pressure and wind is a stationery structure that remains at sea for decades. Fortunately for metocean specialists, scores of such structures already exist in the form of offshore oil and gas production platforms. For years, information gathered on upstream facilities has been made available to scientists on an informal basis. Now the process has become official, with the launch of System of Industry Metocean data for the Offshore and Research Communities, SIMORC.

An initiative of OGP's Metocean Committee, SIMORC brings together a wide variety of metocean data and makes them available to the scientific community (as well as upstream colleagues) through a dedicated internet data service. Supported by the European Commission, SIMORC was officially inaugurated at OGP's London office by Dr. Alan Edwards, who represented the Commission. The Metocean Committee's SIMORC co-ordinator is Dick Schaap.

According to Dick, SIMORC data come from upstream operations the

world over. 'Within Europe we cover the North Sea, the Mediterranean, the Caspian, and the Norwegian Sea. Looking further afield, SIMORC also collects data from the North Western Atlantic Shelf, the Gulf of Mexico, offshore Brazil, the China Sea, and the waters of Australasia, the Middle East and West Africa.'

Observed metocean data, analyses and climate studies from upstream facilities 'provide our industry with the information and knowledge they need to design and engineer future offshore installations, such as production platforms and pipelines,' Dick says. 'The data also give us greater insight into assessing workability conditions and a good way to plan diving operations and pipeline installations. In some cases, the information available through SIMORC can even help us forecast storms and heavy weather conditions that might require facility evacuations or other safety measures.'

SIMORC's web service consists of an index metadatabase and a database of actual data sets. Both are accessible via the internet. While the index metadatabase is in the public domain, access to and use of data sets is restricted to scientific users, oil and gas companies and other registered third parties. At the time of its launch, SIMORC already encompassed more than 600 data sets from several major oil and gas companies. This coverage is steadily increasing.

SIMORC came about through a collaboration between IOC-IODE (UNESCO), major ocean data management specialists MARIS (NL) and BODC(UK) and OGP, with co-funding by the European Commission, which will last until the end of the year. Thereafter, MARIS and BODC will run SIMORC in an arrangement with OGP.

For further information, contact: john.campbell@ogp.org.uk



India is imminent

OGP's first general meeting in India will take place on 25 April.

The setting will be the historic ballroom of the Imperial Hotel in New Delhi. There, where generations of India's leaders have conferred – and celebrated – one of the first items on the agenda will be official approval of the results of the members' ballot for OGP's own leaders, the Management Committee, as well as the Associate Members' selection of their own MC representative.

Interspersed between updates on standing committee achievements, highlights of the day will include presentations by leading figures in the Indian oil and gas industry. Rakesh Jaggi, Managing Director of Schlumberger's India operations, will provide attendees with an overview of the nation's burgeoning oil and gas industry. He will be followed by A.K. Arora, Director General of Petrofed, the national industry association. Joining him will be Petrofed's Director of Marketing and Communications, Y. Sahai.

After a lunch kindly hosted by Cairn India, a roundtable discussion will address ways to best encourage the use of the recommended practices that OGP makes available



to members as well as the wider upstream industry.

That night, all AGM/EGM participants, their partners and the day's presenters will be treated to a gala evening generously arranged and sponsored by Schlumberger.

The following two days in Delhi will see major OGP-led workshops on Standards and HSE. Both will focus the national and regional issues and the benefits of global best practices.

For more information, contact: dianne.james@ogp.org.uk.

New aircraft guidelines lift-off

Early April saw the publication of OGP's new *Aircraft management guidelines* – a report that supersedes the previous set of guidelines produced nine years ago. The revised 160-page report was produced by the Safety Committee's Aviation Subcommittee.



It provides a ready reference for the management of aviation activities within the context of the upstream oil and gas industry. As such, it deals with operations from the conceptual phase onwards, including the factors to be taken into account when managing aircraft operations, the tendering and contractual process, the setting up of support facilities and the expectations required of contractors.

According to OGP Technical Manager Don Smith, the new guidelines are meant to supplement official standards.

'Most governments have some form of national or civil aviation authority. Bodies like that lay down standards and requirements for aircraft and their operation. But aviation authorities vary in their effectiveness and the nature of their regulations,' he says. 'And even the best aviation authority can only lay down minimum requirements. Ultimately, the responsibility for safety in the air is with the aircraft operator. And that's who OGP's new aircraft guidelines are directed at.'

The OGP guidelines are written so that they can form the basis of an aviation policy, applicable to companies and their contractors alike.

In line with the guidelines, a typical policy could require that:

- Preference be given to the use of those international airlines and regional carriers with low accident rates
- Exposure to high-risk operations be minimised
- For all aviation activities other than scheduled airline travel, only aircraft operators and aircraft types approved for use by an aviation advisor be used
- Contracted aircraft should be operated and maintained only by crew and engineers who possess minimum (and current) qualifications and experience
- Aircraft operators meet company insurance requirements
- Specific operational restrictions be applied, taking account of the contractor and local environment
- The decision to use aircraft should be weighed against alternative forms of travel, taking full account of operational, economic and, above all, safety implications

Copies of the new *Aircraft management guidelines* are freely downloadable from the publications page of:

www.ogp.org.uk.

Health Committee gets new leaders, a new work schedule and a new forum

The joint OGP/IEPCA Health Committee has a new chair, Alison Martin of BP and a new vice chair, Franco Mika of ENI. They succeed Clarion Johnson of ExxonMobil and Bernard Huisman of Shell. Alex Barbey of Schlumberger remains as a Vice-Chair.

In addition to choosing two new leaders at the 27 March meeting of the Health Committee in Bologna, members also determined a lineup for future projects. Having produced a report on health risk assessment and an OGP/IEPCA travel guide (see *Highlights* December 2006 and March 2007), in the coming months the Committee will focus on issues that include:

- Food & waterborne diseases
- Hazards of oil-based muds
- Integrating health with business planning
- Fitness for work and expatriate health
- Extreme cold weather work
- Health performance indicators

The Committee had chosen Bologna as their meeting venue to coincide with the 8th Offshore Mediterranean Conference and Exhibition in nearby Ravenna. There, at a gathering that attracted more than 240 companies from Europe, America, Africa and the Middle East, they staged a special Health Side-Event. Participating companies and organisations included CONCAWE, Qatar Petroleum, Transocean, ExxonMobil, Eni and Sonatrach.

Among the agenda topics:

- Best practices and the auditing of a workplace occupational health programme
- Developing health management systems
- Fitness for task health assessment and health surveillance

- Developing hazardous material exposure metrics as a way to measure progress toward zero work-related illnesses

For more information about the Health Committee and its work programme, contact: rob.cox@jpieca.org.



More funding for work on marine sound

The E&P Sound and Marine Life Joint Industry Programme (JIP) administered by OGP has allocated additional funding for a range of projects. The JIP Executive Committee made these expenditure decisions at its meeting in San Francisco on 3rd-4th April.

The Excom endorsed a total of more than \$600,000 in additional funding for:

- Collating existing marine mammal observer data and identifying potential new uses for this material
- Holding a scientific workshop dedicated to arriving at a better understanding of tissue injuries to fish and invertebrate marine animals that might have been caused as a result of marine sound
- Acquiring an airgun to advance further investigation into the possible impacts of seismic work on toothed whales, dolphins and porpoises
- Building on three previous investigations of passive acoustic monitoring (PAMGuard) by initiating a new field trial
- Progressing work on the development of standards for

measuring underwater sources and sound

- Staging a second biological significance workshop
- Supporting the 17th biennial conference on the biology of marine mammals

There are now 15 members in the JIP. They are: Anadarko, BG Group, BHP Billiton, BP Exploration Canada, Chevron Energy Technology, ConocoPhillips, Eni, ExxonMobil Exploration, Hydro, IAGC, Shell International E&P, Santos Ltd, Statoil, Total and Woodside.

Contact: john.campbell@ogp.org.uk for additional information.

EU confirms focus on greener energy

The European Union last month confirmed its green agenda when Member States' Heads of State and Government agreed to:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions unilaterally by 20% by 2020, using 1990 as a base figure
- Seek to convince the rest of the world to aim for a 30% reduction by 2020, with a 60-80% reduction by 2050
- Increase the market share of renewable energy to 20% by 2020
- Increase the market share of biofuels in transport petrol and diesel to 10% by 2020

'These objectives reflect European politicians' concerns over the security and price of external oil and gas supplies,' says OGP's Director of EU Affairs Beate Raabe. 'Such concerns in connection with efforts to manage the risk of climate change have led to the strengthening of a policy aimed at reducing the use of hydrocarbons.' In comments to OGP's secretariat, one European Commission official admitted that, 'without the security of supply scares of recent years, gas would today have a much better standing as a fuel of convenience in the transition to a carbon-free society.'

Now, under the auspices of the Berlin Fossil Fuels Forum, the EU Commission has set up one working party on security of supply and another on clean fossil fuels, Beate informed OGP's EU Committee at its Brussels meeting on 20 March. OGP is a member of both working parties and is additionally represented on a Commission working group that is preparing a revision of the Emissions Trading Directive. OGP also has a place on the EU's Gas Co-ordination Group. Later this month, OGP EU Affairs Manager Richard Hall is due to make a presentation to this body on gas supply risks and mitigation.

To ensure the widest possible awareness of OGP's views on the future of oil and gas in the overall energy mix for Europe – and beyond – the Brussels secretariat is disseminating the messages contained in OGP's response to the Commission's Strategic Energy Review of January this year. This involves a series of meetings with and presentations to leading figures in the Commission, the European Parliament and the EU Member States' Permanent Representations in Brussels.

New faces, new responsibilities

OGP's secretariat has two new staff members.

Natalie Scarimbolo is the Association's new Committee Support Co-ordinator. An Australian from Sydney, she has a degree in environmental biology. Although precise responsibilities are still being allocated among the secretariat, Natalie's initial focus will be on the Standards, Environment, Structures and Metocean Committees – together with all of their subcommittees. She will also provide some help to the E&P Sound and Marine Life Joint Industry



Natalie (left) and Caroline (right)

Programme (JIP) administered by OGP (see page 3).

According to Natalie, she was particularly keen to work at OGP because its remit coincides with her interests. 'Now all I have to do is get a grip on all the acronyms that fill every conversation I've had and every document I've encountered so far. But since everyone's very helpful about explaining things, it shouldn't be long before I'm fluent,' she says.

Caroline Nylander, OGP's new Administrative Assistant, is facing much the same challenge. But considering her knack for languages – she speaks English, German and Norwegian as well as her native Swedish – she should learn quickly. Caroline's degree is in mechanical engineering, with a focus on product development. Although she's worked as an admin assistant for a Swedish furniture company, the rest of her career has been more eclectic, she says.

OGP is Caroline's first direct experience of the oil industry – but having lived in Norway, she says she's well aware of what upstream prosperity can do for a country. As for peripheral upstream experience, of the upstream industry, she recalls her time as a chef on a Norwegian yacht for charter. 'Hydro was one of our clients so it's quite possible I cooked for some OGP members,' she says.

Though Dianne James certainly isn't a new face at OGP – she's the longest-serving member of the secretariat (see *Highlights* September 2006), she is now performing a new role as the Association's Administration Manager. In that capacity her responsibilities include the smooth running of OGP's offices, maintaining membership



files, keeping track of contracts, paying invoices and arranging the Association's twice-yearly general meetings.

'At the moment I'm deep into final details of our meetings in New Delhi,' she says. 'Arranging things from a distance is always a challenge, but our members have high standards so getting those details right is important,' she says.

Gill Smith plays a parallel role in arranging OGP workshops – an important aspect of her job as Committee Co-ordinator. Gill started with OGP as a receptionist almost three years ago and has since handled such high profile events as the Transporting People Safely workshop in Cairo (see *Highlights* December 2005) and the marine mammal workshop in Halifax, Nova Scotia. (see *Highlights* September 2005)

'I was involved in events organising before and used to run my own restaurant, so I know from experience



Forthcoming meetings

April

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

May

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Committee	Date
Surveying & Positioning Committee	20 April
Safety Data Task Force	23-24 April
HSE Geophysical Subcommittee	24-25 April
Management Committee (New Delhi)	24 April
AGM/EGM (New Delhi)	25 April
HSE Workshop (New Delhi)	26 April
Safety Committee (New Delhi)	27 April
Standards Workshop (New Delhi)	27 April
Emissions Trading Task Force	30 April
EU Committee	10-11 May
Land Transportation Safety TF telecon	15 May
Risk Assessment Data Directory Task Force	21 May
Security Issues Subcommittee	30 May

that getting the details right is the best way to get participants to relax and get on with the business at hand,' Gill says.

For the time being, Gill's committee work will focus mainly on Safety and Health and their many sub-committees.