A new year and two new members for IOGP

Welcoming the world’s biggest oil producer...

Saudi Aramco is the state-owned oil company of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and is the world’s largest oil and gas producer. Average daily crude production is over 10 million barrels from reserves of 261 billion barrels. Natural gas reserves are over 297 trillion standard cubic feet, with gas sales totalling just under 8 billion cubic feet per day.

In addition to operations in its home country, Saudi Aramco has subsidiaries and affiliates with global reach. The company employs 65,000 people in its upstream, refining and chemicals businesses. Together they are working to deliver on Saudi Aramco’s ‘core mission of reliably supplying energy to the Kingdom and the world’ and progressing ‘towards becoming the world’s leading integrated energy and chemicals enterprise, a top refiner and a creator of energy technologies.’

Saudi Aramco’s IOGP member representative is Chief Engineer Nabilah M. Al-Tunisi.

...and one of the oldest upstream service companies

Norway-based Aker Solutions traces its history back 175 years to a small mechanical workshop on Oslo’s Aker River. Today, the company provides the oil and gas industry with engineering, design, production systems and services on a global basis.

To do this, Aker Solutions employs about 15,000 people in 20 countries. As the company says, ‘Wherever we are in the world, we make sure to instil our high standards of safety and integrity in staff and suppliers.’

‘Promoting a sustainable oil and gas industry is key to our company vision,’ said Dean Watson, chief operating officer at Aker Solutions. ‘Joining IOGP allows us to collaborate with our customers, peers and other key E&P stakeholders to further this crucial effort.’

Vigleik Sexe, Senior Vice President HSSE, is the company’s IOGP member representative.
Progress in standardizing Christmas trees

The report was prepared by Joint Industry Project (JIP) 33 for the Standardization of Equipment Specifications for Procurement. JIP 33 is organized by IOGP with support from the World Economic Forum. Membership consists of 17 operating companies who are working to leverage and improve industry-level standardization.

The report, Supplementary Requirements to API Spec 17D Subsea Trees, builds on the participating members’ company specifications and supplements API Specification17 D – one of the few key global benchmarks defining the technical requirements for subsea trees. The IOGP specification provides alignment in how users might supplement the API standard.

Also driving the JIP 33 work was a pilot project initiated in 2015 by the Subsea Committee, with BP, Statoil and Total leading efforts to find alignment on the subsea trees’ technical specifications.

The newly-published IOGP specifications apply to any type of subsea tree design, and is not intended to limit users in defining options. Moreover, the document reflects discussions with all global suppliers of the equipment, ensuring that the specifications do not limit the use of any qualified technology or product. The 28-page specification includes information on service conditions and production specification levels, common system requirements as well as general and specific design requirements.

Other JIP 33 specifications cover ball valves, low-voltage switchgear and piping material.


Church blesses fracking – with caveats

The Church of England – which is at the centre of an Anglican communion of more than 85 million people around the world – has issued a briefing paper that addresses shale gas and fracking in the UK.

The 10-page report concludes that ‘shale gas is a potentially useful element in achieving a transition to a much lower carbon economy. The government’s public commitment to reducing the UK’s carbon emissions under COP21 provides a context which should ensure that shale gas is not treated as an alibi for ducking carbon reduction commitments.’

However, ‘shale gas developments must not distract or delay efforts to expand low-carbon renewable energy, especially community-owned energy in the UK, towards achieving the long-term 2050 carbon reduction targets.’

The report goes on to say that ‘if such a possible limited role for exploiting shale gas in the UK is accepted, the next question is whether the impact of fracking can be minimised satisfactorily’ with regard to affected communities, the landscape and the environment.

To ensure this, and ‘having concluded that shale gas may be a useful component in transitioning to a low carbon economy, we are persuaded that a robust planning and regulatory regime could be constructed,’ the briefing paper says.

The paper, jointly signed by the Church of England’s Chair, Mission and Public Affairs Council and the Bishop of Salisbury, who chairs the Church’s Environment Working Group, was commissioned ‘to help understand a “live”, and contentious issue about which there are many strong feelings on different sides, both in the church and the wider community.’ The Church Commissioners and their Ethical Investment Advisory Group were also involved.

Commenting on the paper, IOGP Executive Director Gordon Ballard, says ‘We welcome the Church of England’s recognition that fracking for natural gas in the UK is “a cleaner option than some alternatives” and acknowledge the recommendation that “ongoing research and monitoring” should be integral to shale gas exploration and development wherever it takes place.’

More information on shale technology is available from: [http://www.iogp.org/Policy-and-issues#4332727-shale-gas](http://www.iogp.org/Policy-and-issues#4332727-shale-gas)

The Church of England’s briefing paper on shale gas and fracking is available from: [https://www.churchofengland.org/media/3856131/shale-gas-and-fracking.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/media/3856131/shale-gas-and-fracking.pdf)
IOGP bids Michel Contie ‘au revoir’

Michel Contie, who served as Total's representative on IOGP’s Management Committee (MC) since 2010, has stepped down.

His joining the MC almost precisely coincided with the Macondo incident and the subsequent formation of the Global Industry Response Group (GIRG). Speaking of GIRG, Michel recalls that it marked a significant point in the Association’s development. ‘It demonstrated that we could effectively devise and manage a strategy and action plan to deliver useful products for the industry as long as we are focusing on core areas and keep continuous pressure on delivery and quality. And that by doing so we can crystallize the conditions for an improvement of the safety and environmental performance of our industry.’

Michel led the ‘prevention’ aspect of GIRG, which devised a report on lessons and recommendations. These included advances in training and improved competency for well personnel, the gathering of well incident data, accelerated sharing of information, enhanced BOP reliability and greater harmonization of international standards and the setting up of the WEC.

During his time on the MC, Michel also served as sponsor of IOGP’s Wells Expert Committee (established as one of the GIRG recommendations) and the Environment Committee.

From May, 2013, he was one of the MC’s Vice Chairs. In that role, he was active in ‘positioning IOGP to be the voice of the upstream industry internationally; re-thinking the strategy and processes so that the Association brings more value to its members through the effective use of its products; establishing new bridges with NOIs in Europe and elsewhere to gather efforts on advocacy and representation; and coordinating the Association’s activities and scope with those of IPIECA – particularly in environmental work and communications on climate-related issues,’ Michel says.

Looking back, he notes that ‘Over the last five years, IOGP has made a difference, creating the conditions that made possible improvements in safety and the environment – prerequisites in engaging effectively with regulators and the wider public. All of this has relied on our members’ sweat equity, as well as leadership and support from the Management Committee and the Association’s secretariat.’

Though no longer on the MC, IOGP links with Michel will continue in his new role as an independent director on the board of Oil Spill Response Limited, which holds and deploys globally, as needed, intervention equipment designed and built in line with GIRG recommendations.

Since the beginning of 2017, Michel’s successor on the Management Committee has been Michael Borrell, Total’s Senior VP Europe & Central Asia.

IOGP rendezvous in Davos

As ever, the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos attracted the world’s political and financial elite. Also attending were IOGP Executive Director Gordon Ballard and JIP 33 Chair Ian Cummins of BP, pictured here. They were at the meeting to report on progress made by JIP 33 – an initiative that began in conjunction with the WEF.

BP CEO Bob Dudley, Chair of the WEC’s Oil & Gas Group, commended the JIP’s work and the continuing support of IOGP. Gordon also maintains that Shakira, Matt Damon, George Clooney and UK Prime Minister Theresa May were, unfortunately, just out of the frame of the picture shown here.
Cleared for take-off? IOGP updates Airline Safety Assessment Mechanism

There are more than 1,000 airlines flying scheduled operations. Cumulatively, they are responsible for more than 30 million flights each year. The question is: how safe are they?

The latest version of IOGP’s Airline Safety Assessment Mechanism helps the Association’s member companies to find out for themselves.

On a distance-flown basis, air travel has become one of the safest forms of travel. ‘Statistically, the chance of being involved in an accident with a scheduled airline is small – less than one per 100,000 flights – and the chance of being fatally or seriously injured is an order less than this at around 1.3 per million flights,’ the publication says.

But as the document goes on to say, it is the accident rate per flight that is of most concern, particularly for frequent travellers, such as those in the upstream oil and gas industry. Such air journeys on business often involve multi-sector flights around the world.

Those undertaking such trips understandably want confidence in a safe arrival for every take off. So do their employers – IOGP’s member companies – for whom the well-being of staff and contractors alike is a genuine business consideration as well as moral concern.

As the document recognizes, ‘airline safety varies widely around the world by airline as well as by the aircraft types used.’ One way to help determine the safety of a particular airline is to conduct a desk-top risk assessment, using a safety grading mechanism based on data readily available for commercial airlines.

The IOGP safety assessment mechanism provides precisely that. It was formulated through a series of workshops that included IOGP Aviation Subcommittee members as well as participants representing airlines, independent consultants, the telecommunication industry, broadcast media and an international funding agency.

The new report and its associated spreadsheet provide a framework for companies to carry out their own investigations, based on ‘rational and structured safety assessment of a scheduled commercial airline.’ IOGP does no airline assessments itself.

To download a copy of the mechanism and associated worksheet, visit http://www.iogp.org/pubs/418.pdf

Meetings Calendar

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**Highlight:**
- **January / February 2017**

**Meeting types are abbreviated as follows:**
- Committee (Com)
- Skype (Sk)
- Subcommittee (SC)
- Task Force (TF)
- Teleconference (Tel)
- Webex (Web)
- Working Group (WG)