Highlights

Houston: We had no problem

The oil and gas capital of the United States is also home to NASA, the nation’s space agency. For November’s IOGP Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM), the Association drew on both aspects of the city for a two-day event that took place at the NASA Space Center itself. The EGM attracted participants with operations on six continents.

But as Management Committee Chair Monika Hauserblas of Shell pointed out in her words of welcome, planning the EGM had its moments of drama. At the end of August, she reminded attendees, Hurricane Harvey – one of the most powerful storms ever recorded in the Houston area – had hit the city with a vengeance.

“At the time, it seemed impossible to guess how long it would take to get Houston cleaned up and back to business,” she said, adding “But we should have known better.”

“Houston is, after all, the US hub of our industry. And our industry is used to meeting challenges: challenging markets, challenging geology, challenging economic pressures, challenging competition from other energy sources and a challenging criticism – most recently on environmental grounds.

“We’ve risen to those challenges. And continue to do so. “I’m proud of the Association’s role in making our industry safer, cleaner and more adaptable to external pressures,” Monika said.

She went on to describe how IOGP’s re-focused strategy was succeeding in its aim to make the Association more flexible and effective. “We set out to improve the ways we respond to – and even shape – the events, regulations and laws that will have a bearing on E&P in the years ahead. We’ve also become more relevant to the needs of the Association’s membership. In other words, to you,” she told those attending.

Other highlights of the meeting included presentations by Craig May of host-company Chevron and Executive Director Gordon Ballard who provided an update of achievements since the previous meeting in May. Gordon went on to give a financial review of 2017, together with a forecast for the balance of the year and a summary of the 2018 Business Plan and Budget. Other presenters were: Director John Campbell and HSS Director Chris Hawkes, who focused on regulatory updates and EU Affairs Manager Bernard Vanheule and Regional Director – Americas Albert Skiba, who outlined developments in IOGP’s Brussels and Houston offices.

Continued overleaf
On the subject of space, guest presenters were veteran astronaut Michael Bloomfield, Vice-President and General Manager of Oceaneering Space Systems and NASA’s Chief Safety & Mission Assurance Officer George K. Gafka. Both offered insights with considerable relevance to the safety of upstream oil and gas operations.

Also on the agenda was a tour of the Space Center and dinner in the Starship Gallery.

It was resolved...

Members attending the Houston EGM – as well as those who voted by postal ballot and proxy – passed resolutions approving:

- A nominal increase of 5% to the unit of account for 2018
- Continuation of the EU supplement at the current rate in 2018
- Endorsement of the Association’s 2018 budget.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chair announced the date and venue of the next Annual General Meeting: Abu Dhabi on 19 April, 2018. “This is immediately after the SPE’s HSSE Conference in the same location,” she explained. “Since so many IOGP members will be attending that meeting, having ours to follow, will keep the burden and cost of travel to a minimum,” she said.

All presentations from the Houston EGM are available on the Members’ website. Draft minutes will be there shortly.

Picture perfect

Following the success of last year’s poster session, during which chairs and managers of IOGP’s standing committees held informal briefings for EGM attendees, the Houston EGM repeated the exercise. With one notable improvement: the availability of chairs for those who found over four hours on foot during the course of two days somewhat tiring.

For the Communications Committee, the session provided an opportunity to poll attendees on messages. Using a poster featuring 42 ‘numbers of the week’ that have featured on the IOGP website, Chair Colin Joyce of Shell and IOGP Global Engagement Manager Olaf Martins asked members to vote on their favourite. The winner, by far, was a reference to ‘72 uses of oil in every day life’, a panel that has appeared in 10 languages (shown here in English).

Other popular numbers were ‘net-zero’, about off-setting greenhouse gas emissions and ‘1’, explaining how a single gram of shipping diesel can move one tonne of cargo one kilometre.

All 14 posters from the Houston EGM session can be seen on the Members’ website.
IEA affirms future need for oil and gas

The International Energy Agency (IEA) has forecasted that, come what may in terms of meeting the world’s climate change goals, oil and gas will still be needed to meet between 48% and 53% of energy demand between now and 2040.

An autonomous body, the IEA is funded by the 29 nations of the Organisation of Economic Co-Operation and Development, as well as the revenue it generates from its publications. Foremost among them is the IEA’s World Energy Outlook, the newly-published 2017 edition of which examined three energy scenarios for the world’s future. In all three scenarios, oil and gas will be needed to meet about half of world energy demand.

For the first time, the Outlook considers future energy demand through the lens of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The publication found that over one billion people still lack access to electricity, while nearly three billion still rely on coal or biomass for cooking, with severe impact on health.

Given the need for oil and gas in the decades ahead – combined with a forecast 6% annual depletion rate – there is a significant case for investment in the upstream sector over the coming years, the IEA says.

Commenting on the Outlook, IOGP Executive Director Gordon Ballard said ‘Even in the most ambitious IEA scenario, the high share of oil and gas in the energy mix shows just how important they are to the global economy. In some regions of the world, limited access to energy and energy poverty are by far the most pressing issues. The world isn’t done developing, and it’s going to need oil and gas for that.’

Gordon also cited the Outlook’s ‘extremely positive’ conclusions about natural gas. The report ‘makes the advantages and the versatility of this fuel known to everyone. The ability of gas to provide flexibility to the energy systems while reducing emissions of CO2 and air pollutants is simply unparalleled.’

The Outlook additionally looks at methane emissions from energy sources, noting that oil & gas are much better placed in terms of abatement potential than coal. “As an industry, we have been working to reduce methane emissions for nearly two decades now, and remain fully committed to achieving additional progress. Countries around the world are counting on us to deliver safe, affordable and sustainable energy. The IEA report inspires us to keep doing our best,” Gordon says.

Back from Bonn

Both IOGP and IPIECA were present at the 23rd session of the Conference of the Parties (COP23) held in Bonn on behalf of the Fijian Presidency. This year’s agenda included a continuation of the negotiations and agreement on the finer details for implementation of the COP21 Paris Agreement.

As IPIECA reports, while some progress was made in key areas, such as market mechanisms for helping countries to achieve their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) agreed in Paris, ‘much remains to be done’. The secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change will flesh out relevant documents between now and May 2018, when negotiations will resume. The aim is to have agreed final texts at COP24, which will be in Katowice, Poland in November, 2018.

According to IOGP Global Engagement Manager Olaf Martins, who was accredited to the Blue Zone in Bonn, the event provided an excellent opportunity to listen, learn and informally put our industry’s points across. “Oil and gas are an integral part of the solution to the climate change challenge. Whenever we spoke about energy efficiency, carbon capture & storage and reducing methane emissions, the initiatives we described were very well received,” Olaf recalls.
IOGP welcomes Aker BP

IOGP’s newest member is Aker BP, one of Europe’s largest independent producers.

Aker BP also has offices in Stavanger, Trondheim, Harstad and Sandnessjøen. Whether in the field or onshore, Aker BP operates by ‘integrating HSE-related goals, strategies and action plans in all projects and activities managed and carried out by the company.’

Aker BP employs some 1,300 people. The company’s IOGP member representative is Jorunn Kvåle.

Christine Glorieux: marking two milestones in one evening

The manager of IOGP’s Brussels office, Christine Glorieux, recently celebrated a quarter century with IOGP.

At the same time, she was preparing to leave so that she could start a new job as personal assistant to the director general of another international association – this one representing the soap, detergent and domestic product sector. A clean break then – but one with considerable emotion on both sides.

After all, Christine was part of a team of two (the other being Brian Raggett) who set up the Brussels office. ‘From that modest beginning, IOGP has become recognized as a serious and active stakeholder within the EU institutions,’ she says. ‘My role has been to help support those efforts, whether in office management, HR, organization of meetings or recruitment. Some of the most satisfying projects have been organizing two office moves and a major office extension, helping to create the IOGP 40th anniversary event in 2014. A memory I particularly cherish was being part of the IOGP team on a charity cycle challenge in Vietnam in 2010.’

Looking ahead, Christine is eagerly anticipating new challenges – and the opportunity for more travel in her new role.

At a dinner for Christine in Brussels, IOGP Director EU Affairs Roland Festor hailed her ‘highest professional dedication’ and thanked Christine on behalf of fellow-colleagues and the Association’s members. ‘All of us wish Christine the best in her private and professional future,’ he said.

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Meetings Calendar

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- Standards - Offshore Structures SC Specs Group
- Standards - Offshore Structures SC
- Subsea Com
- Wells - Competency & Training SC
- Environment Com
- Standards - Engineering Leadership Summit
- Standards - Operators Preferred Standards TF
- Subsea - Flexible Pipe Life Extension Network
- Standards - Offshore Structures SC Specs Group
- Standards - Coatings SC
- Standards - Information Standards SC

Meeting types are abbreviated as follows:
Committee [Com] Skype [Sk]
Subcommittee [SC] Task Force [TF]
Teleconference [Tel] Webex [W]
Working Group [WG]

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