

Atwood rig awarded 1st deepwater drilling contract offshore Ukraine



Atwood Oceanics' semisubmersible Atwood Southern Cross was awarded the first deepwater drilling contract for offshore Ukraine by Vanco International. The contract work will take place in the Prykerchenska block of the Black Sea.

THE FIRST DEEPWATER drilling contract for offshore Ukraine has been awarded by **Vanco International Ltd.** to **Atwood Oceanics Pacific Ltd.**, a subsidiary of **Atwood Oceanics Inc.**, for use of the Atwood Southern Cross semisubmersible drilling unit. The contract is for 1 firm well and 1 optional well in the Prykerchenska block of the Black Sea.

The Southern Cross is a semisubmersible capable of drilling in up to 2,000 ft of water.

"Atwood is an established drilling contractor with a proven level of performance," Vanco chairman **Gene Van Dyke** said. "Not only is the Atwood Southern Cross well-suited for the initial well location, but its current commitments in the Black Sea make it conveniently positioned for this drilling program."

As early as August 2007 or as late as January 2008, the Atwood Southern Cross will drill off the shelf in the north-

eastern corner of the Prykerchenska block in water depths greater than 300 meters.

In April, Vanco won a competitive tender for the right to conclude a Production Sharing Agreement with the government of Ukraine for the Prykerchenska Tender Area.

Covering 3.2 million acres, the Prykerchenska PSA Tender Area is located offshore the Crimea near the Kerch region. In its northern shallower part, the Tender Area contains a prominent Tertiary folded belt with numerous prospective structures that are on trend with the recently announced Subbotina oil and gas discovery. The deeper (below 2,000 m) southern part of the block contains large structural closures, including the Tetyaev High.

The Ukrainian government expects the Kerch region project could generate up to \$2 billion in foreign direct investment into oil and gas E&P. ♠

Dolphin Deep field goes on-stream

BG GROUP and its partner **Chevron** have announced the delivery of first gas from the Dolphin Deep development to the onshore processing facilities at Beachfield on the south-east coast of Trinidad and Tobago.

The field is located about 83 km off the east coast of Trinidad. Gas production from the 2 Dolphin Deep wells is expected to reach a maximum rate of 250 million standard cu ft/day.

"By bringing the Dolphin Deep field on stream, BG Group and its partner have completed the first subsea development in Trinidad and Tobago," said **Martin Houston**, executive vice president North America, Caribbean and Global LNG. ♠

In Amenas project begins gas production

BP HAS announced the In Amenas gas project, a joint development with **Sonatrach**, the Algerian state energy company, and **Statoil** of Norway, has commenced gas production.

In Amenas, the largest wet gas joint development project in Algeria, is located about 850 km south of Hassi Messaoud. The project includes development of 4 primary gas fields, plus gas gathering and processing facilities.

Production is expected to build to about 9 billion cu m/year (25 million cu m/day) and about 50,000-60,000 bbls/day of liquids. ♠

Fiord field starts up

CONOCOPHILLIPS and **Anadarko Petroleum Corp** have announced the startup of the first Alpine satellite oilfield, known as the Fiord field. It is located 5 miles north of the Alpine oilfield on Alaska's North Slope. Fiord is expected to have a peak production of approximately 22,500 bbls/day gross in 2008. It was developed exclusively with horizontal well technology and will use enhanced oil recovery. The currently approved plan for Fiord development entails about 17 wells. ♠

Transocean Marianas goes 4 years without a serious injury case



The Transocean Marianas is currently operating for BP in the Gulf of Mexico.

CREWS ON Transocean's semisubmersible Transocean Marianas recently completed 4 years without a single serious injury case. The moored rig is operating for BP in the Gulf of Mexico.

"The key to our success is our family culture and teamwork," said rig manager **Kenny Brown**. "We help our new hires to work safely just like we help our own kids at home. We take ownership of safety. If we need a change of plan, we don't rush. We make sure everyone is on the same page before we turn the page. I am extremely proud of all personnel on the Marianas and am proud to be a part of this team." ♪

Nicklos Drilling takes delivery of Chinese-built rig



NICKLOS Drilling's Rig 5 was constructed in China by **Baoji Oilfield Machinery Co (BOMCO)**. It took about 3 months to construct and about 2 months to ship to the US. Nicklos spent another 2 months assembling the rig and finishing the rig-up process

with US-manufactured **Caterpillar** engines and **Cameron** BOPs. Rig 5 is BOMCO's first complete rig sold to an American company and operating in the US. It has a 1,500-hp drawworks, 1,600-hp mud pumps and is capable of drilling up to 18,000 ft. ♪

Prudhoe Bay oilfield disruptions barely touch drilling contractors

WHEN BP DECIDED to shut down its Prudhoe Bay field in Alaska in early August, a big storm blew over the mainstream media. But for drilling contractors, it was barely a blip on their radar.

According to **Nabors** director of corporate development **Dennis Smith**, 2-3 rigs were down for 2-4 days due to a lack of fuel to keep the rigs running.

"But we were able to perform routine maintenance, so we made productive use of that time," Mr Smith said.

As of mid-August, Nabors had about 8 rigs working on the field for BP. Two other drilling contractors working there – **Nordic Calista** and **Doyon Drilling** – had 3 and 2 rigs operating, respectively.

Udo Cassee, operations superintendent for **Nordic Calista**, said he also experienced only a slight logistical disruption. "All rig operations are



BP found a small leak on the Flow Station 2 Oil Transit Line on the Prudhoe Bay field in Alaska in August.

now continuing. For me as a drilling contractor, life is normal," he said.

Ron Wilson, general manager for **Doyon**, also reported no major disruptions to operations.

BP had originally announced in early August it was shutting down the Prudhoe Bay field after discovering severe pipeline corrosion. But about a week later, it said it would continue production from the western area while 16 miles of pipeline is replaced on the eastern side. ♪

Kuwait Drilling Company rig LTI-free for 6 years



KUWAIT Drilling Company's Rig 26 has extended its Lost Time Incident-free days to 2,190, or 6 years. The rig is operating in the North Kuwait oilfields for **Kuwait Oil Company**. This is a milestone in a time

with such high personnel turnover, said **Kevin Rollins**, KDR HSE manager. Its significance increases even more when you consider that its crew includes members from 9 different language speaking countries, he said. ♪

First gas delivered from Shell project in New Zealand

SHELL E&P has welcomed delivery of first gas from its Pohokura Project in Taranaki, New Zealand. Gas began flowing from the 3 completed onshore wells through the production station

at Motonui, near New Plymouth in early August. The field is the 2nd-largest in New Zealand and is expected to produce about 40,000 bbls of oil equivalent at its peak. ♪