

## **Minute note - Cross Party Group on Oil and Gas**

Held on Tuesday 25 June 2013, 18:00 – 19:30

Committee Room 1, the Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP

### **In attendance:**

Lewis Macdonald MSP (Chair)  
Christian Alland MSP  
Chick Brodie MSP  
Maureen Watt MSP  
Kevin Stewart MSP  
Jamie McGrigor MSP  
Nanette Milne MSP  
Mary Scanlon MSP  
Rhoda Grant MSP  
Mark McDonald MSP

John West assistant to Kevin Stewart MSP  
Ron Aitken, Resolve Creative  
Shirley Allen, Pinsent Masons  
Carol Barbone, CNR International  
Fiona Bayne, Shell  
Bruce Becker, ENI/Elgin Franklin Ltd  
Gemma Buxton, PWC  
Pierre-Alain Coffinier, Consul General  
Professor Andrew Curtis, Edinburgh University  
Elsa Davidson, National Museums of Scotland  
Rachel Elliott, Aberdeen and Grampian Chambers of Commerce  
John Hampson, Chevron Upstream Europe  
Craig Harrow, MD MHPC (Scotland)  
Bob Holmes, IPA Director  
Jeroen Hoonhorst, Dyas UK Limited  
Christine Jones  
Paul Jones  
Calum Lancaster, Scottish Enterprise  
Rebecca Maguire, Summit Petroleum Limited  
Patrick McCauly, BG International (CNS)  
William McIntosh, Brodies  
Willie Park, Pinsent Masons  
David Petrie, Oil and Gas UK  
Malcolm Ricketts, Wood Mackenzie  
Sue Roaf, Heriot Watt University  
Muriel Roberts, Chevron  
Mark Roscoe, TUV SUD NEL Ltd (IPA)  
Graham Russell, Newslink Scotland  
Darah Zahran, OPITO  
Philippe Guys, TOTAL E&P UK Limited

Gunnar Olsen, TOTAL E&P UK Limited  
Brian O'Neill, TOTAL E&P UK Limited  
Iain Brotchie, TOTAL E&P UK Limited  
Virginie Jegat, TOTAL E&P UK Limited  
Babette Brown, TOTAL E&P UK Limited

**Apologies:**

Richard Baker MSP  
Liam McArthur MSP  
Alison McInnes MSP  
Stuart McMillan MSP  
Jenny Marra MSP  
Jackie Baillie MSP  
Margo MacDonald MSP  
Alexander Johnstone MSP  
Tavish Scott MSP  
Murdo Fraser MSP

Ally Rae, BP  
John Taylor, National Grid  
Andrew Bright, ERM  
Hadi Fawzy, Scottish Enterprise  
Prof Stuart Haszeldine, Edinburgh University  
Conor MacGowan, Weber Shandwick  
Muir Porter, TUV SUD NEL Ltd (IPA)  
Alistair Rankin, Scottish Business in the Community  
Linda Rosborough, Director, Marine Scotland  
Rob Schneider, SOC  
Gordon Sim, Scottish Carbon Capture and Storage  
Brian, Nixon, Decom North Sea  
Sarah Hillyear, Decom North Sea  
Alastair Ross, Pinsent Masons  
Audrey Banner, DECC  
David Rennie, Scottish Enterprise  
Ewan Daniel, AMEC  
Steve Garrett, Chevron  
Karen Craig, Scottish Enterprise

## **Group administration:**

Lewis Macdonald welcomed the assembled group and outlined the events of the evening.

Brian O'Neill, TOTAL E&P UK Limited, then provided an introduction to the presenter and presentation.

## **Presentations:**

Philippe Guys, Managing Director at Total E&P-UK, then provided a presentation on the gas leak on Total's Elgin platform which covered the initial response, re-boarding/securing the well, the current status and the conclusions and findings of the subsequent investigation so far.

This presentation will be circulated with the minutes.

## **Open discussion and Q&A:**

Open discussion then followed, which included the following topics, questions and points:

**Kevin Stewart MSP (SNP, Aberdeen Central)** asked whether the combination of factors that caused corrosion of the annuli was common.

**Philippe Guys (Total)** replied that, whilst the techniques and substances used was not in itself unique, during the development of the field the well head was left in brine for a number of months which, when all these aspects were combined, caused excessive corrosion of the annulus.

**Christian Allard MSP (SNP, North East Scotland)** asked whether any of Total's competitors had provided any feedback when informed of the cause of the corrosion and subsequent gas leak.

**Philippe Guys** responded that, through the work of Oil & Gas UK's Well Life-Cycle Group, the information received from other companies was that no other well has been exposed to the same set of circumstances that lead to the leak on the Elgin platform. M. Guys added that it was vital that as much as possible is done to prevent legal blocks from hampering the sharing of information that may prevent repeat incidents from occurring.

**Prof Sue Roaf (Heriot Watt University)** asked whether there had been any indication for why the initial failure had taken place, such as any coinciding seismic activity.

**Philippe Guys** said that seismic activity was not found to have been a factor in causing the annulus failure which was, ultimately, caused by the chalk layer starting to produce gas for an unknown reason – investigations into which are on-going.

**Bob Holmes (IPA Director)** asked for details on how much time there was between the various annuli failures and the platform shut down.

**Philippe Guys** answered that the safety shut down was immediate on the discovery of a leak. M. Philippe added that the systems in place on Elgin are completely different to those used on Piper Alpha.

Finally, **Lewis Macdonald MSP (Labour, North East Scotland)** asked whether, without the safety improvements that have taken place in the last 25 years, the Elgin incident had the potential to be of equal magnitude to the Piper Alpha disaster.

**Philippe Guys** said that he felt this was a fair comment and that the number and scope of improvements to safety in the UKCS meant that the industry was far better placed to prevent and manage safety risks.

Lewis Macdonald MSP then closed proceedings by thanking the presenters and attendees and inviting everyone to stay for informal drinks and networking.

ENDS.