

# Key Subsea Projects Update & Lessons for the Future



Evening Meeting, Aberdeen  
RGU Aberdeen, Sir Ian Wood Building

**Wednesday, 15 February 2017**

*By Martin Harley*

**Beryl Far North Terrace Project**, presented by Crawford Brown, Apache Project Manager.

**Catcher Project Update**, presented by David Mitchell, Subsea 7 Project Manager for Premier Catcher.

**Redevelopment of the BP Schiehallion & Loyal Fields West of Shetland, Quad 204**, presented by Tony Boyle, BP Q204 Project General Manager and Richard Wylie, Technip Project Director.

An audience of approximately 100 converged on the Robert Gordon Institute in Garthdee, Aberdeen for the SUT Aberdeen Branch February evening seminar on the theme of ongoing subsea projects and lessons relevant to the current straitened times in the subsea industry. A loss of Capex funding and Opex cost-cutting has resulted in numerous projects being either cancelled or suffering severely curtailed budgets. But even under these circumstances our speakers were here to show how the right approach could still bring success.

Crawford Brown, Apache Project Manager for the Beryl Far North Terrace project, explained how even in the middle of this downturn, Apache was able to develop a 4km single-well tieback. The project went from sanction to first-oil in 11 months by focusing on what could be achieved by use of existing designs and infrastructure. Under normal circumstances the well might not have been developed if a front-end engineering process had added cost and consumed time optimising production profiles and infrastructure options.

David Mitchell of Subsea 7 discussed the design, construction and installation of the Catcher subsea systems. With 90m water depth at the FPSO, the flexible riser system was on the limit of what could be achieved when accounting for mid-water arches, their foundations, vessel motion and the risk of riser clashing. Another feature of the project was the need to comply with 3rd party specifications at the export tie-in, adding time and cost in an environment in which the subsea industry is frequently discussing standardisation and 'fit for purpose' designs.

Tony Boyle of BP and Richard Wylie of Technip discussed the collaborative measures required to achieve efficiency on the Quad 204 redevelopment with the need to have multiple vessels working in close proximity. A key point was that by spending time engineering the process of performing repetitive subsea operations, a pipeline connector for example, each step of the procedure could be scrutinised to remove or improve it and by monitoring the efficiency improvements offshore, the team was able to justify the time spent on this amount of detailed engineering.

With such detailed stories to tell, it was not surprising that each talk overran by just a few minutes. As a result we kept the time for questions short, making for a livelier networking buffet afterwards, with all our speakers engaging with the audience members.