Big Themes

The Gulf of Mexico is one of the main areas of interest in this edition of Offshore Industry. The Deepwater Horizon incident's first anniversary has passed and BP is said to have reached an agreement with the US government to restart its drilling activities in the GoM. However, the disastrous incident continues to resonate, highlighting how important blowout prevention is. More so now it seems that the shear rams involved were not able to do their job properly, as mentioned in a contribution by AnTech in this issue. Their tool-in-riser detection system might present a solution to help guarantee a BOP's functionality.

Another big GoM theme tackled is decommissioning. In September 2010 the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement issued new regulations for the Gulf of Mexico. The Idle Iron Mandate requires regulators to decommission offshore structures within five years of being idle. The new legislation has led to an increase in decommissioning activity in the Gulf of Mexico. It already had done so prior to the new rules coming into force, but it will no doubt stay on the industry's agenda.

But this is not the only region in the world, having decommissioning activities at the centre of attention. Perenco UK executed the heavy lift removal of the Welland gas production platform in the southern North Sea during January of this year. The project set a new decommissioning performance benchmark for southern North Sea operators and service providers alike, because it was completed in the middle of the North Sea winter.

Decommissioning of course being a rather costly affair has set the clock for production solutions that will be able to be reused – in whole as well as in part. As part of Offshore Industry's GoM focus the ATP Titan is an asset to watch, having doubled ATP's oil production last year. It is the world's first three-column draft-reusable floating, drilling and production platform in the world that combines semi-submersible mobility with spar stability.But again the North Sea is an area to watch in that respect as well. Centrica's F3-FA gas production platform – built by Heerema Fabrication Group – is designed as a multiple re-use platform. The technology it is based on could become a big theme.

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Offshore industry

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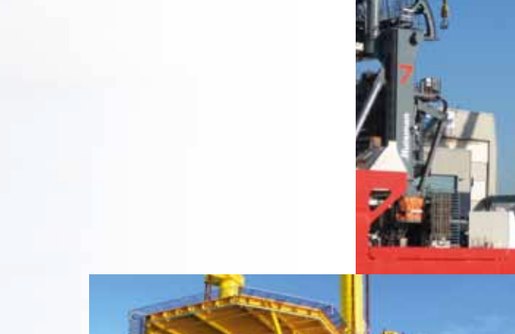

Front Cover: The ATP Titan is the world's first three-column draft-reusable floating, drilling and production platform that combines semi-submersible mobility with spar stability. It managed to roughly double ATP Oil & Gas Corporation's oil production last year to 28,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day. More on page 48.

Background picture contents page: From design to installation, the F3-FA platform represents a host of industry firsts. Built by Heerema Fabrication Group (HFG), the gas production platform produced first gas for field developer Centrica since January of this year. More on page 8.