



DRILLING AHEAD

IADC welcomes the Drilling Engineering Association!

Mike Killalea, Editor & Publisher

OURS IS AN INDUSTRY for which technology has become a mantra over the last decade. However, technical advances in drilling notwithstanding, not everyone puts their money where their mouth is on this issue. That makes it all the more refreshing to encounter people for whom the pursuit of better drilling science is something akin to chasing the holy grail—but more practical.

I'm talking about the Drilling Engineering Association. This organization of operators and service companies has since 1982 served as a forum to consider and fund joint industry projects—from the grandiose to the minute, the fantastical to the mundane, all with the common idea of lowering drilling costs and enhancing safety.

In that, IADC and DEA hold a common mission. That gives me all the more pride in announcing a new partnership between our two associations and welcoming DEA as a new member in the capacity of Affiliate Organization. This is an exciting new alliance for both organizations. DRILLING CONTRACTOR, IADC's official magazine, will officially represent DEA, providing news to the industry about DEA activities and initiatives. We believe it is an enhancement that will enhance DC's value to its readers and provide valuable new technical information to the industry.

DEA was born from the mother of invention—necessity. When oil prices began their cataclysmic slide in the early '80s, most of the major oil companies cut their R&D budgets—and not with a scalpel, but an ax. Some producers don't participate in R&D ventures at all anymore.

Instead, many producers look to the marketplace for new technology or develop new techniques through joint industry projects, sharing the risk, expense and benefits.

DEA is an important avenue for these JIPs.

Currently, DEA comprises about two dozen major and independent producing companies worldwide, as well as a number of associate members—service companies, oilfield manufacturers, government agencies, research organizations, and drilling contractors.

DEA's website details its activities, including past and current projects. The site is www.dea.main.com and is linked to www.iadc.org.

WORKSHOPS GENERATE JIPS

DEA doesn't sit idly by and wait for projects to come to it, though. Over the last five years, DEA, with the assistance of the Energy Research Clearinghouse, has conducted a series of industry forums designed to identify specific technical challenges facing the drilling industry. Organized as cooperative exercises, workshop participants shared ideas on deepwater technical issues, shallow water flows, and other topics.

This past May, DEA organized an important workshop on the Future of Well Construction. The event reviewed developments and actual field experiences with such cutting-edge developments as drilling with casing and expandable tubulars, as well as looking at one operator's (BP) vision for the rig of the future.

DEEPWATER DIRECTIONS

On 17-18 June, DEA will convene an equally forward-looking workshop—"Deepwater Drilling: Where are We Headed?" This event takes a two-pronged approach. First, it will examine the technical gaps the industry must overcome to successfully drill development wells in ultra-deepwater, and second, look at technology transfer from the deepwater segment to current and future shallow-water and land applications.

DEA will issue a call for papers soon. Watch your e-mailbox! ■