

# TRAINERS CORNER



Electrical instructor supervisor Ray Walthall teaches an AC/DC drive class at NOV's Technical College in Houston.



A simulator helps to provide a realistic environment to train employees on NOV's Cyberbase system.

## NOV expands Technical College with Houston facility

AS OF Q2 2008, National Oilwell Varco (NOV) was reporting a \$10.8 billion backlog in capital equipment orders for its rig technology segment. Considering that more than 170 offshore drilling rigs are under construction worldwide, that backlog may not seem like such a surprising number. Still, it undoubtedly demonstrates the level of demand manufacturers and suppliers are facing. So how can they meet this demand in a timely and efficient way?

For NOV, the answer appears to lie in training, which will be critical not only to the company itself but also to its customers. "The industry must push hard on training. As the new deepwater rigs come out, the demand for service people and experience will only increase," NOV chairman, president and CEO **Pete Miller** told DRILLING CONTRACTOR for its Jan/Feb issue earlier this year. The company will spend around \$30 million on training employees in 2008, "and it's money well spent," he said.

In 2007, NOV established the Technical College program, with the primary focus on growing its capability to meet demand from the new rig construction backlog. As part of the program, the first training center was opened in Kristiansand, Norway. A second location followed in Houston, with an open house held on 2 June 2008. A third location is planned for Singapore later in the year.



Electrical instructor Clifford Windom shows a student how to use the crane operation training simulator. New simulation designs and equipment are allowing for more realistic environmental training. NOV is also adding troubleshooting techniques and equipment to the simulation model to improve the experience.

According to NOV, enrollment in the college is multinational, addressing cultural and geographic industry demands. Training for customers is also part of the program plan.

In Houston, the 33,600-sq-ft facility will house customer training courses for product operations and maintenance class, which trained more than 2,000 customers in 2007 and is forecast to train more than 3,000 customers in 2008. According to the company, it is the single largest facility devoted to training of both internal and customer students within the drilling equipment market.

The facility's simulation area has been expanded to include products such as Cyberbase, Amphion, Electronic Drilling System (EDS) and Crane Controls. Simulation equipment allows for realistic training, and troubleshooting techniques

and equipment are being added to the simulation model to improve the experience.

Core curricula at the NOV Technical College include:

- Basic service technician.
- Industrial practices.
- Electrical and electronics training.
- Communication and soft skills training.
- Product training and hands-on experience.
- Mobile training facility. This classroom can take the training into the field – rig yards, rig location or shipyard. It features 10 computer stations for students and offers courses ranging from foundation courses for new personnel to general maintenance to simulator training for the EDS. ♠