

# Caza Drilling's training program pays off with safety

**CAZA DRILLING'S MASTER Driller Program** is a short course developed by the company that gathers knowledge from industry research, history and practices and combines that knowledge with experience gained over the years by Caza's own personnel. The short course is attended by Caza's drilling managers, rig supervisors and drillers.

The Master Driller program has been a two-way avenue for communication with the field. The training course allows Caza's employees to question some of our policies and ask for explanations as to why a certain action was adopted. Because of this feedback, Caza has changed some of its policies.

## HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

During Spring 2001, Tom Schledwitz, Caza's Operations Manager, was looking for a way to bring together all of the company's accumulated knowledge and put it to text. Caza had already instituted a Management Leadership Safety Training program in 1999 to instill and reinforce a safety culture at the rig level within the Caza organization. Mr Schledwitz felt it was time to incorporate operations into the company's safety training. After much discussion with Harry Olds, Caza's HSE Director, the Master Driller idea was launched.

One of the early decisions reached was that the management team would develop the program. This was a key to the successful development of the course. Each manager was assigned two or three topics to research and develop over the course of three months.

The first trial run was made in November 2001 with a select group of drillers and rig supervisors in attendance. The program was modified based on the feedback and input from those people, and the official program began in January 2002. To date, approximately 15 Master Driller courses have been conducted, with a Drilling Manager in attendance at every course.

## PROGRAM'S PURPOSE

The Master Driller Program serves as a vehicle to promote Caza's vision of how and why the company does things certain ways.

"Caza Drilling was formed by the combination of six old-line Rocky Mountain drilling contractors," said Matt Rohert, Drilling Manager for Caza. "Most of these companies were started in the 1950's at a time when footage and turnkey drilling were in its heyday."

"Because of this, the drillers and tool-pushers of that era developed into some of the best "downhole" people in the business," Mr Rohert explained. "How-



ever, a sobering fact of that era was that often times the order of the day was speed before safety."

In recent times, daywork drilling (or "rent-a-rig") has become the contract preferred by many operating companies. The management at Caza felt that the hard-won lessons of its footage legacy were rapidly disappearing. They also realized that the most important part of its mainline drilling operations had to be addressed. That is, safety is not a separate program or department but the key issue in Caza's operations.

Because of the wide differences in the constituent companies that make up Caza, the Master Driller program is a way to establish consistency and uniform practices across the company.

Caza expects to use this program to train its employees in a shorter time frame than in the past. The company also hopes to pass the knowledge gained by the older and more experienced employees to the younger ones before it is lost due to retirement and attrition.

## WHO BENEFITS?

"Drilling rig employment can be a transient experience," Mr Rohert said. "However, no matter where our employ-

ees might work in the future, they will always have the knowledge gained from our program with them."

One of Caza's main goals is the reduction of unscheduled well events. The resulting reduction in well costs should lead to more economic drilling and better wells.

Finally, the company benefits. With a better understanding of what is happening in other aspects of drilling a well such as logging or cementing, Caza expects its footage and turnkey contracts to be more profitable.

"We also expect to see less wear and tear on our drilling equipment," Mr Rohert noted.

## A DOWNSIDE?

"The cost in terms of money, manpower and scheduling has been significant," Mr Rohert said. "Most important has been the commitment of the Drilling Manager's time to the program."

Another obvious downside would be that a considerable sum of money would be spent training an employee just to have him quit or get laid off in a downturn. However, Caza management believes that programs like the Master Driller builds company loyalty.

"Caza has almost no turnover in drillers or rig supervisors," Mr Rohert explained. "Management in turn tries to keep these valued employees on the payroll even during slow times."

Another possible issue could be that if an employee left Caza and went to work for another drilling contractor, all of the training goes with him.

"This is a risk worth taking," he said. "If the Master Driller program would help prevent an accident or save a well in the future for any contractor, it has accomplished its purpose."

## RESULTS TO DATE

The most apparent result has been more consistency across Caza's districts and from rig to rig. Additionally, the company's employees are much more flexible and CAZA's manpower can be shifted to help out in busy areas. ■