The issues that IADC works today reflect this growth in scope and operations. Worldwide, we work for sensible legislation and regulation. Part of our work is to secure reasonable access to promising drilling areas, both onshore and off. Access is a big issue, but all the access in the world won’t do us much good if we lack a seasoned workforce. Two decades of economic struggle crippled the normal recruitment and mentoring programs that any industry needs to sustain itself. As our veterans gray and near retirement, it is our major challenge to build from the ground up the next generation of rig personnel and engineers.

To meet this challenge, IADC has worked closely with the US Department of Labor to develop programs to train new oilfield workers. IADC member Key Energy Services has been at the forefront of this effort. Recently, DOL grants have launched training programs for oilfield workers at San Juan Community College in New Mexico, Midland Community College in Texas and High Plains Technology Center in Oklahoma.

IADC is also reinventing training for the industry. Our well control accreditation program, WellCAP, is world-renowned and recognized by government, operators, contractors, trainers and academics alike as the best standard for well control training. WellCAP has served the industry for a decade.

This year, we are taking that program to the next level with the introduction of WellCAP Plus. WellCAP Plus is an interactive, team-based program in which participants build solutions to exercises based on real-world well control scenarios.

We are likewise moving ahead with a program to ensure professional competency at the rig site. The IADC Competency Subcommittee, chaired by George Edwards of Global-SantaFe, plans to develop an accreditation system for competency assurance. With it, organizations can apply for IADC recognition of internal competence assurance systems.

In safety, the drilling industry continues to make great strides, and IADC has been recognized for its efforts by government and industry alike. In addition to convening conferences and publishing safety alerts and manuals, IADC has developed a comprehensive series of regional HSE meetings around the US. These forums help land personnel share problems and learn from the experience of others.

I’ve focused in this issue primarily on safety and training—the “people problems”—because these are among our greatest challenges as an industry, if not the greatest challenge.

I look forward to exploring other IADC initiatives in the months ahead, and hope you will join me on this journey.

Meanwhile, reiterate the pride I feel serving as Chairman of IADC. I am eager to begin touring our chapters and speaking at our conferences during 2005. I hope to see you there.

Rest assured that IADC is hard at work for you. At 65, we are nowhere near retirement. In fact, IADC is just getting started!