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2007 IADC Contractor of the Year Mark Burns honored for remarkable contributions to industry

THROUGH AND THROUGH, **Mark Burns** is a drilling contractor. Since he was 18 years old and a floorman with **Cinco Drilling Company** in Texas, he has always been employed by a drilling contractor. "I've been in love with the excitement of this industry, the people and the adventures since that first job," said Mr Burns, **Noble Corporation's** vice president and division manager responsible for US Gulf of Mexico operations. Since 2005 he has managed the daily operations of 10 mobile drilling units.

Over the years, his love of the business has resulted in both professional achievements and involvement in groups such as IADC. Now his peers have recognized Mr Burns' contributions and accomplishments by selecting him as the 2007 IADC Contractor of the Year. The award also recognizes his service with IADC and his promotion of safety, efficiency and integrity within Noble and the overall industry.

"When you look at the list of past honorees, these are great visionary leaders of our industry. Just being considered for this award is very gratifying," Mr Burns said. "I am deeply honored to be selected by my peers for this wonderful honor. It's something I will always cherish."

PROUD AT NOBLE

For his colleagues at Noble, the award couldn't have been given to a more deserving person. "Mark is great in the face of challenges because he's a very positive person and he makes sure people talk to each other," said **Cees van Diemen**, Noble vice president and division manager for Brazil. "When it comes time to show leadership, Mark always does. He knows how to make a decision and take action when it's necessary."

Scott Marks, Noble senior vice president of engineering, agreed: "Mark is a strong communicator and a great team leader. He's open to conversation and ideas, and he believes that everybody contributes. When you're in a meeting or doing business with him, he makes you feel like your ideas are respected."



ReedHycalog vice president operations Cody Scace (left) and IADC president Dr Lee Hunt (right) present Mark Burns, Noble vice president and division manager - US Gulf of Mexico, with the 2007 IADC Contractor of the Year Award. ReedHycalog donated a \$7,500 scholarship in Mr Burns' name to the political science department at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas. Mr Burns graduated from Sam Houston in 1980 with a degree in political science and business.



The Noble Mark Burns, a Livingston 111-C designed cantilever jackup, is seen here operating in the Arabian Gulf in 2006. The rig was named after Mr Burns in recognition of his service to Noble.

He added, "There's been quite a bit of excitement in the office since we found out about the award. We're all very proud of him."

FAMILY, WORK AND TRAVEL

Since beginning his career with Noble in 1983, Mr Burns has lived and worked in North and South America, Africa, Europe and Asia. "The drilling industry has given me the unique opportunity to live and work internationally."

His family – wife **Melissa**, daughter **Brittany** and son **Blake** — have always been supportive and willing to pick up and move from one area to the next, he said, and enduring the challenges that came with moving across the globe.

"My children began their kindergarten and elementary school years in Bangkok and Singapore, and concluded their high school education in Aberdeen, Scotland," he said. Brittany graduated in May 2007 from Texas A&M University with a degree in biology, and Blake is currently

a junior at Texas A&M. "I'm extremely proud of both of them."

Mr Burns thanked his wife for providing "wonderful support to me over the course of my career. Together we have lived in and visited some great places."

Besides his family's support, Mr Burns said, he appreciates the support and friendship he's received from many dedicated colleagues over the years. In particular, he mentioned **Gene House**, vice president and division manager for Noble's Mexico operations: "Gene hired me when I began my career at Noble in 1983. He's always been a friend and a mentor."

At the IADC Contractor of the Year Luncheon held in March in Houston, Mr Burns also thanked **Mark Jackson**, Noble chairman of the board, president and CEO. He also accepted the award on behalf of the 6,000-plus employees of Noble.

CHANGING BUSINESS

In his more than 25 years of industry experience, Mr Burns has witnessed many changes in the oil and gas business.

"Our industry grows more demanding with each passing year — from the people we hire to the expectations we place on them. We must continue to recruit, hire and develop talented people who love this business and want to contribute to its growth," he said.

For all the important and innovative technological advances the industry has made, Mr Burns is most proud of the commitment it has made to ensuring the safety and welfare of personnel and efforts to protect the environment. "We work very hard to ensure the health and safety of our employees, and I know of no other industry that devotes the same level of time, focus and expense to provide a safe work environment."

Noble's recognition by the 2006 Minerals Management Service National SAFE (Safety Award For Excellence) was extremely gratifying, he said, and one of his proudest professional moments: "Winning the award was a recognition



Mark Burns and wife Melissa (second from left), with their daughter Brittany and son Blake, celebrate Christmas in Scotland in 2004. Mr Burns thanked his family for supporting him throughout his career. "I am proud of my family."

that we care about our people, and that makes me very proud."

INDUSTRY CONTRIBUTIONS

Mr Burns has been active with IADC since he joined Noble in 1983. While stationed in the European division, based in Aberdeen, he served as chairman of the IADC North Sea Chapter, dealing with the UK's implementation of the EU Working Time Directive and leading the

joint IADC/UK Health and Safety Executive Work Group on risk assessing and monitoring rig floor safety.

He served on the Advisory Committee for the IADC/SPE Drilling Conference in 2003 and 2005, and on the Program Committee for the 2007 SPE/IADC Drilling Conference. He also was involved in 2006's IADC Mooring Workshop, among other successful industry events.

"The IADC/SPE Drilling Conference is recognized by our industry as the most respected technical conference on drilling applications within our industry. I have always been pleased to serve on these committees and look

forward to continuing the service in the future," he said.

"For those who are not actively involved in our trade association, I encourage you to do so. It's a highly satisfying experience."

Check on www.drillingcontractor.org to see video footage of Mr Burns accepting the award at the IADC Contractor of the Year Luncheon, held in Houston on 7 March 2007.

2007



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