

## PERSPECTIVES

# Seadrill's Harald Bratthammar helping to open dialogue between drilling contractors, regulatory authorities

By Linda Hsieh, associate editor

HARALD BRATTHAMMAR, manager of the Q&HSE department at Seadrill, has no complaints about Norway's rigorous HSE regulatory environment, among the toughest in the world. After all, his first job out of college was with the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate (NPD) and he helped to draft and implement many of the rules he now follows as a drilling contractor.

"Yes, it is more challenging to be in Norway than other shelves, but I think my background allows me to know better than many what the expectations are," he said.

Among his biggest accomplishments at NPD, now known as the Petroleum Safety Authority (PSA), was the introduction of formal quality assurance and management systems. "All companies had some kind of internal control system, but in the mid-'80s, we implemented regulations to require more structured systems."

After 5 years at NPD, he left to join Polar Frontier Drilling because "I wanted to dig deeper into the real world," he said.

In 1988, he stepped into Conoco Norway's Heidrun Development Project, the installation of the world's first concrete tension leg platform (TLP). For the project's nearly 8-year span, Mr Bratthammar served as the focal point of contact between the project and all technical authorities.

"Conoco was very proud of (the project). It had never been done before and was state of the art at the time," he recalled.

Upon the project's completion and handover to Statoil, he joined Smedvig, now Seadrill, and since 1998 has served as manager of the Q&HSE department.

## INDUSTRY CONTRIBUTIONS

Leaving NPD for the "real world" doesn't mean Mr Bratthammar has stopped making contributions to Norwegian and European regulations. He has worked with PSA on development of the Norwegian Acknowledgement of Compliance (AoC) system, which is now required for all mobile drilling units and floating petroleum installations in Norway.



**"We must get the correct tempo into our operations, and the industry must take responsibility to ensure opportunities for new employees," said Harald Bratthammar of Seadrill. "They need more chances to go on offshore installations to get real experience. That can't be obtained through theory only."**

AoC not only set standards for what's acceptable and not, he said, it also "opened up a much more direct dialogue between drilling contractors and the PSA. Previously, we could only communicate with them through oil companies. That has changed now and, I think, is one of the biggest benefits of the system."

As a member of the IADC European Working Group, Mr Bratthammar has helped to develop the IADC HSE Case Guidelines and the IADC European Offshore Competency Programme. He has also served on the program committee for several of IADC's Drilling HSE Europe conferences, as well as last year's first-ever Environmental Conference.

"I do not believe that drilling contractors should compete on safety. It's to our common good if we share information and learn from each other," he said. "In the past I think we haven't been willing to share information, but now I see a much more open attitude. For instance, IADC's conferences on HSE – they're all about sharing. Anybody can go and pick up learnings from other companies, and that's a great thing." 💧

## Harald Bratthammar on HSE

**Q:** What is your biggest area of concern with the industry's HSE approach and progress?

**A:** In the '60s and '70s and earlier, when an accident happened, the solution was always to get more equipment – thicker steel, higher fences, more safety valves. In the '80s and into the '90s, it was internal control, management systems and procedures. It was a lot of paper. And we did see a drop in the number of accidents. But I think many of us forgot the most important element – the human beings.

For the last 5 to 6 years, I'm glad to see there has been more focus on people and how they think and behave. It's important to understand why employees take shortcuts even though there are procedures in place and the best technical equipment. Why do we take chances?

This is a third dimension in the industry's efforts towards improved HSE. Whether this will take us down to zero incidents, I don't think so. But at least we haven't stumped progress with the technical solutions and management systems. 💧