

Conference to Highlight HSE Best Practices, Challenges

Joel Parshall, JPT Features Editor

The Ninth SPE International Conference on Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE) in Oil and Gas Exploration and Production (E&P) is slated to be held 15–17 April at the Acropolis Center in Nice, France. The theme of the biennial conference is “In Search of Sustainable Excellence.”

Since its inception nearly 2 decades ago, the conference has become the E&P industry’s premier event highlighting HSE best practices and challenges. The event provides a forum for professionals from around the world to share their experiences, views, and concerns with their colleagues and a wide range of stakeholders.

The conference will feature three plenary sessions; 37 technical sessions, with nearly 250 papers slated for presentation; three knowledge-sharing sessions, with more than 150 papers slated for presentation; 14 panel sessions; a special session on carbon capture and sequestration (CCS); and an exhibition encompassing HSE product and service innovations from companies worldwide.

Michel Contie, senior vice president, Northern Europe, Total, is general chairperson of this year’s conference, with Emmanuel Garland, head of the HSE Regulations Division, Total E&P, and Simon Mitchell, QHSE manager, Australasia, Schlumberger, serving as cochairpersons of the Technical Program Committee.

More than 120 SPE volunteers worked together to build the conference technical program.

Plenary Sessions

“The program is somewhat larger than the previous conference that was held in Abu Dhabi during 2006, with five designated categories: HSE management, Safety, Environment, Health, and Social Responsibility,” Garland said. “There will be plenary sessions each morning, and in addition to the technical and panel sessions, we have enhanced what in the past were known as poster sessions, and that are now called knowledge-sharing sessions. With the number of papers being presented, the plenary and panel events, and the special session on CCS, the conference is a very significant event.

“We expect to attract not only HSE professionals, but also operational managers, who are responsible for the health and safety of the workers as well as for protecting the environment—and at the same time, neighbors and stakeholders.”

In the opening session, Contie and 2008 SPE President William M. Cobb are slated to address the group. Christophe de Margerie, executive director, Total; Gary Luquette, vice president, Chevron, and president, Chevron North America Exploration and Production; a representative of the French government; and the mayor of Nice also have been invited to speak.

The plenary session immediately following will address “The Challenges of Excellent Performance.” Moderated by



Contie



Garland



Mitchell

Garland and Mitchell, the discussion panel will include John Mogford, vice president, Safety and Operations, BP; Charles Bowen, executive director, International Oil & Gas Producers; Somit Varma, global head of Oil, Gas, Mining, and Chemicals, World Bank; and a representative from Areva, the French nuclear energy company.

On April 16, the plenary session will examine “The Future of Oil in a Carbon-Constrained World.” Claudia Gnecco, BP, and Luiz Molle Jr., Petrobras, will moderate the discussion. On the panel will be Aart Tacoma, senior adviser on Water Management, Ministry of Transport, Public Works, and Water Management, North Sea Directorate. Invited panelists include Paul Warwick, president Middle East and North Africa, ConocoPhillips, and Claude Mandil, former executive director, International Energy Agency.

The April 17 plenary session is titled “Health Impact—Bridging the Gap.” The moderators will be Alexander Barbey, Schlumberger, and Clarion E. Johnson, ExxonMobil. Panel speakers will be Jean-Hervé Bradol, president, Médecins Sans Frontières; Richard V. Lee, professor, Medicine, Pediatrics, and Obstetrics, and adjunct professor, Anthropology and Social and Preventive Medicine, Department of Medicine, State University of New York at Buffalo; and David Christiani, professor, Occupational Medicine and Toxicology, Harvard Medical School.

The program has been designed to strike a balance between emerging issues, best practices, and lessons learned, including those from failure.

Technical Sessions

Among the HSE-management session topics on the technical program will be the HSE culture, new tools and techniques, risk management, and learning from the past.

The technical sessions on safety will focus on asset integrity, preventing major incidents, transportation, human behavior, and related subjects.

The technical program on the environment will feature sessions on preventing impacts to the natural environment, including discharges and releases to soil, air, and water. A specific session will be devoted to sensitive environments.

Session topics in the health area will include infectious diseases, emergency response, and the challenge of risk assessment.

The technical sessions on social responsibility will examine topics such as local content and capacity building beyond the fence of installations.

The knowledge-sharing sessions will cover the five technical disciplines. Presenters will be invited to incorporate laptop presentations to enhance the visual appeal of material presented. There will be awards for the best knowledge-sharing paper in each technical category.

Panel sessions, by category, include

- HSE Management
 - Security as Part of Risk Management
 - Catastrophic Incidents: Learning From the Past To Prevent in the Future
 - Coping With New Regulations: REACH
 - How Do You Change the HSE Culture?
- Safety
 - Road Transportation: How Do We Manage the Risk?
 - Partnership
 - The Role of Leadership
 - Learning From Failure
- Environment
 - Sensitive Environments
 - Challenges of Greenhouse-Gas Emissions in the Upstream Business
 - Sustainable Environmental Performance
 - Marine Mammals and Sound
- Health
 - Health Risk Assessments: Do You Do Them?
- Social Responsibility
 - Human Rights, Human Development, and Business

A Balance of Technical and General Issues

“To broaden the guidance we sought in setting up the conference and the impact of the conference itself, we chose our Executive Committee from the ranks of senior line managers whose positions are not specifically within an HSE organization,” Garland said. “In all, we have tried to achieve a fair balance between technical issues, which are addressed in the technical sessions, and the discussions on more general issues or challenges, which are mainly addressed through the panel sessions.”

The Program Committee, in addition to Garland and Mitchell, comprises Health Subcommittee Cochairpersons Barbey and Johnson; Safety Subcommittee Cochairpersons Tom Knode, Halliburton, and Rod Ritchie, OMV; Environment Subcommittee Cochairpersons Gnecco and Molle; HSE Management Subcommittee Cochairpersons Michael Denkl, WesternGeco, and Roland L. Moreau, ExxonMobil; Social Responsibility Subcommittee Cochairpersons Barnaby Briggs, Shell, and Jean-Marc Fontaine, Total; Knowledge-Sharing Subcommittee Cochairpersons Antoine Augustin, Gaz de France, and Lee A. Turner, M-I Swaco; and two advisers: Lyn Arscott, former SPE president, and Terry L. Thoen, Thoen and Associates.

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