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11 May 2013

ScanTech Offshore's innovative PyroSentry wins IADC safety award

The International Association of Drilling Contractors (IADC) has awarded ScanTech Offshore its Associate Member Award in its North Sea Chapter Safety Awards for its pioneering safety solution PyroSentry, which provides increased fire detection and instant suppression for methanol supplies at risk of combustion offshore.

ScanTech Offshore fought off stiff competition from the likes of Aramark, Cammach Group, Frank's International and InterMoor, to be awarded the IADC's Associate Member Award for its PyroSentry product.

PyroSentry is an innovative new product that has been specifically designed for chemical bunding and storage areas with special consideration towards methanol bunding on-board offshore installations, where many rig operators use the alcohol to keep flow lines from the oil or gas wellhead clear.

The IADC's North Sea Chapter Associate Member Award was judged by a small panel including Craig Martin, Ensco, Chair IADC North Sea Chapter SHE Workgroup and Nicol Ross, Diamond Offshore, Vice Chair IADC North Sea Chapter SHE Workgroup. Initiatives comprising improved safety performance schemes, environmental projects and safety management systems were all considered for the award as part of the judging process.

Robbie Garden, business development manager at ScanTech Offshore who shaped the PyroSentry product, says: "We're absolutely delighted to have been awarded the IADC's North Sea Chapter Associate Member Award; it represents all of the hard work that's gone

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into improving safety developments for offshore installations. It's already proving popular, with interest from numerous offshore operators including Total, Chevron, ENI and Exxon Mobil and now as a recognised leading-edge solution, we expect that interest to only grow."

Methanol (CH₃OH) is highly effective in preserving flow assurance but brings its own unique hazards to the offshore environment. It is a clear, colourless liquid with the appearance of water and no discernible odour in low concentrations but it is extremely flammable and releases vapours at or below ambient temperatures. It burns in air with a flame that gives off very little visible light and, as such, it can be difficult to detect a fire or to estimate its extent in daylight. Special fire protection measures are therefore crucial in ensuring the fire-safety of offshore methanol installations.

Robbie Garden explains: "The PyroSentry mechanism uses specialist tubing that, if burnt through, automatically triggers alcohol-resistant aqueous film-forming (AR AFFF) foam so that any fire is suppressed within seconds of starting. In trials, the long lasting foam fully covered the test area and remained in this state for over 24 hours."

The PyroSentry system can be installed and commissioned in as little as six hours. It is bundled to avoid any leakage of methanol to the rig structure, provides both audible and visual alarms and is a 100 percent independent system. In addition to the base system, AR AFFF equipped fire-fighting trolley units can also be supplied as a secondary protection measure, together with a thermal imaging camera to support methanol fire assessment and safety.

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Notes to editors:

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ScanTech Offshore Ltd is part of the James Fisher and Sons plc group. The company is the leading provider of air compressors, steam generators, rig cooling equipment and qualified personnel for the well testing market sector worldwide. The company was founded in 1995, as Air Supply AS, primarily focused on the Norwegian well test market before successfully expanding globally. ScanTech Offshore, modified from Air Supply AS in 2002 to reflect the business' growing capabilities, has been trading in the UK for over 10 years and has expanded its product and service offering into all key oil & gas regions. For more information see www.scantechoffshore.com

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