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*Transocean's Sedco Express underwent major upgrades before beginning work on BP's Greater Plutonio project offshore Angola.*

BP's Greater Plutonio Drilling and Completions project offshore Angola is a success story demonstrating the type of performance that can be delivered by an innovative team using new and optimized technology.

**Charlie Gilbertson**, wells team leader for the Greater Plutonio Development Project for BP, detailed its bottom-line results: Since Transocean's Sedco Express rig was delivered from Brazil following a major upgrade, it has worked for three years and over 2.5 million manhours without a lost-time incident. During that time, the rig has drilled and completed 25 wells.

In describing these achievements at the IADC Drilling Africa Conference and Exhibition in Lisbon, Mr Gilbertson identified the five key drivers for the project's success: a focus on HSE; involvement with people – both offshore and onshore; detailed planning; emphasis on continuous improvement; and the capabilities of the rig itself.

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The Sedco Express is one of only three enhanced-activity drilling rigs in its class. Prior to commencing work on the Plutonio Project, it underwent four major upgrades: thrusters were replaced, blisters were installed for extra deck loading and stability, an additional drilling station was installed and an additional ROV was stationed aboard.

A multidisciplinary planning team was formed in Sunbury, United Kingdom that embarked on a three-year pre-planning process, eventually defining a 43-well development program offshore Angola. The team also identified necessary rig specifications and upgrades. Standardized well plans included casing designs for shallow gas and no shallow gas, and standardized hole sizes for producing wells and injection wells.

The start-up team included employees of eight nationalities. Once the project got under way, this quickly expanded to 43 nationalities operating offshore. "Even though English was the common language, communications problems resulted from this diversity," Mr Gilbertson said. "However, this diversity also provided us with wide-ranging and highly skilled technical experience from different parts of the globe, which eventually worked to our benefit."

Safety leadership training was conducted in both Brazil and Luanda, with major emphasis placed on mid-level leaders such as drillers and assistant drillers. Continuous improvement was an essential part of the project that was ingrained in the process at an early stage.

"Our first top hole took six days," Mr Gilbertson said. "We took photos, recorded data, and used this to hone procedures that were implemented for the remaining top hole sections. We were later doing top holes in less than two days."

Continuous improvement coaches were stationed offshore to expedite the transfer of lessons within the team. These were supplemented by ongoing DWOP and CWOP, post-section and post-well reviews, weekly continuous improvement process (CIP) meetings, quarterly contractor reviews, and ongoing CIP implementation tracking.

In closing his presentation, Mr Gilbertson gave credit for the success of the Plutonio Project to the Sedco Express and the Block 18 team. "This is the most high tech we have in Angola — rig and its personnel. That's the secret to our success – Sedco Express and the people who work it."

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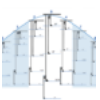
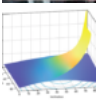
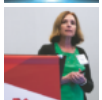
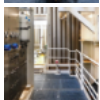
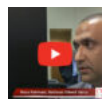
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