

Tuesday, May 12, 2009

Subsea Trends Becoming Everyday Realities

Source: Rigzone

Author: Phaedra Friend

In a recent presentation Tore Halvorsen, FMC Technologies senior vice president of global subsea production systems, discussed the trends that will be permeating the industry in the near future. From subsea processing to increased recovery, FMC is focusing its efforts on achieving more for less -- looking to boost the subsea industry by developing new technologies.

Fields are becoming more complex, and therefore more difficult to develop, said Halvorsen, underscoring HP/HT situations, the emergence of heavy oil and subsea processing. Contributing to the complexities of today's offshore environment, operators are demanding more and more recovery from these fields.

"The recovery rate for an average subsea field is 30% to 35% of the hydrocarbons; this leaves 65% to 70% of the oil and gas in the reservoir," Halvorsen revealed.

"As discoveries of huge new reservoirs become less frequent, customers are seeking ways to maximize their existing developments," he added.

Additionally, Halvorsen foresees an added emphasis in lowering construction and operational costs for offshore developments in the future. Operators will be able to tap fields in deeper waters and harsher conditions through remote and unmanned developments or completely subsea operations.

"By performing functions on the seabed that are traditionally performed on the platform, customers can reduce costs, increase oil recovery and develop reservoirs that are located in more harsh offshore environments," he said.

Technologies on which FMC is focusing include subsea processing, boosting and separation, as well as well intervention to enhance production without having to contract more expensive vessels for the work. FMC's recent purchase of 45% of Schilling Robotics, a leading ROV manufacturer, underscores this belief. Now, Schilling Robotics ROVs will have close cooperation in the development of intervention interfaces and systems.

Additionally, Halvorsen sees more field developments depending on all-electric control systems to increase response time.

In an effort to remain at the top of the subsea game, FMC is counting on these trends becoming an everyday reality. In fact, Halvorsen concluded that the future of the industry will see subsea developments produce straight to market, knocking beach facilities out of the picture altogether.