



Engineering Excellence in the Oil and Gas Sector

World Energy interviews Neil Bruce,
Managing Director, AMEC Group Ltd.



World Energy: Earlier this year, AMEC appeared for the first time as one of the most respected companies named in the annual *Financial Times/PricewaterhouseCoopers* survey of CEOs. Has that honor been taken note of in the U.S. oil and gas industry?

Neil Bruce: Well, I suppose some in Houston, where we have our North American headquarters for Oil & Gas, may have heard. We've worked hard to maintain a top-notch reputation in many ways, however, so I'm more hopeful that AMEC, especially our Oil and Gas Group, is actually winning recognition for what we're doing in the oil patch.

World Energy: What part does oil and gas play in the overall AMEC picture?

Neil Bruce: Having been in the engineering services business for well over a century, we've had time to create several centres of excellence. Oil and gas accounts for about a fifth of our total business. Our other prominent groups include Transport, Industrial, Infrastructure and Regional Services. Actually speaking of honors, I'm very proud of the major role AMEC played in the cleanup of the World Trade Centre site and the Pentagon. We were very honoured to have been called to that duty.

World Energy: Going back to oil and gas, where does AMEC fit into the market?

Neil Bruce: Internationally, we are a leading provider of total life of asset services to our oil and gas clients. We base our reputation on delivering assured production. Our circle of knowledge flows from consultancy, front-end engineering, project design and project delivery to operations support, shutdowns and turnarounds. We offer a total capability across upstream and downstream oil and gas underpinned with a real commitment to safety leadership.

World Energy: AMEC is one of several major global companies with a high reputation for deepwater developments and complex facilities. What do you bring that's different?

Neil Bruce: We are an integrated company that provides services from initial concept right through to operations support. With today's increased pressure to reduce the time frame for project development, market evolution has called for the integrated contractor. We understand 'The End Game,' which is about maximising investment through the efficient utilisation of capital assets. AMEC also understands the constituent parts of the value chain that can bring this about – always with the end game in sight.

In addition, through supply chain management and market leading training services, we can deliver a locally maintained asset – delivering local content and reducing costs.

World Energy: In what areas of the world does AMEC have a presence?

Neil Bruce: Our group has a total of some 50,000 employees, a large part engineering professionals, in more than 40 countries. It would be hard to find a petroleum-producing province in which AMEC is not well positioned to deliver a full range of services.



One of our Guiding Principles for maintaining leadership internationally is encouraging our people to develop and contribute to their full potential.

World Energy: What are a few of your current flagship projects?

Neil Bruce: We are currently involved in around 50 projects of varying sizes, geographic locations and service offerings. Our Bonga Field Development project for Shell Nigeria Exploration & Production Company Limited is of note, as it represents the very latest thinking in topside facilities for offshore production. We're delivering engineering design, fabrication, integration and commissioning of a sophisticated Floating Production, Storage and Offloading (FPSO) facility in water depth of over 3,000 feet.

Then, as part of the Russian Far East offshore gas play, we are providing the next stage of detailed engineering, project management and construction support on the massive 'frontier' Sakhalin II offshore development, including development of the Piltun and Lunskeye oil and gas fields. Our client is a joint venture between Shell, Mitsui and Mitsubishi, and the project is one of the largest oil and gas developments in the world.

World Energy: How is the Sakhalin project getting on?

Neil Bruce: The project's extreme logistical, environmental and technical requirements are suited to AMEC's extensive offshore experience, particularly our work in the deep waters of the North Sea and the sub-zero temperatures and ice floes of the Canadian East Coast. Delivering this project involves bringing together AMEC's expertise from around the world, working closely with Russian engineering organisations, and utilising the very latest specialist offshore industry expertise to make the Sakhalin project a 'benchmark' for future success.

World Energy: AMEC has put a great deal of thought and effort into its safety program. What you have done to make a difference?

Neil Bruce: We have been concentrating not only on the policies and procedures of safety, but on the behavioural aspects as well, which I believe are very important. It is vitally important that we do this if we are to achieve our target of zero lost time accidents.

World Energy: How viable is this target of zero LTAs, considering the amount of projects that you are involved in across a multitude of cultures? Surely, it is impossible to stop every simple lapse of concentration by an individual that might lead to an accident.

Neil Bruce: Well, I agree it is theoretically impossible to stop every individual from ever losing concentration, even if for a split second. But let me explain my philosophy. If you have two people who are committed to safety – by this I mean that they practise safe behaviours and they also look out for others – you will reduce by half the chance for an accident. Now imagine the whole workforce acting in the same manner – with the conviction that no job is too important that it cannot be done safely and that no lapse of safe thinking should go unchallenged. While a perfect record is certainly difficult, our track record demonstrates that the method is producing continual improving results.

World Energy: What is the outlook for AMEC Oil and Gas?

Neil Bruce: One of our Guiding Principles for maintaining leadership internationally is encouraging our people to develop and contribute to their full potential. Just as real safety comes from individuals, so does innovation, responsiveness, improvement and ultimately, the ability to add value, which is what it's all about. With the calibre of people we have and their focus on excellence, I feel confident of our future.

