

Exploration Task Force Meeting (Q4 2020)

2 December 2020

Attendees:

Nick Terrell (Chair) – Azinor	Mohamed-Amine Soudani (Total)
Nick Richardson (co-Chair) – OGA	Ben Hillier (Shell)
Jenny Morris (Chrysaor)	John Underhill (Herriot-Watt University)
John Colleran (Neptune)	Colin Percival (Athena)
Anne-Sophie Cyteval (Spirit)	Rod Crawford (Zennor)
Gillian White (OGTC)	Graham Godfrey (Soliton)
Graham Turner (TGS)	Marian Bruce (OGA)
Keith Wise (OGUK)	

Introduction, Agenda & Review of Actions

- Nick Terrell opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the final meeting of 2020.
- He recognised that this had been a difficult year and there was a great deal happening in the energy transition space:
 - BEIS licensing review
 - The Energy White Paper
 - The OGA Strategy
 - Climate change committee update of the 2019 report
 - Sector carbon budget
- Despite this there is still a commitment to deliver oil and gas to meet the UK's energy demands.
- He thanked everyone for the work they had undertaken on behalf of the Exploration Task Force (XTF)
- He welcomed Keith Wise, OGUK who would be replacing Katie Heidenreich and advised that Julie Branston had stepped down. Consideration will be given to a replacement for her in due course.
- All actions from the previous meeting have now been closed.

Energy Transition

- The aim of this priority was to ensure that the case for continued UKCS exploration was made, whilst supporting the objectives of the government's net zero targets.
- Thanks were given to everyone who had been involved.
- Phase 1 delivered a short 'bite sized' pack, which outlines the role that exploration plays in a low carbon future.
- Feedback received has been very positive and there is evidence that the pack is being widely used.
- There are two options now being considered for phase 2:
 1. Essential geoscience skills to support a low-carbon future
 2. Investing in a low-carbon future

- The question was asked which option the XTF thought should be taken forward next. The group would like to start to refine the TOR's for the next pack as soon as possible.
- There is a lot of existing material and it is thought the next pack could be finalised by March.
- Following discussion, arguments were put forward for both options and it was agreed that both were important.
- It was suggested that both options could be included in one pack and if possible, deliver both in the timeline.
- It was highlighted that the group could request additional resource if needed.
- **Action:** Any XTF member who would like to join the project team should email Jenny Morris.

Licensing

- The main active tasks for this project were to:
 - Review the standard Joint Operating Agreement (JOA) and revise it to reflect the innovate licence terms
 - Review and recommend improvements to LARRY (Licensing Application Repository)
- The way forward for the JOA is for it to be updated to reflect the Innovate Licence. Additional points to be incorporated only if a wider review is undertaken. Expectation is that the JOA is to be signed within 6 months of licence award.
- A questionnaire has been issued and results compiled for LARRY and the marks scheme, the results have been discussed with the OGA. This is now on hold pending the BEIS licence review. Changes to the marks scheme and LARRY will need to be aligned to this.
- A round table meeting was held by BEIS on 12th November to engage with industry and gather views on the licensing review. OGUK and XTF have provided separate written responses. The results from the review are expected in January 2021.
- It was asked if the BEIS slide pack from the round table could be made available?
- **Action:** Liaise with BEIS to check if the slides from the licensing roundtable are available and can be shared. – Nick Terrell
- The question was asked if interactions between licensing for offshore wind, the wider energy transition, and oil and gas had been characterised. The issues have been recognised and are being identified through ongoing work by other groups.

Data

- The key initiatives for the project were:
 1. Facilitate data release
 2. Support development of best in class National Data Repository – this needs to be defined – what is actually required?
- After a tender process the administration of the NDR is being transitioned to Osokey. The NDR has been incorporated into the OGA Digitalisation initiative. It is funded by industry via the license fees.

- The NDR data base is growing. If data is deposited in the NDR the data owners are no longer obligated to store the data.
- The data held includes data on wells (but not all wells), some seismic (processed and unprocessed), technical reports, and infrastructure.
- One question is should the data be kept as a library, or should it be a live database?
- The release of well by well data is fundamental to continued oil and gas production and future use, including to support carbon storage and other offshore activities.
- The question was asked if there was any other data that would be useful to include in the NDR?
- It was also asked if there had been any interaction with the UK Onshore Geophysical Library (UKOGL) to gain any learnings from their experience of building a database consisting of seismic data that can be viewed via an online portal and digital map? – Discussions have taken previously taken but merging had not been possible at that time, this could be looked at again.
- Historically the NDR has been used as a library. It needs to be identified what industry's wish list is.
- As an industry it should be identified which data types would be most useful, campaigns could be used to get this data.
- The question was asked if it was the intention to have seismic field data and navigation merged in the NDR for free full access? – It is thought that this was the intention.
- It was highlighted that the OGA had held a workshop for stakeholders, it was asked how the feedback from these workshops had been incorporated. The reformed NDR steering committee is meeting next week and members were asked to raise this at the meeting.

Opportunity Maturation

- The work of this group has centred around:
- Sustainable hubs and implemented area plans. They have focussed on the reserves progression aspect.
- They have initiated collaboration with the Reserves Progression task group which is a sub group of the Asset Stewardship Task Force to build on the common areas. The first stage of this develop a common approach around hub strategies and area plans. This will be the focus of initial discussions.
- Early insights from the reserves progression tool will be looked at prior to going back to companies to see how the tool was used. It is also planned to identify what lessons can be learned and look for opportunities for improvements.
- It was highlighted that insights from the tool could be a vehicle to look for future technology applications.
- The point was made that this was a natural and positive progression for the work already done on area plans. It will be important that as it progresses it is communicated to the wider exploration group, this could be done through the Exploration Forum.
- XTF members were asked to encourage use of the tool within their companies.

Technology

- The initiative for this priority was to support OGTC technology exploration projects which included:
 1. Supporting delivery of the NNS machine learning project
 2. Support progression of the OGTC exploration call for ideas projects
 3. Ensure progression of TLB challenge for short and medium-term priorities.
- Short term MER exploration projects that are currently being taken forward are:
 1. Demonstrate the successful application of code to automate the identification of missed pay zones in diverse seismic datasets, using well calibration
 2. Use AI workflows to cleanse and prepare all structure and unstructured UKCS exploration data to deliver a complete, high quality and searchable National Data Repository to industry.
- Medium term projects are:
 1. Dramatically reduce seismic processing timelines from months down to days for a 3D survey including FWI production.
 2. Drive down cost of full-azimuth/high-density ocean-bottom seismic acquisition to the same or less than an equivalent streamer survey.
- The Subsurface Solution Centre currently have 9 active projects and 4 projects have been completed. A great deal of focus has been on exploration projects, the focus will move to getting these technologies adopted by industry.
- Unless there is industry support/input and a great need, it is unlikely that there will be a lot more investment in exploration technology projects until at least the current tranche have completed.
- Analysis of all three developers in the NNS machine learning project has been made available to participants.
- Feedback has been received from the developers and participants.
- OGTC does not have the capacity to assess/verify the results and it may be a challenge to get this done. Any suggestions on how this could be supported should be passed to Gillian White.
- A lessons learned document is being produced and the results will be disseminated.

AOB

- Ahead of the next meeting in Q1 2021 work will be done to align and agree what the priorities should be for 2021.
- Each of the priority leads were asked to summarise feedback from this year and what they wanted to work on in 2021.
- Energy Transition – There has been good feedback from the initial pack. This should remain a priority and more packs should be developed and issued. The main lesson would be to have earlier engagement and anchor the terms of reference early in the project. Members of the XTF were thanked for the support provided.

- Licensing – Progress has been slower than hoped. The key priority for 2021 will be to complete the revision of the JOA, and depending on the outcome of the licensing review also to complete the work being done on LARRY and the mark scheme, aligning this with net zero.
- Opportunity Maturation – Good progress has been made around area plans and hubs. Going forward the focus for 2021 will be the collaboration with the Reserves Progression Task Group. It has been invaluable to have more than one person working on this.
- Data – Priority should be broadening the NDR and enhancing access to more data.
- Technology - Need to develop a way to get feedback from the technology projects. More needs to be done on getting new technologies adopted by industry.
- It was highlighted that the XTF had evolved and delivered meaningful outputs and is now recognised as being an integral part of the landscape. The formation of the sub groups has been important to this success.
- It was suggested that sub groups should be revisited – this will be done prior to the first meeting in 2021.
- XTF members was asked to consider how they could ‘step into’ and support some of the emerging areas where they would have a valuable and unique role to play in terms of net zero, with the obvious one being CCS.
- It was also suggested that new members could be brought in to ensure the XTF had the expertise needed.
- It was agreed that XTF meetings would continue to be quarterly.
- The next Exploration Forum is unlikely to take place before March.
- Upcoming events include:
 - 15th & 16th December, PROSPEX which will be held online
 - OGUK are currently looking at options on how they can run the Exploration Conference. There is a possibility that this could be delayed.
- As there was no further AOB the meeting was closed.

Actions from this meeting

Priority	Actions/Update	Who	When
Energy Transition	Any XTF member who would like to join the project team should email Jenny Morris.	All XTF members	End December 2020
Licensing	Liaise with BEIS to check if the slides from the licensing roundtable are available and can be shared.	Nick Terrell	End December 2020

Actions from previous meetings

Priority	Actions/Update	Who	When	Status
Opportunity Maturation	OGA to provide data on uptake of Phase 1 of the Petroleum Systems project (data/downloads) etc.	John Colleran	Ongoing Nick R and Jo B to seek data from OGA IM team	Closed
Energy Transition: Exploration in a Low Carbon Future	Addition feedback on the Energy Transition pack should be submitted to Jenny Morris	All Task Force members	4th September	Closed
Seismic Data Release	Katy Heidenreich to discuss with seismic representatives and the OGA.	Katy Heidenreich	Q4	Closed
MER Exploration Forum	Agenda to be finalised and virtual session to be scheduled and publicised	Nick Terrell and Nick Richardson	Late September/early October	Closed
Licensing	Initial 32 nd round announcement of award not to be delayed beyond mid-2020 where possible and the OGA has already offered to speak to licence awardees at the time if they have queries or requests	Nick Richardson		Announcements Made 3 September Closed