



PRESS RELEASE

ElectroProject Soft Torque awarded GDF SUEZ Grand Prix de l'Innovation

Cofely realises savings of in the millions for clients with innovative control system on oil and gas drilling rigs

Bunnik, 20 July 2011 - Cofely has achieved an important breakthrough in the oil and gas extraction industry with an advanced measurement and control system: ElectroProject Soft Torque (EPST). This innovative, intelligent system offers significantly better results than existing methods for preventing stick slip and cutting back on bit wear. The system not only enables operators to save millions of dollars annually, but also considerably improves the overall safety on drilling platforms. On 26 May 2011 EPST - developed by ElectroProject Aandrijftechniek which is part of Cofely - was awarded the 'GDF SUEZ Grand Prix de l'Innovation'.

Worldwide, there are over 600 offshore platforms and up to a few thousand onshore platforms. Oil and gas boreholes can be as deep as up to seven kilometres, but can also be bored horizontally. Drill heads often have to make their way through hard layers of limestone and salt. A major problem during drilling is the 'stick slip' phenomenon, whereby the drill bit stops rotating momentarily and the subsequent build-up in torsional energy causes the bit to break free at high speed, resulting in increased bit wear. Such downhole bit velocities, of up to two to three times surface speeds, are the cause of increased maintenance costs and lost drilling time. The costs of stick slip for the oil and gas industry annually amount to many millions of dollars. In this industry oil- and gas companies typically own the oil- and gas fields, but lease the offshore drilling rigs at prices ranging from 100,000 to 400,000 dollars per day. Any delays in the drilling process as a result of stick slip, means that these companies have to lease rigs for a longer time, significantly increasing operating costs. Considerable savings can therefore be achieved if stick slip is minimised.

Important breakthrough

"In order to counter stick slip, Shell developed the Soft Torque Rotary System in the early nineties. This is a control method to prevent the sticking of the drill bit", explains Angel Catena, Account Manager at ElectroProject Aandrijftechniek. "In collaboration with Shell, Noble Drilling and PIAK we have been able to successfully implement this control system, which has been given the name: ElectroProject Soft Torque, or EPST for short. And we've already moved on since then in the development of new software for our stand-alone system. EPST is an important breakthrough for the oil and gas industry in countering stick slip. We are very proud that this innovation has now been awarded the 'GDF SUEZ Prix De l'Innovation'."

Advanced measurement and control technology

ElectroProject Soft Torque is a stand-alone digital control system that has been specifically developed for top drives. The advanced measurement and control technology ensures that the stick slip phenomenon is minimised, so that drilling can take place without decrease in rate of penetration or lost time delays and at a constant speed. Resulting benefits include higher penetration speed, less wear of drill bits and greater safety on drilling rigs. Such improved performance means annual savings amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars.

Cofely, a GDF SUEZ Company

Cofely is part of GDF SUEZ Energy Services, the European leader in sustainable technological services. GDF SUEZ Energy Services offers its customers in production and services industries made-to-measure solutions, whether in the fields of engineering, installations or energy services. GDF SUEZ Energy Services employs 76,000 people and achieved revenues of € 13.5 billion in 2010. GDF SUEZ Energy Services is a business unit of GDF SUEZ, one of the leading energy suppliers in the world.

For further information please contact:

Ingrid Clauwaert, Public Relations Manager Cofely

Kosterijland 20, 3981 AJ Bunnik

Tel: 030 656 94 59

email: ingrid.clauwaert@cofely-gdfsuez.nl