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INTRODUCTION

This is the second year of our new development paper format whereby the North American and foreign papers are combined in a single issue. In addition, and as a reflection of the broadened scope of our Association, papers on other energy minerals have again been included. It is not intended that these papers provide the local detail as do those for oil and gas. Rather, the energy minerals papers cover the most significant developments on a broad basis.

Last year, we said that an effort would be made to publish this issue in September. Unfortunately, we were unable to do so due to an ever increasing difficulty in obtaining data from various foreign countries. During this past year, I have received feedback from several sources indicating that the most time-critical paper is the one on Drilling Activity in North America. It has been proposed that this paper be published separately as early in the year as possible. This will be considered seriously for next year. If that is done, we would probably republish it with the other development papers later in the year for the sake of completeness and uniformity in the World Energy Developments issue.

The development papers in this issue are a review of the significant exploration and production activities in each of the areas covered. It is the informed commentary by the authors that sets these papers apart from bare statistics and materially increases their value to the reader.

Figures 1 and 2 show the areas of each individual paper for oil and gas developments in North America and foreign areas, respectively. To prepare these papers, well data, land status, production statistics, and geophysical activity information are accumulated from a myriad of sources, such as foreign and domestic scouting services, both foreign and domestic governmental agencies at all levels, industry organizations, oil companies, individual consultants, and local representatives. Because of the diversity of sources in the foreign areas, the information may be submitted in many different formats and languages, is often difficult to obtain, and may be incomplete. The compilation and organization of these foreign data are, understandably, a very difficult and complex task. Authors experienced difficulty again this year in obtaining the necessary information in several foreign areas. I am happy to report, however, that Israel is represented again after an absence of several years.

You will find that no effort has been made to standardize numeric units to either the metric or English system. We felt that the choice of the author best reflected the needs of the majority of the readers of the paper concerned. For the convenience of those who might wish to compare statistics, a conversion table (Table 1) has been provided at the end of this introduction.

Again this year, the authors of the development papers and those who assisted them have done an outstanding job and have made a very valuable contribution to our knowledge of worldwide energy exploration and production activities. They all worked voluntarily and gave freely of their time and energy. Their in-depth knowledge, personal expertise, and extensive efforts are clearly reflected in their papers. It is equally important to recognize the substantial contribution of support and technical assistance by the authors' employers and the foreign governments involved, without whose cooperation many authors would have been unable to complete their work. These acknowledgments would not be complete without also recognizing the tireless efforts of Michael H. Blechner and his associates in the Aapg Publications Department in putting this issue together. Finally, I extend to all who helped with this publication both my personal thanks and that of Aapg.

We hope that you will find this issue both a reliable and useful reference this year and in the years to come.