

Exploration in Block A-18, MTJDA, Malaysia-Thailand

by Nick De'Ath, Senior Vice President Exploration, Triton

An accelerated exploration and appraisal campaign in Block A-18 Malaysia-Thailand Joint Development Area (JDA) has resulted in the discovery of four significant natural gas fields. One of these, the Cakerawala Field, has been delineated for early gas production.

The contract area is located offshore in the North Malay Basin/South Gulf of Thailand, an area which had been under boundary dispute for some time between the governments of Thailand and Malaysia. Negotiations between the two host governments progressed to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 1979 to share the potential of the area and initiated an era of cooperation between all of the parties involved. After 15 years of searching for, identifying, and implementing a solution to the disputes involved, a Production Sharing Contract was signed on April 21st 1994, culminating an effort of over 22 years of Triton's involvement in the area. The A-18 contract area is now operated by Carigali-Triton Operating Company Sdn. Bhd. (CTOC) on behalf of its joint shareholders Petronas Carigali and Triton, Contractors to the Malaysia-Thailand Joint Authority (MTJA).

The petroleum system comprises Miocene

clastic reservoirs trapped in fault/dip closed structures, which are sealed and charged intra-formationally. The principal hydrocarbon phase is lean gas/condensate.

A phased exploration/exploitation strategy and plan was formulated through a gas market opportunity study and a techno-commercial evaluation of the potential hydrocarbon resource base, which included regional 2-D and delineation 3-D seismic.

In May 1996, Triton signed a MOU on the sale and purchase of natural gas from the JDA. The MOU was signed with Triton's partner Petronas Carigali; Petronas, the Malaysian national oil company; PTT, the national oil company of Thailand; and the MTJA. The MOU provides the basis for negotiations of a gas-sales agreement for natural gas to be produced from Block A-18. Plans for the first phase of Block A-18 development call for production from the Cakerawala Field of 300 million cubic feet of gas per day during 1999, with gas transported via pipeline to Thailand.

The forward program comprises further appraisal drilling and 3-D seismic to delineate the other finds for later gas production and exploration drilling to test the remaining prospectivity.

Biographical Sketch

Mr. Nick De'Ath joined Triton in April 1993 and was appointed Senior Vice President, Exploration in July 1993. Before joining Triton, Mr. De'Ath was with BP Exploration for 21 years. His positions with BP Exploration included Chief Geologist for Northwest Europe (1983-86), General Manager for Colombia (1986-91), and President and General Manager for Exploration in Mexico (1992). While in Colombia, he was instrumental in the discovery of the billion barrel Cusiana Field, the largest discovery in the 80-year history of the Colombian oil industry and the largest discovery in the Western Hemisphere in the past 20 years. From 1992 until joining Triton, Mr. De'Ath was President of Pinnacle Ltd. in Bogota, Colombia, a management consultancy in quality, loss control, and crisis management.

Mr. De'Ath earned a degree in geology from University College, London. He is a member of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists and the Petroleum Exploration Society of Great Britain. In 1990, Mr. De'Ath was named a Member of the British Empire (M.B.E.) by Queen Elizabeth in honor of his British commercial services to Colombia. ■