



# link

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**ASCO**  
Delivering More

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# Eastern Promise

**ASCO launches freight  
operation in Singapore**

See pages 8 & 9

# Welcome

from **Billy Allan** Group Chief Executive

It's been a busy few months for ASCO.

Whilst the combination of credit crunch, recession and the low oil price earlier in the year is continuing to provide challenging trading conditions, it's good to be able to report on a few successes.

Over the following pages you will find details of a range of fantastic contract wins and renewals in Europe, the Caspian and for AFM; the renewals provide continuity and the new business will go some way to offsetting the lower activity levels that we are facing in today's market.

Nick Dalgarno of Simmons, the international oil and gas corporate advisors, is our second contributor from outside of ASCO and, on pages six and seven, Nick provides some thought provoking views on the state of our industry.



The Asia Pacific region will see substantial oil and gas investment over the next decade and it's important that we pay attention to this major market. We've started the process by establishing a freight management operation in Singapore and you can find out more about this on pages eight and nine.

Closer to home, we have made two acquisitions in the UK recently. Enviroco bought HFS in order to expand its industrial cleaning service in England (see page seven) and ASCO Marine purchased Seletar Shipping to expand its agency services (see page 10).

As I said earlier, market conditions remain challenging and many commentators are predicting that things will get worse in the oil and gas industry in the second half of 2009 before we see any sign of recovery. We have done a good job so far of containing our costs and, to ensure that our business stays in good condition, we need to maintain our discipline in the coming months.

I look forward to your continuing support.

**Billy Allan**  
Group Chief Executive

## Successes

A guide to contract extensions, renewals and new business secured around the world recently.

### Europe

#### Norway

- **BP Skarv** – Supply base infrastructure contract, 15 years with 2 x 5 year options and operations contract for 3 years with 2 x 3 year options.
- **Consortium of BG, Centrica, Noreco, Petro-Canada & Nexen.** Base support to the rig West Alpha for a 17 well drilling campaign (approx. 3 years).

#### NNS

- **Mobil North Sea** – 5 year extension. Fully managed logistics for all UK assets.
- **Total E&P UK Ltd** – 5 year extension. Warehouse, yard & quayside logistics.
- **TEAM** – 3 year contract for shore based logistics and freight management services.

#### Enviroco

- **Scottish and Southern Energy** – Contract extension at Peterhead Power Station.
- **Weatherford UK Limited** – Contract extension and addition of Great Yarmouth to contract scope.
- **Shell** - Secured major disposal project for bulk liquids from Maersk Curlew.
- **Alstom Power** – Seven year framework agreement for disposals.

### Caspian

- **BP Azerbaijan** – Supply Base Management Services Contract. Ten year contract with 1 x 5 year option.

### Canada

- **Petro-Canada** – Contract Renewal (6 months) MacKay River SAGD Plant, Warehouse Management.

### AFM

- **Technip USA** – assigned as the U.S. consolidation point for four major projects including Jubilee development in Ghana.
- **GDF Suez E&P UK Ltd** – heli-freight and freight forwarding in support of their well being drilled on the Tesla location UKCS.
- **Petro-Canada** – heli-freight and freight forwarding in support of their 300 day drilling campaign in the UKCS.

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**Want to discover more?** If you would like to find out more about ASCO or any of the stories featured in this edition of LINK, please contact us at [info@ascoworld.com](mailto:info@ascoworld.com)

# European successes

Employees in ASCO's European business unit have had much to celebrate this year with the award of new contracts and extensions with a value of more than £100 million over the next five years. Strategically, these contracts strengthen ASCO's position in the European marketplace significantly.

In the North Sea, we were delighted to be awarded the TEAM Marine contract for the provision of shore based logistics and freight management services to the consortium of four operators, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, Hess and Britannia in all sectors of the North sea. The contract will be serviced from ASCO's Mearns Quay facility in Aberdeen. The ASCO team has worked hard to demonstrate its capability to the consortium and our fresh approach and wider geographical coverage in support of TEAM's operations have been well received. We will be taking over the contract from current incumbent PetersenSBS Logistics.

ASCO Norge has been awarded two contracts for the provision of supply base services for BP's Skarv development in the Northern North Sea following a competitive tender process. The awards are the Supply Base Infrastructure Contract for a period of 15 years with two 5 year options and the Supply Base Operation Contract for three years with two 3 year options. Base and operating support functions for the development will be located in Sandnessjøen, which is currently being prepared for first activity in September this year. The first well is expected to be drilled in January 2010.

ASCO Norge will be recruiting locally for approximately 12 new positions to be based at Sandnessjøen. ASCO has been handling the storage and transport of all of the coated pipes for the BP Skarv pipeline from Sandnessjøen since January 2009

Significant contract renewals came in the form of extensions from both Mobil North Sea LLC and Total E&P UK Ltd. The five year deals, with options to extend, are for the provision of a fully managed logistics service for all of Mobil's UK assets including marine, quayside and warehouse operations as well as freight forwarding services, and the provision of warehouse, yard and quayside logistics services for Total. The contracts started in May and June respectively.

ASCO has provided logistics services for Mobil for 12 years, which are serviced from ASCO's supply base in Peterhead, while the Total relationship, continuing for 7 years, will be serviced out of Aberdeen Harbour.

New client, Nippon Oil E&P UK has contracted with Norwell, the integrated service contractor, and ASCO has been appointed to provide support for its single well drilling operations out of Peterhead which started in June.

"This news is a real boost for all of us at ASCO," commented European Managing Director, Walter Robertson, "especially in challenging times. It's been a case of everybody pulling together and keeping

**"To secure these awards amidst challenging times is a tribute to the tenacity and professionalism of the team here."**

focused – not an easy ask when activity levels are dropping and the media is full of negative stories about the global economic downturn.

At ASCO we made an early decision to minimise expense for the foreseeable future to assist us to retain the shape of our business and allow us to review the effect of the industry downturn on an ongoing basis. This 'belt tightening' supported by all of our staff has assisted us to bid competitively in the current market conditions.

The wins are very important for us strategically and position us strongly in Europe as well as introducing ASCO to one of the most underdeveloped areas on the Norwegian shelf, the Norwegian Sea, which has huge potential for future discoveries."



## Interesting news or stories?

LINK is always looking for interesting stories, news and photos to include in each issue. The newsletter is meant to represent you and your experiences at ASCO so please let us know what you think! We are always looking for ways to improve so please e-mail [LINK@ascoworld.com](mailto:LINK@ascoworld.com) with any ideas. Submission deadline for the autumn edition is 08 September 2009.

# ASCO wins in Azerbaijan



Following a tender process, ASCO has successfully retained the BP Supply Base Management Services Contract in Azerbaijan in the face of competition from multinational service providers.

The scope of the new 10 year contract (with one 5 year option) includes supply base management, operations, materials handling and transportation, facilities maintenance, materials management and diesel management and will be provided out of ASCO's own facilities as well as BP's new supply base.

Derek Smith, Chief Executive EMEA commented; "Our ability to deliver efficient, reliable and safe logistics services during difficult economic times played an

important role in securing this contract and extending our global relationship with BP. Overall, this is an excellent performance which reinforces our commitment to BP in the Caspian.

"The tremendous efforts of our staff underpin our ability to consistently meet and exceed customer expectation, and to provide security of employment for our employees. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this contract award."

## Delivering on promises US\$11M saved in Pipeyard Relocation Project in Trinidad

When ASCO was re-awarded the BP Trinidad & Tobago (BPTT) logistics contract last year, we were challenged to implement our proposal to consolidate BPTT's pipeyard to the ASCO shorebase in La Brea, South Western Trinidad.

BPTT's drilling and exploration program over the last six years has focused on complex, deep wells requiring a diverse range of tubulars. This caused the inventory (and scrap) to mushroom beyond existing pipeyard capacities and was further exacerbated by the limitations of the principal port of operations, Galeota Port while it awaits redevelopment.

To address these issues, BPTT had sought additional pipeyard space in Chaguaramas in the North West corner of Trinidad; a tourist area prime for development which commanded premium rates for land not to mention the increased vessel time and cost implications of having to sail there.

ASCO's dilemma was to weigh up the pros and cons of the expensive but safe option of transporting the pipe by boat (as was traditionally done) versus the unprecedented option of taking the equipment by land transport where there is greater likelihood of safety incident or service failure.

John Campbell, ASCO Trinidad's La Brea Shorebase Manager said: "To ensure that our proposal would work, we had to mitigate risk. We achieved this by implementing three things; careful selection of contractors to ensure that they shared



the same attitude and focus towards safety and service; pipe transportation and handling best practice; close management and monitoring of all road journeys using GPS by a dedicated and experienced ASCO team."

BPTT's Project Manager, John Wilkes, said "This was a major piece of work involving the movement of 675 trucks, with a total load of 14,830 tons of pipe, performed safely and within budget. The method of using the specialised Gradall pipe handling system for pipe movements has demonstrated that pipe can be handled efficiently, safely and cost effectively without the use of cranes and slings."

The move was completed in 60 working days, 39 days faster than expected using boats and without incident.



pipe can be handled efficiently, safely and cost effectively

## Jubilant about Jubilee

ASCO Freight Management (AFM) in Houston has been assigned as the US consolidation point for four major projects for Technip USA, a large EPC company and a new client for AFM.

Final details of all of the projects have yet to be revealed however AFM will be supporting the Jubilee project in offshore Ghana. Jubilee was discovered last year in 1,500 m of water by UK independent Tullow Oil and is estimated (90% probability) to hold 170 million bbl of recoverable oil. It straddles the boundary between the West Cape Three Points Block and Tullow Oil's Deepwater Tano Block.

The second Technip project to be supported from AFM Houston will be the transportation and installation of an

umbilical for the BHP Billiton operated Angostura gas project, located offshore Trinidad & Tobago, in approximately 30 meters (100 feet) of water. The flowline will be welded at the Technip's spoolbase located in Evanton, Scotland. Offshore installation is scheduled for 2010.

President of AFM US, Rick Higgins said; "We're very pleased to be selected for this suite of projects. It's a real boost for everyone here as we increase our international profile further."



AFM's facilities in Houston



Mouth of the Volta River Delta, Ghana



## Become a UK Explorer

**Explorer is one of a growing number of new and exciting initiatives that form part of ASCO's core strategy to deliver more to our customers.**

**Explorer is about changing mindset, challenging and improving existing practice. It is about actively pursuing new ways to increase efficiency and profit, decrease overheads and, most importantly of all, to work smarter for our customers' benefit.**

So how does it work?



Explorer consists of two main groups:

**Ideas Explorers** – Volunteers from within the company who work in pairs to explore an aspect of the business such as reducing administration, changing customer perception, or improving communications.

Ideas Explorers will be trained in industry-leading techniques for finding ways to improve businesses from top to bottom. ASCO has engaged the services of a specialist training company to introduce and embed these techniques across ASCO over the next few months.

**Explorer Management Team** – Made up of managers from across the business. This team's main job is to ensure that Explorers have access to the people and areas of the business necessary to generate new ideas and to foster conditions in which these ideas can be implemented.

Members of both groups will be changed every few months to re-invigorate and refresh thinking and approach.

*Interested?*

Contact George Anderson at [explorer@ascoworld.com](mailto:explorer@ascoworld.com) for more information.

# Rocky road to recovery

So the global slowdown continues but is the end in sight? LINK asked Nick Dalgarno, Director of Simmons & Company International, specialist corporate finance advisors dedicated to the energy industry, to give us his thoughts on economic recovery in the oil and gas sector.

**What a difference a year makes. As we approached summer 2008, the economy was 'frothy' and M&A (mergers and acquisitions) activity had been at unprecedented levels. In the oil and gas market, this was underpinned by record oil prices and, as a result, prices paid for acquisitions grew. Market confidence was high. Goodness, MPs were even getting their moats cleaned through their expenses!**

Fast forward to today and things are remarkably different. We have seen banks and financial institutions across the globe going out of business.

Oil prices dropped from a peak of \$147 in July 2008 to \$32 in December 2008 before returning to around the \$70 mark today, and our MPs and our bankers vie for the title of most vilified occupation.

So what does all this turmoil mean for the oil and gas economy and M&A markets in particular? Given the backdrop of the last 12 months, it is easy to feel like a man building a house on quicksand when predicting the future but I will at least attempt to give a view on these matters below.

When compared with the broader economy, the oil and gas market is generally perceived as one of the better places to be at the moment and, despite the recent turmoil in commodity prices, the long term fundamentals remain strong.

That said, it would be foolish to suggest that the oil and gas sector is immune from the general economic tribulations and indeed, the recent volatility has simply emphasised the importance of general economic factors in supply and demand for

oil. This has made it increasingly difficult for commentators to predict the future.

The oil price collapse last year was driven to great extent by traders' need for liquidity and the general economic environment, rather than reflecting a total collapse in global demand or a huge surge in supply of oil. The recent rally seems to subvert normal laws of economics as the price has doubled despite physical stocks of inventory being near their all time highs. Here it seems that the weakness in the US Dollar has been more of a factor as traders have moved out of dollars and into commodities rather than signal a sharp recovery in the sector.

Despite this oil price volatility, which I believe will continue in the short term, Simmons' view on the outlook for oil and gas remains positive. While global demand fell in the early part of 2009, the longer term fundamentals remain strong. Unlike in previous oil price downturns, we entered the current one with very little spare capacity in the market while increasing demand from emerging economies such as India and China coupled with the increasing decline rates in production from established fields and an ageing infrastructure which has suffered from years of chronic under-investment. These are all factors which point to a faster than expected rebound in crude prices.

For the service sector, a rebound in crude prices will be a good thing. Many oil service companies have seen a push to reduce costs in recent times as E&P companies attempted to curb the rising cost inflation of recent years. Quite a number have agreed



Nick Dalgarno, Director of Simmons & Company International

to oil price escalation clauses in their contracts as part of a risk and reward sharing approach. Thus, higher commodity prices will lead to a fairly immediate margin benefit for a number of companies. In addition, as E&P companies become confident in the sustainability of sufficiently strong oil prices, the more likely it is that new deepwater and ultra-deepwater development projects will receive sanctioning and this will drive activity across the sector.

**SIMMONS & COMPANY**  
INTERNATIONAL LIMITED

Despite this oil price volatility, which I believe will continue in the short term, Simmons view on the outlook for oil and gas remains positive.

The last couple of months have seen a sharp pick-up in M&A activity in the oil and gas sector, perhaps reflecting a sense that the worst is over. Clearly, the doubling in the commodity price has helped but there is also a sense that there are some good opportunities to be had for strategic and opportunistic buyers alike. Major service companies, some of whom have significant amounts of cash on their balance sheets, appear to be in the market for differentiating technologies and are prepared to pay for them. Private equity buyers are able to proceed with far greater certainty as to the availability of debt to support their acquisitions than was the case less than six months ago.

Despite predicting a continued period of volatility in the short term, I would expect a strong recovery in M&A activity in the oil and gas sector over the next 12 months. The financial crisis and downturn have created a strong environment for potential acquirers, and sellers' value expectations are lower than they have been for some time. The old adage that opportunity comes out of adversity is certainly true and, for brave investors, who believe in the fundamentals, this must be a time of unprecedented opportunity.



## Cleaning up in England

Established in 1992, HFS Liquid Waste grew to become a leading provider of industrial cleaning and bulk liquid waste management services in East Anglia. Now envirocoHFS, the 15 strong company strengthens Enviroco's industrial cleaning and bulk liquid haulage capabilities in England by broadening the spectrum of resources offered and industries serviced.

HFS's relationship with Enviroco developed after the company was sub-contracted to undertake a number of jetting and tankering tasks at the gas terminal in Bacton.

"I think both parties realised that there was synergy between the two businesses but bringing them together would strengthen the service offering as a whole", commented Alister Wait, former Managing Partner of HFS. "Now as one entity, we are both focused on the provision of expert waste management services which embrace sound health and safety practices, together with minimisation, recycling and environmentally sound practices at the forefront of what we do."

Moving from farming to managing waste may not seem the most obvious career path but it is one that Enviroco's newly appointed Industrial Services Manager (England), Alister Wait, is justly proud of.

Alister is the first to admit that the waste industry is not the most glamorous market to be in: "It's easy to be glib about getting rid of waste but where would we be without companies to do this? We are an essential service to society".



Alister Wait, Denise Wait, Kevin MacIver (Finance Director) and Dan at the signing of the deal.

A fast mover in the waste sector, Norfolk born and bred Alister is hoping to be as speedy on the racetrack as he re-ignites his passion for rallying; "I drove rally cars until I was 30 and then gave up, always promising myself that I would start again when I hit 40."

Last year, the 'Grease to Greece' Rally was the first successful attempt to drive 10 vehicles across Europe fuelled by waste vegetable oil sourced locally during the trip from restaurants – let's wait and see whether Alister can better this!

- In 2005, the market for industrial and commercial waste across the UK totalled approximately £8 billion and this is expected to double by 2015.
- The forecast value of the heavy industrial cleaning market was in excess of £500 million.

Think of Singapore and one immediately thinks of Singapore Slings, Raffles Hotel and a country where spitting is, thankfully, unlawful. Safe, clean and orderly, you will find no chewing gum staining the pavements and no drunken youths lurking on street corners. The system of on-the-spot fines may sound draconian to those in the Western world but they have preserved Singapore as a great place to live for those who obey the rules.



# Simply Singapore



Made up of one main island surrounded by 63 smaller islets, it may be a tiny speck on the global map but Singapore is one of the liveliest and thriving cities in the world as well as one of the most densely populated. Known as 'the Houston of the East', it is a strategic location for oil and gas activity with a port that is one of world's busiest in terms of shipping tonnage: that's why it's been chosen as the location for ASCO's first venture in Asia Pacific.

#### Our Man in Asia

Heading up ASCO Freight Management's new Asia Pacific operation in Singapore is Neil Johnson who is no stranger to the region having spent a over the decade in the Far East.

A qualified accountant by trade, Englishman Neil has spent most of his career in business development and managerial roles in locations such as Brussels, Moscow, Tashkent (Uzbekistan) and Nairobi. He was instrumental in overseeing the restructuring of global logistics organisation DHL, as well as

supporting their start-up in China. In 2004, Neil established Mangrove, a logistics consultancy which introduced him to ASCO when the companies became Joint Venture partners in Asia.

Building on their success in Aberdeen and Houston, ASCO's Singapore office specialises in providing project freight services for the energy, infrastructure and related sectors.

Neil explained the choice of Singapore for AFM's Far East operations; "Singapore is an important shipping and trans-shipment hub as well as being where many decision-makers for the Asia region are based. Energy security within the region is critical and Singapore is located in the centre of a growing Asia Pacific oil, and more importantly, gas industry. This is fuelling the growth and development of South East Asia, China and India and making an important contribution to the energy needs of Korea and Japan."

In addition to heading up the AFM operation, Neil Johnson is Chairman of the Shipping Transport and Logistics Group of the British Chamber in Singapore. He also owns a small coffee plantation in central Java, so expect extremely good coffee if you are dropping in!

#### My Singapore experience

"The climate in Singapore is what many people dream of but, like a lot of Brits, I miss the changing seasons. Hot weather is wonderful when one is on vacation but not so appealing when you are having to negotiate your way around a bustling city in 32 degrees!

Every part of Singapore is master planned however there are still places to escape from the City if you are 'in the know' and have a sense of adventure. There is some beautiful rainforest preserved as a nature reserve where there are marked walking trails, however if you venture off the beaten track, there are also lesser trodden 'jungle trails'. I enjoy running in the jungle with Charlotte, my pure bred Asian street dog (aka mongrel!) whom I 'rescued' from an abandoned animal centre seven years ago.

We are spoiled for choice here in terms of good cuisine and upmarket drinking spots. The most famous landmark is, of course, Raffles and I do take people there for lunch and the obligatory Singapore Sling on occasions. Having lived in Asia for so long, I have encountered a variety of dishes unfamiliar to the British palate including dog, cat, rat, snake, camel, horse, lizard, sea slug, jellyfish and numerous insects, and yes, I have tried everything! (sorry, Charlotte!)

One thing that constantly reminds me of home is football; Asia is nuts about the English Premiership and there is wall to wall coverage of the top teams.

It's not hard to adapt to life in Singapore and it is where I have made my home. Obviously I miss my family and friends but, with today's technology, staying in touch is easy.

**Neil Johnson**



# Ship shape around the world

## ASCO's Marine division welcomes Seletar Shipping into the fold

The recent acquisition of Aberdeen headquartered Seletar Shipping has strengthened ASCO Marine's service offering to clients as Keith Fletcher, ASCO Marine's Chairman explains: "We established ASCO Marine in mid 2007 to give the marine side of our business a higher profile and to re-focus on a part of our overall service that had been important in years previous.

"The addition of Seletar to ASCO means that we have the right business model in place to offer a fully managed marine service to our clients and provides a platform to expand in terms of new types of customer in different locations.

We already have an enviable reputation in terms of technical marine management and we naturally provide ships' agency services to charterers i.e. looking after HMRC requirements and cargo dues etc. The combination, however, of Seletar's full portfolio of owners' agency services with their excellent team and systems really adds value to our capability."

### **SHE who must be obeyed**

A ship is always referred to as 'she'. Early seafarers spoke of their ships in the feminine gender due to the close dependence they had on their ships for life and sustenance.

The concept of 'ships' agency' dates back centuries and is, in simple terms, looking after the needs of the ship's owner or charterer in a particular location so it's a 24-hour role requiring superb co-ordination, quick thinking and diplomacy.

The owners, Captain and crew of a vessel will call on their agent to give them support for virtually anything from

receiving the ship's mail to co-ordinating the receipt and delivery of heavy duty equipment on board.

Local knowledge and contacts are key to the success of a ship's agent when a broken down TV in the messroom needs attention or a vital piece of catering equipment is required at short notice.

In addition to the nuts and bolts of the vessel, there are also the important human needs to be looked after; medical treatment, dental care, repatriation, emergencies and sadly, loss of life where sensitive communication with the crew member's family is paramount.



**Seletar:** one of the older, local place names in Singapore for the North-east region. A Malay word, Seletar refers to the Aboriginal coastal dwellers who lived at the mouth of the Seletar river.



Keith Fletcher,  
ASCO Marine's  
Chairman

“The bitterness of poor quality remains long after the sweetness of low cost is forgotten.”

**Shaun Eardley, Managing Director, Seletar Shipping.**

By his own admission, Shaun Eardley, Managing Director of Seletar Shipping (which will remain under its own name for the foreseeable future), ‘fell’ into the shipping industry soon after leaving school. With A-levels and a YTS (Youth Training Scheme) in Medical Photography under his belt, he was enjoying partying hard in Great Yarmouth, England’s seaside resort and oil and gas town. An ultimatum issued by his father forced Shaun to get himself a job and, after being offered the first three posts he applied for, he opted to join Halcyon Shipping despite it being the position he was least qualified for and knew little about. At 22, Shaun was promoted to Shipping Manager although his dreams of a BMW 3 series to accompany his success were thwarted when he was offered a choice of various models of Mini Metro!

By the time he was 24, Shaun had established Seletar Shipping in Great Yarmouth, a fresh alternative within its peer

group. Although a hugely competitive industry, he felt there was room to differentiate the business by raising the bar on service levels and he was right; in the first year, the company had achieved £500,000 turnover and made a profit of £20,000.

The business had also started to make inroads into the Aberdeen market and Shaun was a regular traveller to the region. Encouraged by customer feedback, Seletar opened an Aberdeen division when they moved into The Seaforth Centre on Waterloo Quay in late 1993. The next 18 months were ‘sheer misery’ according to Shaun:

“We were a new company in the area and ‘small fry’ as far as Aberdeen customers were concerned so, while there was a lot of interest in what we could offer, clients were reticent to transfer their business from known entities and had concerns about our longevity.”



That all changed in 1995 when Viking Supply Ships moved their fleet of 18 vessels to Seletar.

More business followed quickly and the company’s situation altered from a struggle for survival in the area to a struggle to cope!

Today, Seletar, now 100% owned by ASCO, is a £15 million turnover business with 55 staff located in its Great Yarmouth office and its Aberdeen headquarters. The company services oil and gas operators and service contractors around the world.

The company’s growth can be attributed to a company culture that does not tolerate low service levels; a culture that has resulted in a dedicated and motivated in-house team that take genuine pride in what they do.





## Premier Crew

The crew and management team of ASCO chartered vessel, Esvagt Observer, were recognised by ExxonMobil for achieving six years LTI free. The vessel, which is managed by ASCO Marine, is a standby vessel for the Beryl Alpha.



*Pic L to R:*  
 Jimmy Whyte,  
 ExxonMobil;  
 Nicholas Gromes,  
 ExxonMobil,  
 Mike Gibbon,  
 ASCO Marine;  
 John Madsen,  
 Esvagt Observer;  
 Paul Taylor,  
 Esvagt UK,  
 Euan Simpson,  
 ASCO Marine.

## PEOPLE >>

### Balance sheets and babies!

#### Adelina delivers more...

No-one was surprised when Aberdeen based Marine & Group Accountant, and third time expectant mum, Adelina Cox decided to carry on working up until a week before her baby was due. When she finally left for her well-earned maternity leave, she was probably expecting a period of preparing for the new addition with no thoughts of number crunching or vessel dues. It was not to be.

When Adelina's temporary replacement fell ill and was unable to carry on in the position, the accountancy team was struggling. A chance phone call from Adelina to see how everyone was doing resulted in her offering to prepare the accounts from home.

Books were balanced, baby Sophie was born and Adelina proved that multi-tasking is an absolutely feminine attribute. A huge thankyou and well done on all counts to 'Super Mum' Adelina!

Baby Sophie with her siblings.



Cartoon by Allan Rennie, ASCO Marine

### Pilgrim's progress

While she may not yet command a \$132 million transfer fee, recently appointed Human Resources Manager for ASCO's Canadian operations, Trudy Pilgrim, is proving to be hot stuff on the soccer pitch as Forward for Edmonton team, Chili Mix.

Goal scoring and tackling is proving to be a family trait as Trudy's 16 year old daughter, Krystyn, plays for the All Stars team in the Newfoundland League while 27 year old son, Darrell, is an ice hockey enthusiast. Trudy herself is returning to the competitive football field after a ten year break and is in the right place as women's soccer has a higher profile in Alberta than her native Newfoundland, where the emphasis is on the junior leagues. If the Allstars win the provincial championship, they will play the nationals in Edmonton later this year giving Trudy a dilemma of who to cheer for!

A newcomer to Alberta, Trudy was born and raised in the tiny Cook's Harbour in Newfoundland, located right at the tip of the Northern Peninsula and with a population of only 2000. The place was named after Captain James Cook who surveyed the coast of Newfoundland in the mid-1760s.

Trudy joins ASCO having worked in the oil and gas industry for nearly 20 years, most recently with Crosbie Salmis Ltd in Newfoundland's capital city, St Johns. Her new role, based in Nisku, involves travel to all of ASCO's Canadian operations.

She will be travelling further this Summer when she takes a trip to London, England although strictly for pleasure rather than business. Seeing the sights will be on the agenda but perhaps not as high as going to see her first Premier League game.



### Helping working parents

Many of you that are working parents may have heard of the UK Government's childcare vouchers scheme which allows employers to offer vouchers to employees as a non cash benefit in return for a tax break on their value. We are delighted to announce that this scheme will shortly be activated for ASCO's UK personnel.

Childcare vouchers can be used to pay for all types of registered childcare including holiday clubs, pre and post school clubs, childminders, nannies, nurseries and play schemes; and it's not

just for toddlers, childcare vouchers can be used for youngsters up to the age of 16.

ASCO has registered with the UK's largest distributor of vouchers, Busy Bees. Working parents can exchange part of their gross salary for vouchers which are exempt from Tax and National Insurance contributions meaning savings of over £1,000 per year on childcare costs in some cases.

For more information, contact [sarah.moir@ascoworld.com](mailto:sarah.moir@ascoworld.com)

# AJ does it the West Highland Way!

Scotland's first official long distance route, the wonderfully scenic West Highland Way, links Milngavie to Fort William – a distance of 152km (95 miles) – from the northern outskirts of Glasgow, to the foot of Ben Nevis at Fort William on the West Coast.

Walkers encounter a wide range of different terrains, ranging from lowland moors, dense woodland and rolling hills, to high mountainous regions in the Scottish Highlands. This variety of environments provides habitats for a diverse range of wildlife species, both flora and fauna.

It's a gruelling walk and not for the faint hearted but our very own big hearted Group HSEQ Director, AJ Strachan decided to take up the challenge and all for a good cause.

Most people will not have heard of Lymphangioleiomyomatosis and even less will be able to pronounce it, which is probably why it is known as LAM.



LAM is a rare lung disease that only occurs in women. It affects just over one woman in a million. LAM Action is a charity that raises money for research as well as providing support for those with the condition.

Having a friend who suffers from LAM spurred AJ and 19 friends into action and they completed the West Highland Way in five days with a multitude of blisters.

Thanks to all at ASCO who sponsored AJ and contributed towards a grand total of over £8,000.



*AJ and wife, Carole, en route.*



# Help is at hand for ASCO UK employees

**As you may remember from the last issue of Link, ASCO's very own UK employee led initiative LIFESTYLE, has gone from strength to strength over the past year raising thousands of pounds for a range of good causes across its three strands: Giving, Community and Support. The results of the Giving and Community elements were clearly demonstrated in our last issue but the confidential Support arm has been left largely uncelebrated despite the great things being done.**

This year, the LIFESTYLE team, headed by Janice Murray (Financial Services Supervisor), want to bring Support out of the shadows to receive the acclaim it deserves. ASCO Support focuses its efforts inwardly to help members of ASCO staff who are going through a particularly difficult time. The service, which provides a range of help, is 100% confidential and requires only a simple nomination from a fellow colleague or even yourself, to set the ball rolling. Knowing that Support is available can make all the difference to someone experiencing personal difficulty.

Examples of what Support can do vary widely. Last year, it provided financial support to a staff member who had suffered a stroke to ease the burden of being off work for such a long time. Support also funded an emergency trip for a member of staff whose mother had fallen ill abroad. Vouchers were received by two members of staff who had experienced tough times after family members had fallen ill. All of these people, and many more, were nominated for help by members of their team who felt they deserved a boost. Testimonies of their thanks prove that the support received and generosity shown by those working around them really made a difference, whether it was time away for some much deserved TLC or being able to be with loved ones when they needed it most.

Support gifts are tailored to the individual needs of each case and can be organised quickly and confidentially.

Despite its good work for the employees of ASCO, very little of what Lifestyle has to give was used by Support. The aim this year is to raise the profile and awareness of this very private good cause. If you feel you could make a difference to someone you are working with or feel you personally

need help then contact Janice Murray ([janice.murray@ascoworld.com](mailto:janice.murray@ascoworld.com)). Rest assured that any approach will be treated with the utmost sensitivity and will be in total confidence.

Together we can make 2009 another great year for LIFESTYLE and support our colleagues as well.

**"Thanks to ASCO Lifestyle when our youngest, Alex, was ill and had to go to Edinburgh sick children's hospital for two and a half weeks, the support given meant we could focus all our attention on her. It meant a lot to us"**  
Andy Robb, ASCO Driver.



# Back for good

Back pain is a pain in the butt... sometimes literally! It is one of the most common complaints amongst office workers and is also increasing among young people who spend more and more time in front of a computer.

**However, back pain can be reduced, if not eliminated, by paying attention to the way you sit at your desk. We only have one spine, we really should look after it!**

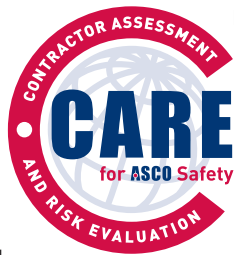
- Stop slouching! Sit well back in your seat with your keyboard straight in front of you and your monitor only an arm's length away. Keep your neck straight and your shoulders relaxed.
- Move your chair close to your desk instead of doing everything at a stretch.
- Your knees should be slightly lower than your hips to keep your spine beautifully balanced.
- Rest your feet on the floor, or a footrest if you are small, and don't cross those legs!
- Don't cradle the phone between your neck and shoulder, use a headset or a hands-free phone.
- Get up every 30 minutes – make a cup of tea, get some water, have a stretch.



## Safety through the supply chain

The nature of ASCO's business means that we employ a number of contractor companies to carry out supplementary services such as transport and container hire. As contractor personnel are often working on our sites alongside ASCO personnel, it is imperative that they embrace our positive safety culture and contribute to keeping ASCO operations safe.

To this end, we have introduced our CARE (Contractor Assessment and Risk Evaluation) initiative across all ASCO's UK locations. CARE considers every aspect of the supply chain which could pose a risk to health and safety i.e. equipment and materials used, the processes that our service providers work to and the people that they employ.



Paul Finnie, ASCO's Environmental and Quality Manager who is instrumental in the implementation of the initiative explained more; "Through AIMS (ASCO Integrated Management System), we already undertake service provider assessment, however the CARE process is more of a

collaborative one. We believe that working with our sub-contractors will be more effective than simply dictating the way we want things to be."

CARE has five key stages of assessment starting with an HSEQ checklist working through an external audit and then ongoing interaction and review of performance against key criteria.

The HSEQ has been sent out to 60 UK service providers and the first contractor audits are currently taking place.



## SOS abroad? You're covered.

Feeling safe at work is a pretty basic need, however many of us travel as part of our jobs and therefore expose ourselves to a certain degree of risk. It is part of the ASCO culture to risk assess every situation that we find ourselves in, however sometimes the unexpected does happen.

We can mitigate risk in business travel to ensure that we prepare for our journey both physically and also in terms of any legalities that may need to be taken care of. Should the unexpected happen then it is comforting to know that help is at hand which is why ASCO has implemented a Travellers Medical & Security Assistance Programme for all its staff worldwide when they undertake business travel.

The provider, International SOS, was selected because of its responsive and comprehensive service. If medical or health related problems arise while away from your home location, International SOS can help you resolve them. The company's pre-travel services are:

- Immunisation recommendations
- Travel medicine clinics
- Passports and Visas
- Local medical facilities
- Special precautions about your destination

Services provided when overseas on a 24 hour basis include:

- Medical advice via telephone
- Worldwide medical and dental referrals
- Medication replacement / prescription Transfer
- Medical evacuation

For details on how to access these services, please contact [karen.bell@ascoworld.com](mailto:karen.bell@ascoworld.com) or [sarah.moir@ascoworld.com](mailto:sarah.moir@ascoworld.com)



## Accolade from No.10 for No.1 in safety!

ASCO was quite rightly in celebratory mode recently after hearing that the business had been awarded an International Safety Award for its North Sea operations from leading health, safety and environmental training, advisory and audit body, the British Safety Council (BSC) following tough independent adjudication.

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown sent a message to all the companies honoured in the Awards stating; "In these difficult times, it is vital that health and safety should not be seen as a cost to cut but as a crucial part of a well-run business that delivers benefits to organisations, employees and the economy alike. I would like to congratulate the Council and all those organisations who have received an award for the high standards of health and safety they uphold."



Brian Nimick, BSC Chairman, present AJ Strachan & Les Clark of ASCO with the award

In order to win this prestigious award, organisations must demonstrate sound and effective health and safety policies, systems and arrangements and a commitment from the shop floor to the boardroom to a positive safety culture and the adoption of behaviours that have safe and healthy working practices at their heart. Training to provide workers with the necessary skills and competence to ensure risks to health and safety are properly controlled is vital too.