



Friday 11 May 2007  
SALA BARBARA  
5° Palazzo Uffici - Eni E&P division  
Via Emilia 1  
SAN DONATO MILANESE

11:00

## SAIPEM 10000 DEEPWATER SALVAGE OPERATIONS

*By Paul Potter – Moduspec Engineering Int.*

### ➤ ABSTRACT

This lecture provides a detailed account of the successful salvage operation aboard the Saipem 10000 through the months of September, October and November, 2001.

The target of this operation was the recovery of a Subsea Blowout Preventer Stack which was buried below the sedimentary mudline in 6673 feet of water depth. (2034 metres)

The salvage operation involved the Saipem 10000 for 56 days. The equipment and human resources used in the operation were predominantly belonging to the Saipem Group.

The loss of the Subsea system was the result of a hoist system failure and occurred at the completion of an exploratory well drilled by Total Fina Elf (TFE) offshore Equatorial Guinea. The hook weight at the time of the loss was 575 metric tonnes. The associated marine riser string was also lost to the sea.

Innovative techniques, many empirical by nature, were used during the salvage operation. The success of methods used was achieved thanks to repetitive trial and error. Persistence paid off and two separate world records were broken during the salvage operation.

One record was set for the water depth in which high torque hydraulic tooling was used to disconnect the joints of a marine drilling riser.

The other record, since then broken by 151 feet, was the water depth from which the Blowout Preventer Stack (BOP) was retrieved.

### ➤ BIOGRAPHY

*Paul Potter, now with Moduspec Engineering, has worked for Saipem SpA for the past 6 years and was involved in the build and commissioning of the Saipem 10000. Prior to this, he was similarly involved in the build and commissioning of the world's first dual-activity drillship: the Transocean Discoverer Enterprise. He has actively been involved in Subsea Engineering for the past 26 years and was on-tower on the S10K at the time of this loss. Subsequently he co-authored the OTC paper and presentation with Renzo Cesaroni.*

*He holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the UK Open University and a Masters Degree in Underwater Technology and Subsea Engineering and a Ph.D from Cranfield University, UK. He is a member of the Society of Petroleum Engineers and The Society of Underwater Technology.*