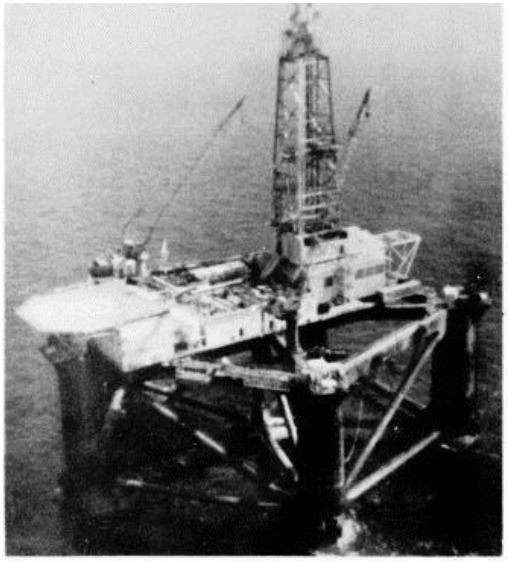
Source: Marconi Link February 1974



OIL FIELD LINKS

The present oil shortages have caused a great surge of interest in North Sea oil production. It is estimated that by the 1980s we shall be getting three-quarters of our oil needs from the North Sea with consequent benefits to our balance of payment.

At present, however, the main effort is still concentrated on exploration, though finds in the Forties Field, Brent, Argyll, Auk and Piper all hold growing hope for the future. Eskofisk in the Norwegian sector is already pumping oil into tankers, and eventually this field will be connected by pipe line to Teesside.

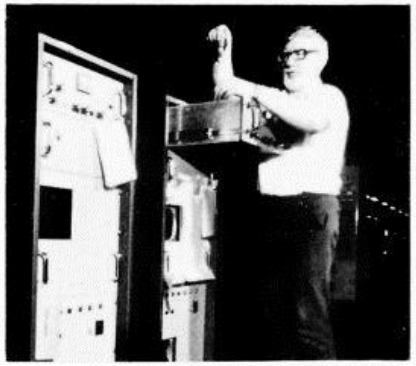
Marconi Communication Systems is making a major contribution to the success of these operations by providing the important communication element in this vital work, both for the drilling rigs that search the sea bed for oil and for the production platforms which are established when oil has been found. The former, being mobile, rely on h.f. for rig-to-shore communications, while, the latter, being fixed, can employ more sophisticated forms of communication to enable data and telemetry as well as speech to be passed back and forth between the platform and the shore.

Above: *The semi-submersible drilling rig West Venture in the North Sea. It is fitted with a Marconi communication package.*

Right: *Jim Maclean of Widford Works examines a line of H1060 transmitters prior to shipment.*

Fifty oil rigs

Marconi International Marine Company is the major supplier to drilling rigs, and they have received orders for complete communication packages for nearly fifty oil rigs. A new package based on the Marconi H1060 1kW transmitter and the Eddystone EC964/7 s.s.b/i.s.b receiver, the new Autospec II error correcting equipment and the voice frequency send/receive unit (H5000 Series).



The H1060 has proved immensely successful since its introduction, and apart from its use in oil drilling rigs, has been ordered in large quantities by Brazil for coast stations. It is being assembled at the Radio Manufacturing Unit at Widford under Manager Andrew Jackson and Product Supervisor George Greenhalgh.

To meet the urgent commitment of supplying oil rigs, Eddystone Radio is mounting a major programme for the production of the EC964/7, which is a high stability single frequency receiver designed for simple operation. The EC964/7 has also been ordered by the Post Office for fixed frequency working in the coast stations which maintain communications with the oil rigs. These stations also use the Eddystone EC958/1 receiver which is used for search and general purpose marine activities.

The necessity of maintaining high quality communication for oil rig operation is met by the inclusion of the Autospec error correcting equipment in the package. This compact, advanced equipment ensures error free teleprinter traffic vital to success in the difficult conditions of the North Sea. Autospec is being manufactured at Writtle where Ray Allen and his team are producing them in quantity and testing is carried out at Widford 2 under Product Leader Colin Broddley.

Tropo scatter

A really significant advance has been made in the provision of communication for production platforms. Marconi Communication Systems is the first company in the world to have received orders for tropospheric scatter systems for offshore communications in the North Sea. All oil discoveries so far have been beyond the range of conventional line-of-

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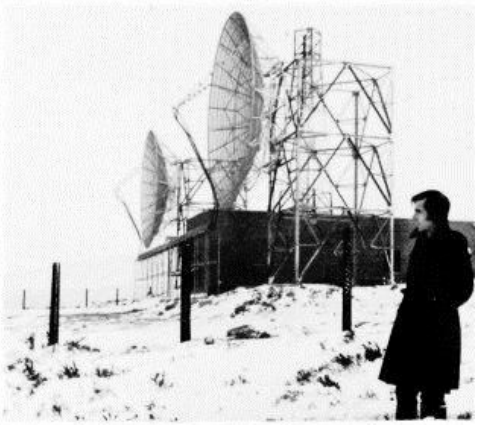
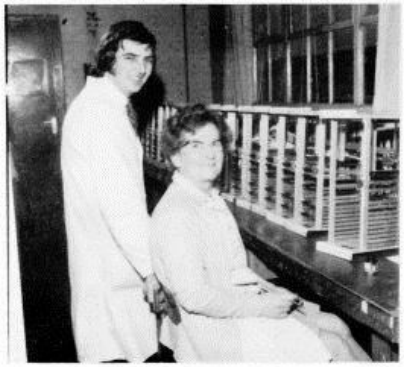
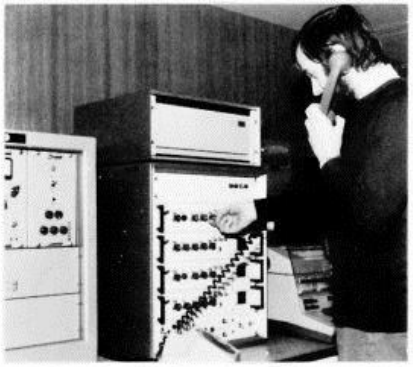


Above: *The complete shore terminal at Brummond Hill, near Aberdeen, of the link to the Forties Field. Peter Rackham of Publicity had an uncomfortable journey when he accompanied the photographer to this bleak site. This tropospheric scatter link carries all operating data and other information to and from the production rig 200 miles out in the North Sea.*

Below left: *Harry Ellis. Chargehand with Joan Smith who engraves the names boards on Autospecs at Writtle.*

Below: *Vic Egard of MIMCO checking the rack of Eddystone RC964/7 receivers on drilling rig Pentagone 82.*





Do-it-yourself degree

Two Hackbridge production engineers, Albert Blackwell and Chris Boyes, are each using their spare time to obtain a degree through The Open University.

It really is open, no qualifications are needed and places are awarded on a first come first served basis. There are 40,000 students in Britain, enjoying their work, and meeting other students with similar interests.

Credit courses

Albert Blackwell took the technology foundation course, plus second level maths, in his first year, just finished, and this constitutes one and a half credit courses. There are six full courses to complete to gain the necessary credits for the degree, but Albert has exemptions from two because of previous qualifications.

Chris Boyes undertook the science foundation course in his first year, has accumulated three and a half credits in three years, and is now in his fourth.

Quintin Gardner is a development engineer at Hackbridge and he also has been involved with the University. Last year he took a post experience course in electro-magnetics and electronics.

A free Guide for Applicants is obtainable from the Admissions Office of the University, PO Box 48, Milton Keynes, MK 6AA, but in any case let your Personnel or Training Officer know that you are interested as they will be pleased to help you.

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sight radio relay systems and tropo is the only satisfactory alternative. Two major orders have been received so far, one between the Forties Field and Aberdeen and one between Ekofisk and Teesside, both of which have been written up in 'Link' before.

Shore stations

Both these systems are at an advanced stage. The Aberdeen shore station on Brummond Hill is complete and the equipment for the production platforms in the Forties Field is being fitted in cabins to be installed on the platforms when they are towed to site this spring. The equipment for the Teesside station is ready for delivery and that for the production platform and the intervening pumping stations is due for installation during the summer to coincide with the completing of the pipeline.

Brian Skingley, Product Manager, Microwave Sales, said that there was considerable business potential in the area, which the company was extremely active in pursuing, and he had high hopes that much of this would come our way.

Left: *Autospec power supplies being assembled at Writtle; left to right Mary Collins, Margaret Underwood, Gerda Kastl, Barbara Tyler.*