

ANGUS COUNCIL

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

29 MAY 1997

SUBJECT: ATTENDANCE AT OFFSHORE TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE, HOUSTON,
TEXAS

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, TRANSPORT & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Abstract: This Report outlines the results of the Council's attendance at the Offshore Technology Conference in Houston, Texas 5-8 May 1997.

1 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of this Report.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Committee is referred to Article 4 of the minute of the Economic Development Committee meeting on 27 February 1997 which considered and agreed an outline Trade Promotion Schedule for 1997/98 which included approval that the Council be represented on the Dundee and Angus Oil Venture Group stand at the Offshore Technology Conference (OTC) in Houston, Texas.
- 2.2 The Council was represented at OTC by the Development Services Manager of the Planning, Transport & Economic Development Department: also exhibiting with the DAOVG were Angus-based companies; Tay Training Ltd, Pacson Ltd and NICC Ltd. A number of companies also used the stand as a base ie Merpro Group Ltd, LOC Business Services and Consafe Fabrications Ltd.

3 RESULTS OF ATTENDANCE

- 3.1 All of the Angus-based companies operating from the DAOVG stand reported a very successful event in terms of the number and calibre of enquiries received. Attendance at this event promotes the name, expertise and technical ability of companies to a very wide audience. The experience of companies working in the deep waters of the North Sea proved to be of particular relevance as production within the Gulf of Mexico is moving into deeper waters.
- 3.2 Both Pacson and NICC have the same agent working for them in the Gulf area and took the opportunity to review his progress. Both companies felt that OTC was a good shop window for their products. Tay Training Ltd took the opportunity of the event to announce a £1m joint research project between Advanced Drilling, a wholly owned subsidiary of the company and R F Regaland Research of Stavanger, Norway, to identify, research and test new technologies in hard rock drilling. Merpro Group were kept very busy with enquiries and were pleased at the interest shown in the new technology and process knowledge of the company, throughout the industry.

- 3.3 The Development Services Manager made contact with other companies which have a base in Angus and it was confirmed that there were good prospects for early expansion of the Angus facility of two of these companies. Contact was also re-established with the British Consul and Vice Consul in Houston, with senior staff of the OSO and Scottish Enterprise Oil and Gas division. A meeting was held with the new Locate In Scotland officer in Houston, Heather Jones, and with her assistant Valerie Mathieu where the benefits of Angus to inward investors was promoted.
- 3.4 No new inward investment interests were identified however one of the companies expressing interest last year was again represented at OTC and the opportunity was taken to remind them of the benefits of Angus. The Company concerned is still expanding and is investigating setting up a European Manufacturing plant. It already has an office in Scotland.
- 3.5 The Development Services Manager also visited two companies based in Houston, one of which already has a subsidiary operating in Dundee and the second of which is currently investigating a joint venture with an Angus Company, which holds the prospect for considerable expansion of that company's facility.
- 3.6 The opportunity was taken to discuss the format of the DAOVG meetings and the stand design with the companies attending, the Oil Development Manager and with Scottish Enterprise Tayside representative. It was agreed that there was scope for improvement in the service provided to group members and that this should be investigated and discussed at a special group meeting. There were also discussions with officers from Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Councils regarding the potential benefits of marketing the corridor between Dundee and Peterhead for Oil and Gas Technology.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The estimated costs associated with attendance at OTC were reported in R266/97 as £1,600. As with last year, a decision was taken to have a room and catering facilities within the Astrodome which adjoins the exhibition halls. The facility was used extensively during 3 days of the event. The estimated cost of Angus Council's share of this facility is £300. The commitment towards booking this facility was an additional cost which can be met from the Departmental Revenue budget for Marketing within 1997/98.

5 CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Law & Administration and the Director of Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The local companies attending OTC considered the exhibition to have been very successful and valued the assistance which the Development Services Manager was able to offer. The show is the premier Oil and Gas sector event in the world and promoting the profile of Angus, as a location with a wealth of technical expertise in this sector, reaches a wide and influential market.

NOTE

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

AA/DV/NP/MR

13 May 1997

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