

AUGUST 2008

VOLUNTEERING: AN AIPN TRADITION

What sets the AIPN apart from other excellent professional organizations is the number of its members who selflessly give of their time, enthusiasm and experience to help educate fellow members, thereby also benefiting the industry as a whole. This spirit of volunteerism has been the hallmark of the AIPN, since its inception in 1981. The organization has been so volunteer-driven that we did not have a full time administrative staff person to assist us until several years ago.

Following are some of the ways in which AIPN members volunteer to help improve the quality and types of AIPN products and services. There is always an open invitation to all members to get involved and you will find some current opportunities later in this letter.

Many thousands of hours are spent by the committees drafting AIPN Model Contracts, a process that can take as much as two to three years. The LNG Sales and Purchase Agreement committee, for example, consists of more than 100 participants and began work in late 2005. It has met in several locales around the world and is now working on its seventh draft of the agreement. The final version should be available in early 2009. In addition, drafting committees prepare Guidance Notes for the Model Contract to provide insight into the rationale and use of specific contract provisions and Education Modules, designed to introduce the Model Contract to people in Regional Chapters. Committee Co-chairs and primary drafters also present the latest drafts of their Model Contracts at the annual Model Contract Workshop each year while the contract is being developed.

Numerous AIPN members are involved in planning, implementing and speaking at our various courses and conferences. We have a committed volunteer faculty who teach at the annual "short course" consisting of one week of upstream and one week of mid-stream international energy law, contracts and negotiations. Another talented, volunteer faculty leads the semi-annual Negotiation Skills Workshop. Other members speak at the Dispute Resolution in the Oil and Gas Business conferences we have started holding with various international arbitration institutions. The next one will be held in Rio de Janeiro on October 20-21 in association with the International Centre for Dispute Resolution. We have also started holding one-day education courses in conjunction with our international conference. Several of our members will be speaking on "Joint Projects: Cross Border Pipelines and Unitization" on September 18, immediately following our annual international conference which will be held in Edinburgh from September 14-17. Last, but certainly not least, our members volunteer their time to plan and speak at meetings of our Regional Chapters.

Other members provide articles for our newsletter, The Advisor, and our official publication, the Journal of World Energy Law and Business. Others are seriously committed to our Student Outreach program, getting students interested in international petroleum negotiations as a career. Our Board of Directors, particularly officers and Regional Directors, spend countless volunteer hours, assuring that the organization offers timely and relevant services to our members worldwide.

The dedication of these many volunteers, who are too numerous to name in this letter, makes the AIPN a truly unique professional organization. My thanks go to them as well as to their companies and firms, who permit them to spend time on AIPN activities. Many companies also pay for their employees to travel internationally to the courses at which they make presentations.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

As the AIPN grows in the number of members and global reach and as we identify new services to provide our members, the need for additional volunteers also grows. Following are just a few of the ways you can become involved. If you have an interest in participating in any of them, please contact Valerie Van Lelyveld, our Executive Director, at valerie@aipn.org.

We have two new committees this year, the Commercial Forum and the NOC Committee. The Commercial Forum is charged with identifying the needs of commercial/negotiator members and determining how we can better serve them. Similarly, the NOC Committee is trying to determine how we can best serve NOC's and their personnel. Additional committee members are welcome.

We need help planning our 2009 international conference to be held in Bangkok. We also need co-chairs and planning committee members for our 2009 spring conference which will be held for the first time in New Orleans. Mark your calendars: it will be held on April 29-May 1, immediately preceding the Offshore Technology Conference to allow international travelers to attend both. We also need co-chairs and planning committee members for the 2010 international conference in Doha. We need another co-chair of the 2009 Model Contract Workshop, which will probably be held in Rio de Janeiro in June.

We need co-chairs and members of the following committees: Website, Advisor and Model Contract Review. The Website Committee is charged with determining how to improve our website. The Advisor Committee assists with making our newsletter a better publication, providing articles, etc. The Model Contract Review Committee will prioritize what new and revised Model Contracts should be drafted over the course of the next several years.

The Model Contract drafting committee for the revised Operating Agreement has just begun work and additional members are needed. The drafting committee revising the existing Service Agreement and a new International Drilling Contract commenced a year ago, but will be continuing its work for quite some time.

Our Vice President of External Affairs, the newest officer position, needs assistance in promoting the AIPN to other organizations and getting involved in certain of their programs.

Our Regional Directors are assisted by an Alternate Regional Director and an Executive Committee. You may want to assist with the Executive Committee for your Region. We still need an Alternate Regional Director for the U.S. Chapter. This person will assist the Regional Director in planning events and arranging speakers. A list of the leadership of each Regional Chapter can be found in the Non-Member section of our website.

We need to expand our Student Outreach program to include universities around the world and we need volunteers to introduce the AIPN to interested students, particularly outside of the U.S. and Canada.

As mentioned in prior President's letters, the AIPN is currently engaged in discussions with Gordon Barrows about the donation of his library, which will be a tremendous benefit to the members of the AIPN. In order to keep the library up-to-date, we will need people to contribute current laws and contracts from each country with petroleum operations or potential. Those who do so will receive other laws and contracts free of charge. I hope to tell you more about this in an upcoming letter.

Lastly, we are always looking for creative ideas and helpful suggestions. You will find that you get the very most of your AIPN membership when you get involved!

All the best,
Pat Allison