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North Sea platforms tied into Faroe telecommunications cable

The oil companies Mærsk and Amerada Hess have now joined and become part of the telecommunications networks of FøroyaTele. Cantat-3

Approximately a week ago the work associated with linking the South Arne platform into the telecommunication cable Cantat-3, owned by FøroyaTele was concluded. Through this latest step the last objective has been reached or achieved, which was to link the oil companies in the Danish part of the North Sea into the hi-speed FøroyaTele telecommunications cable. The work to link the Mærsk Oil platform, the Thyra West, was concluded in July and that communication is in operation. At FøroyaTele they are very pleased to have reached their objective stipulated in the contract with the two oil companies, Mærsk and Hess. This has been a very exciting and demanding task. That one of the Faroes largest companies has succeeded in gaining a foothold within the oil industry is regarded as a feat in its own right, not least when bearing in mind the fierce competition, which exists within this sector of industry. FøroyaTele decided some years ago to develop their telecommunications section as one of their core interest areas and it seems that their highly professional work has now come to fruition. Lifted a major task To have progressed to such a stage has of course demanded a huge preliminary preparation effort in order to have the necessary knowledge, skill and equipment. It begun west of Shetland when FøroyaTele, after extensive negotiations, was awarded a contract with the oil giant BP and later also with Total. This success prompted the move further into the North Sea and these two latest contracts with these two large oil companies - -The inclusion of oil companies into our telecommunications networks has been a very comprehensive and demanding task for our staff. As our part has now been completed, we can confirm that our staff have managed to lift a major task,

which has been very exciting, demanding and challenging, said Mr Páll Vesturbú, the CEO for FT Net. He added that it had been a very long and winding road to reach the stage where they are now at. Began in 2010 In July of 2012 the owners of the original Cantat-3 cable announced they were prepared to abandon the cable by the end of 2010. The reason for this was that the cable dating from 1992, which connected Canada, Iceland, Faroes, England, Denmark and Germany, no longer satisfied the requirements. This among other aspects due to the emergence of the internet, which raised the requirement for hi-speed telecommunications between countries. In the small Faroe market however, the Cantat-3 cable was still an excellent backup option system and therefore a proposed takeover bid for the cable was lodged in April of 2011. After extensive and very complex negotiations an agreement was reached with the Indian owner, Tata Communication in January of 2012. The Shefa cable would take over telecommunications between Iceland, Faroes, Denmark and Germany. Simultaneously as negotiations were on-going with Tata Communication, FaroeTele was negotiating with Mærsk and Amerada Hess and an agreement was reached in February and March respectively with Hess and Mærsk to supply their telecommunication requirements to their platforms. From April through to July of 2012, work has been on-going to relay and improve communications to England and on to the oil platforms. The crews on board the Mærsk platforms have had the opportunity to work and use the new telecommunications for app. six months now and the reception has been exceptional. The future This adventure will probably not end here, as both the Shefa and Cantat-3 telecommunication cables run through areas where many other platforms are located, for example the Norwegian sector of the North Sea. In the area west of Shetland large-scale developments are underway, which no doubt would benefit from the Shefa cable possibilities. Oljan.fo understands that FøroyaTele is monitoring existing and future developments west of Shetland very closely and also the largely untapped market, which is the North Sea area in general.