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our people creates
endless possibilities



Case study:

Sand Removal from Online Production Vessels

A UK Southern North Sea platform was experiencing an accumulation of sand in process equipment which was resulting in a decrease in hydrocarbon production.

A solution was required to remove the sand in the safest, most cost effective manner to restore production to the required output.

The challenge

The asset platform had been accumulating large volumes of sand within its liquid handling vessels and water storage tanks as a by-product of hydrocarbon production. As a consequence, production rates were adversely affected and the risk of damage to the plant from the sand was increased.

Using traditional cleaning methods, these vessels are cleaned during bi-annular pit stops, requiring a production outage lasting up to 10 days, exposing personnel to the risks associated with confined space entry during the decontamination process.

Client	Confidential UK Client
Project	Online sand removal
Location	Confidential (UK)
Value	Undisclosed

The solution

Double block and bleed valves were installed on the liquid handling vessels, water storage tank and upstream slug catchers, enabling Altrad to deploy the online 'syphonvac' system. Subsequently, the Altrad offshore team were able to remove four tonnes of sand while ensuring the plant remained online and fully functional, maximising production and minimising downtime. In total, an estimated 10 days of potential lost production was mitigated.

The benefits

- No loss of production
- Annual pitstops now reduced to every two years
- Reduced workload on asset operations team
- Approximately 10 days of plant shutdown mitigated
- Reduced critical path shutdown cleaning operation
- Reduced sand carry over into adjacent process systems
- No confined space entry requirements
- Compact equipment footprint – modular system

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