

In the limelight

One of the issues for the NPD which has attracted the most attention in 2009 was the gathering of seismic data off Lofoten and Vesterålen in northern Norway.

After three summers, we have completed the job given us by the Storting (parliament) to survey the Nordland VII and Troms II areas for possible petroleum assets. We are due to present an estimate of these resources next spring for inclusion in the revised integrated management plan for the Barents Sea and the waters off Lofoten.

We also commissioned the Norwegian Institute of Marine Research to carry out an extensive research project while seismic surveying was under way this summer. Its purpose was to study how far fish are startled by the shooting. This issue contains a report from the fieldwork, but no results have emerged yet.

Another prominent issue this summer was our failure to find a worthy recipient for our improved oil recovery (IOR) prize in 2008. We regard IOR efforts on producing fields as one of the petroleum industry's most important jobs. Norwegian oil output is in decline. Many discoveries have been made, but they are small. And no new areas have been opened for exploration since 1994.

Our job at the NPD is to ensure that the industry does what it can to recover everything worth producing. We are meant to be both a driving force and a source of inspiration.

The question of carbon capture and storage (CCS) is a current international issue. One much-discussed solution for such containment is injection into the Utsira formation,

a large sandstone aquifer found under much of the North Sea.

Many people were accordingly concerned last year when produced water injected into a structure near the Tordis field, thought to be the Utsira, was found to be seeping out.

After studying the sub-surface in this area, one of our experienced geologists has reached a clear conclusion – the leak did not come from the Utsira. More precisely, the produced water was never injected into this formation, but into younger and much less extensive sediments. Our specialists present these findings both in this issue and on our website.

Norway can this year celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Ekofisk discovery and the start of what has been called the Norwegian oil adventure. We have taken advantage of this occasion to present one of the most significant personages in Norway's petroleum sector.

Farouk Al-Kasim was involved right from the start, before the NPD was established, and had a long career as our resource management director. In that role, he laid the basis for our most prominent characteristic – good management of the petroleum assets on the NCS. ❄



Bente Nyland

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director general