

February 1992

**VISIT TO THE KINGDOM OF TONGA
MINISTRY OF LANDS, SURVEY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
10-13 February 1992**

by

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OBJECTIVES

The visit was made by the Petroleum Co-ordinator at the request of the Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources. The aims of the visit were to discuss current work (including promotion of Tonga's hydrocarbon potential and proposals for stratigraphic drilling), and needs for future work.

ITINERARY

11 February, 09.00 hrs	Meeting with S. Tongilava, Secretary of Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources, and S. Helu, Chief Geologist, Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources. Discussed outline of promotion drive, Petroleum Data Package, and paper at American Association of Petroleum Geologists (MPG) Conference.
11 February, 10.00 hrs	Meeting with S. Helu, Chief Geologist. Discussed Seismic Data Base, stratigraphic drilling, recent developments with exploration licenses and future work.
12 February	Meeting with S. Helu. Chief Geologist. Discussed details of Petroleum Data Package and promotion issues. Visited oil seep near Nuku'alofa and four quarries on T ongatapu.

ITEMS DISCUSSED

1. Promotion Drive (Task 92.TG.5a)

It was agreed that promotional brochures and catalogues of available data should be sent to major oil companies in the second half of 1992. Also that petroleum exploration rights in Tonga would be promoted in monthly bulletins published by Petroconsultants SA of Geneva. SOPAC will co-ordinate this.

A promotional tour by Tongan representatives and SOPAC staff was suggested as a follow-up. This would target oil companies who have requested data following the Promotion Drive. Similar promotional tours of Tongan representatives to the USA were funded by the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC) in 1985 and 1988.

The Tongan government has a Petroleum Team responsible for developing contacts and

[3]

negotiating with oil companies. The team comprises the Minister of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources, the Minister of Justice, the Government Deputy Secretary and the Government Chief Geologist.

2. Petroleum Data Package (Task 92. TG.5d)

It was agreed that Tonga would initially send a list of relevant available data to SOPAC (by end March). SOPAC will then make a selection of material suitable for the Data Package which Tonga will then supply.

It was agreed that the Bureau of Mineral Resources (BMR) would keep Tonga and SOPAC informed of orders made by oil companies.

Tonga no longer has copies of Final Well Reports for two exploration wells (Kumifonua-1 and -2). SOPAC agreed to request new copies of these from the operator Shell Internationale Petroleum Mij. on behalf of the Ministry.

3. Paper at AAPG Conference (Task 92. TG.5a)

It was agreed that S. Helu should attend as Tonga representative. S. Helu agreed to provide a complete copy of the report by Pfleuger and Havard (1988) and information on Tonga's oil exploration history. These will be used as a basis for the presentation.

Trips were made to oil seeps near Nuku'alofa and to four limestone quarries on Tongatapu to take photographs for the presentation.

Tonga is currently receiving technical and financial assistance from CFTC experts working for the Seychelles National Oil Company (SNOC) to produce a promotional video of hydrocarbon potential in Tonga. This is due to be shot in March-April 1992 and could be shown at the MPG Conference.

4. Proposal for Stratigraphic Drilling (Task 92. TG.5c)

In view of the high costs of drilling onshore stratigraphic wells relative to the very high risk that such wells would not encounter source rocks and reservoirs, it was agreed that this proposal would be dropped.

5. MCS Data Base (Task. 92. TG.5b)

S. Helu was informed that plotting of seismic line location maps at any desired scale could be set

[4]

at SOPAC before end April. Maps could then be ordered by the Ministry by fax as required.

6. Recent Development with Bird Oil License

S. Helu stated that Bird Oil, having failed as yet to attract partners with sufficient capital to drill an exploration well, Bird Oil have requested that the current license be extended.

7. Future Work

At present oil prices are high, thus emphasis should be placed on promotion to oil companies. It was agreed that this should include presentations at international conferences, publications in oil industry journals, direct mailing of promotional material to major oil companies and promotional tours to oil companies.

During possible future lower oil prices, SOPAC work should switch to technical evaluations. It was agreed that this should include a review of seismic and newly processed magnetic data (Falconer & Handley 1991) in the northern Tonga Ridge area, and reprocessing of seismic lines in other key areas.

OUTCOME OF EARLIER SOPAC WORK

Award of new Exploration License

The last major review of Tonga hydrocarbon potential was made by SOPAC in 1988 (Pfleuger & Havard 1989). This work formed the basis of a glossy promotional brochure (Gatliff 1990) which was widely distributed to oil companies. It is largely as a result of this work that hydrocarbon exploration rights have just been awarded to a Japanese company in December 1992. This license was linked to an award for onshore mining rights.

REFERENCES

Falconer, R.K.H. & Handley, L.J. 1991. Nomuka and Ha'apai Group, Kingdom of Tonga, SOPAC 1989 marine magnetics survey, presentation and interpretation of results. GeoResearch Associates Report 91:112. 21 pages.

Gatliff, R.W. 1990. The Petroleum prospects of the Kingdom of Tonga. Frank Daniels Pty Ltd, Perth. 20 pages.

Pfleuger, J. & Havard, K. 1989. Hydrocarbon prospectivity of the Kingdom of Tonga. CCOP /SOPAC Confidential Report C0/1989/04/TG. 44 pages.