

Energy service companies look to east Africa for trade

Mission: Mozambique target when north-east businesses join delegation

BY KEITH FINDLAY

Energy service companies either headquartered in the north-east or with operations in the area are going on a mission to Africa to drum up more business.

They will be part of the first Scottish Development International (SDI) trade visit to east Africa next month.

A total of 15 businesses are making the trip, with Mozambique being targeted in particular as a potential base for future developments.

Scottish firms are ideally placed to take advantage of

“We focus on markets where our skills play to a specific need”

new opportunities opening up in east Africa, thanks to decades of experience in harsh North Sea offshore environments.

A recent survey of Scotland's energy supply chain by SDI, Scottish Enterprise's international development arm, found Africa was the top region for direct oil and gas sales and second only to North America for total sales.

SDI chief executive Anne MacColl, who is heading the February 5-15 trade mission, said: “We are always seeking new opportunities for our companies at a global level.

“We have a particular focus on markets where Scot-



RETURN VISIT: The trade mission will come after Armando Emilio Guebuza, president of Mozambique, attended a conference in Aberdeen

land's skills and expertise play to a specific need.

“With east Africa fast becoming established as a hub of deep-water activity, thanks to exploration and production drilling activities in the Gulf of Guinea and offshore in Mozambique and Tanzania, we know that the potential for Scottish oil and gas companies in significant.”

She added: “This trade

mission will help companies to explore how they can use the experience they've built up in the challenging environment of the North Sea, to exploit these growing opportunities and develop their business internationally.”

Companies taking part in the visit include West-hill-based remote communication specialist RigNet, whose Sub-Saharan account manager, Gordon

Murray, said east Africa had the potential to be a lucrative market.

He added: “RigNet currently has over 40 sites in west Africa and we are excited about the opportunity, with the support of SDI, to extend the good work into the east of the continent.”

Jennifer Broom, sales and marketing co-ordinator at Oldmeldrum-based ScanTech Offshore, said:

“We already work in Tanzania on projects for BG Group and StatOil and in Kenya with Expro, but Mozambique is new territory.

“We're keen to explore the growing market there and see what opportunities there are for us.”

Brian Duthie, business development manager for the Atlantic region at DOF Subsea, said: “The success of tomorrow de-

pends on dedication today, so we see our visit to east Africa as part of this commitment to identifying new markets.”

Aberdeen recently hosted a high-level government delegation from Mozambique, including President Armando Emilio Guebuza, eager to find out how Scotland could help the country develop its emerging offshore gas industry.