

Updated data could lead to Fiji's first oil well

Written by Administrator

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Akura Ltd. could begin drilling for gas in Fiji as early as next year, subject to the necessary approvals, according to its Managing Director, Bill Brook.

Mr. Brook made the announcement at the SOPAC/STAR meeting now being held in Nadi. SOPAC provides assistance to 19 island countries in the Pacific region through applied geoscience and technology.

Akura is a largely Fiji-owned company that has been given an exclusive 5 year exploration licence to search for oil over a 17,600 square kilometre area from August last year.

Mr Brook said that Akura has already identified 17 seismic sites (leads), that warrant further review work with one prospect ready for drill testing.

This site indicates the presence of gas and is known as a "bright spot". It is located some 20km to the east of Suva and was first identified by Dr. Mac Beggs, previously consulting to Akura and now exploration manager for New Zealand Oil & Gas.

The structure has the potential to contain a minimum of 12.5 billion cubic feet of natural gas or enough to replace up to 50% of the imported diesel now used for electricity generation in Viti Levu for a decade. However, Mr. Brook said, the only way to confirm this is to drill the prospect.

Mr. Brook said that the identified sites were predicated on the data acquired from the Fiji Petroleum Data Package held in Canberra, which contains data collected by those who previously searched for oil in Fiji from 1969 to 1982.

The seismic data has been studied by consultant petroleum geologist, Mr. Alan Hart, a 30-year veteran of petroleum exploration having worked with Hunt Oil Company, Arco International Oil and Gas Company as well as fourteen years in his own petroleum consulting business.

"There have been impressive advances in exploration technology since international companies

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last searched for oil in Fiji, we have completed reprocessing the old seismic material which covers the sites.

“Mr. Hart is about to commence a detailed review of this material using a dedicated computer program and work station”, explained Mr. Brook. “This will be completed by mid November and we will then have a much clearer picture of the potential of these leads.”

“So although the data that was previously collected was substantive at that time, we have found additional evidence through our own research that has given us the strong indications that oil and gas deposits do exist in Fiji” said Mr. Brook.

The main explorers in the past were Amoco, Chevron, Mobil, Mapco and Pacific Energy and Minerals.

Mr. Brook, who has been a geologist in Fiji for 35 years (he is credited with finding gold at Tuvatu), has assembled a small consultative team with extensive oil exploration experience including Mr. Hart and Dr. Roman Leslie, a practicing well site geologist, who completed his doctoral thesis on the volcanic rocks of Fiji.



Bill Brook (left) and Alan Hart at the Tanoa Hotel where the SOPAC/STAR meeting is taking place.