



# Blind Faith Is Our Deepest Offshore Platform

## Gordon Rorrison, Engineering Manager, Blind Faith Project

To meet the future energy demands it's very important that we have access to the deeper-water areas of the Gulf of Mexico, such as Blind Faith. Chevron is progressing the capabilities and technologies to develop such fields. Blind Faith is Chevron's deepest water development anywhere in the world, and from a personal point of view, it was a very challenging project and also very, very rewarding.

Blind Faith is located 160 miles southeast of New Orleans in the Gulf of Mexico. We're producing oil from four wells in 7,000 feet of water, and that production is going back to a platform that is moored in 6,500 feet of water. The completed Blind Faith platform weighs over 40,000 tons, and including what's below the waterline, it's equivalent in height to a 29-story building.

It took over three years to construct the facilities for Blind Faith. The floating hull for the platform was built in Verdal, Norway, and it took about 17 months to construct. The hull was transported across the Atlantic from Norway to the Gulf of Mexico, a journey that took 24 days. While we were building the hull, we were also building the topsides in Houma, Louisiana. The topsides include the production equipment for the oil and gas, along with the living quarters for the crew. We moved the hull and the topsides to Ingleside, Texas, where we connected the two units. That involved a lift of over 7,000 tons to get the topsides onto the hull. The tow-out and installation took two years to plan. It was very complex; we had to wait for just the right weather to be sure that when we left Texas, we could go all the way out to the Blind Faith location and get it safely moored up.

At the same time as we were building the platform, we were also constructing the subsea facilities. That included four production wells and two flow lines that routed the oil and gas from the wells back to the platform. When we do construction in these deepwater depths, obviously we can't send people down there, so we rely on robots — remotely operated vehicles — and they're basically our eyes and hands down there to do the construction.

Large projects like Blind Faith take a lot of financial investment, but they also take a lot of investment in people. You have to build an organization for a project to make sure you get the right people in the right roles. Because of the reservoir pressure and temperature and the water depth at Blind Faith, we had to take existing technologies and extend them beyond where they've been used before. In doing that, we've not only developed the technologies, but we've also developed the people who can deploy these technologies, and that's very important for future Chevron projects in deep water around the world.