

## AKE opens Aberdeen satellite

**SECURITY** specialist AKE has set up a satellite in Aberdeen as a response to growing oil industry demand for its services.

Placing the office in the firm's global-leading energy security sector, Claire Fleming, who has returned to her home city to take on the challenge.

Fleming told Energy that the latest spate of incidents in Nigeria almost justified the decision, given the growing level of business between companies based in Aberdeen and West Africa. Indeed, the region has long formed a key focus for UK West Africa Action Group, which is based out of Aberdeen & Orkney Chamber of Commerce.

"The threats and there are changing and becoming more insidious," said Fleming.

"This places a premium on good intelligence and appropriate training of personnel - both are the prime asset of companies and they have to be protected, even if threats are sometimes more perceived than real."

Fleming worked against corporate complacency here in the UK, pointing out that, recently in the US, a family successfully sued its employer for failing to exercise sufficient due care to protect a member of that family while working overseas.

AKE is headquartered in Aberdeen, with offices in London (11th Floor Building), Atlanta, Singapore and Sydney.

# Violent attacks in Niger Delta



Claire Fleming

by Claire Fleming

**VIOLENT** attacks directed against oil assets and personnel in Nigeria continue to make international headlines.

Since the beginning of 2006, attacks on oil facilities, as well as abductions of international personnel operating in the Niger Delta, have increased with the emergence of a new, more sophisticated militia group, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND).

While the group's strategy aims at the nationalisation of oil results in the underdeveloped oil-producing region, its tactical goal is, paradoxically, to achieve this through disruptive attacks on critical infrastructure.

MEND and groups associated with it appear to be the key players in the troubled delta and are believed to have a number of involvement in more attacks, despite departing or withdrawing in most "party" attacks that have occurred in recent months.

The group enjoys widespread support from the locally predominant law tribe and is driven by the tribe's growing disillusion, particularly in relation to the energy industry that drains its territory.

Despite the increased level of militia activity, which is likely to see further in the run-up to the 2007 election, oil companies are for more likely



to be a victim of a criminal act. In that sense, the latest spate of increasingly frequent kidnappings of expatriate staff is viewed only as the high number of break-ins.

Kidnappings have long been an established way for small local criminal groups, as well as militias, to top up their income and to finance their illicit activities, even more so ahead of a nationwide election since that often requires the acquisition of more assets to secure a constituency or to protect a home and a family.

This has led to the formation of established channels for ransom payments which, due to the month's pressure, have, in turn, prevented an increase of incidents in the last few months.

Lighter air therefore being identified according to their current procedures and their current policy towards ransom payments.

These signs are then observed and an opportunity for abduction arises. The majority of the abductions are thus financially motivated or arise out of the collapse of com-

munity relations. Only a few kidnappings have obvious, political motives and, so far, no hostages have been killed in 2006.

This persistent insecurity was reflected in the recent three-day strike - instigated by the National Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG) and Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGASGAN) - against the increase in the number of abductions of workers and the general deterioration of working conditions due to the lack of security in the area.

With measures being all over Nigeria ahead of the 2007 parliamentary will inevitably increase further and expatriate workers are likely to remain the victim of attention by criminal and smaller militant groups with less political than primary intentions.

● Claire Fleming is senior intelligence analyst at security specialist AKE Limited. She is now based in Aberdeen.

## Once MET™ never forgotten

Our unique Memory Enhanced Training™ has a proven track record in retraining and ongoing development of training and health and safety teams, conferences and exhibitions.

We blend logic and humour with realistic scenarios and people skills to produce new life into old topics of communications.



17th Dimension congratulates itself on the 25th anniversary of the Green Oilfield.

We are proud to have performed that in developing their safety culture.

Intrigued?

Call today for further details on 01224 706705

[www.fifthdimension.biz](http://www.fifthdimension.biz)

## Next issue of Energy is out on Monday, 4 December...

To advertise in Energy contact +44 (0) 1224 690224



Log on to [www.energy-gb.com](http://www.energy-gb.com)

- Monthly Energy Security Briefings
  - Maritime Security Training
  - Medical and Security Audits
  - Hoistle Regions Training
  - Medical Training
  - Insurance
- INTEGRATED RISK SOLUTIONS FOR THE ENERGY INDUSTRY**  
Tel: +44 (0) 1224 355070 - Email: [services.aberdeen@akegroup.com](mailto:services.aberdeen@akegroup.com) - Website: [www.akegroup.com](http://www.akegroup.com)  
Energy Security Briefings: [www.gasandoil.com/energysecurity/](http://www.gasandoil.com/energysecurity/)

