



STEVE DEVEREUX

Nationality: British

Languages: English, French (intermediate), Dutch (conversational)

Steve Devereux is an independent arbitrator, accredited mediator and chartered engineer, with over 46 years of industry experience in engineering, oil, gas & drilling and aviation and aerospace.

Steve is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators and has issued over 70 awards as a sole arbitrator including international and domestic arbitrations. All of his awards were issued within 28 days of final submissions.

Prior to joining Arbitra, Steve dealt with multiple disputes involving oilfield companies which often involved complex technical and human factor issues. He is also a qualified Aeronautical Engineer and has worked in over 40 countries for oil, gas, and geothermal companies managing complex exploration drilling projects. He has published two books on Drilling.

As an arbitrator and dispute board member, his approach is modern, robust and dynamic. As with his Drilling work his primary objectives are to deliver fair awards quickly and with costs kept as low as practicable for the parties. He is experienced in leading large multi-national teams of people drilling high-budget (over \$100m) complex wells in remote locations. As a Chartered Engineer and technical expert, he is used to dealing with complex technical issues. Steve will limit the number of concurrent appointments he accepts to ensure that each appointment will receive the attention required to deliver fast, fair and cost-effective awards.

Steve is vetted and accredited as an expert witness by the Academy of Experts.

Sector Expertise

- Dispute Adjudication Boards
- Engineering
- Energy, Drilling and Oil & Gas
- Aviation & Aerospace

Arbitra London

Juxon House
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1100 15th Street NW
Suite 420
Washington DC, 20005

Arbitra Abu Dhabi

ADGM Arbitration Centre
Level 20, Al Maqam Tower
ADGM Square, Al Maryah Island
PO Box 111999, Abu Dhabi, UAE

Engineering

Designing oil and gas wells and investigating failures requires engineering expertise, identifying and following the requisite technical standards and regulatory requirements. It demands detailed understanding of the characteristics of materials in components subjected to high stresses (uniaxial, triaxial, cyclic, bending, shear); varying temperatures, high internal and external pressures, corrosion, erosion, wear, hydrogen embrittlement and the chemistry of fluids and gases to which the components are exposed.

Steve has designed and delivered courses in casing design, advanced well control and other aspects of designing and drilling wells. He has supervised and approved the work of teams of drilling engineers working on projects under his responsibility and leadership.

Energy, Drilling and Oil & Gas

Starting as a Trainee Driller with Shell in 1979, Steve has worked in every Drilling position on the rig and in the office, up to Operations Manager. He resigned from British Gas in 1988 after completing drilling on the Rough Gas Storage project offshore Yorkshire. He then worked as a consultant in drilling projects and training assignments for many operators in many countries for the next 33 years. In 2021 he joined Arbitra to continue to develop his practice as arbitrator in drilling matters, bringing an expert’s perspective.

Aviation & Aerospace

Steve served a 4-year technical apprenticeship with British Aerospace in Brough, Yorkshire. After qualifying as an Aeronautical Engineer, he worked in Mechanical Testing which mostly involved full-scale fatigue testing of military aircraft airframes, investigations of mechanical failures leading to crashes and the effects of bullet damage to airframe components.

Prior to starting the apprenticeship, Steve was a Trainee Draughtsman for a small engineering company designing and building structures and components using Glass Reinforced Plastic including scrubbers, yacht hulls, flues, tanks and cladding.

Steve qualified as a pilot in 1986 and subsequently gained Night, Multi-Engine Pilot, Instrument and Aerobatic ratings.

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Dispute Adjudication Boards (DAB's)

Steve is a Chartered Engineer with nearly 50 years of international aerospace and oil industry experience, comprehensive legal training through the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CI Arb), and a track record of over 80 arbitral appointments. He is an accredited Mediator, trained to assist parties to resolve their disputes without resorting to arbitration or litigation. Throughout his career, Steve has also analysed many unplanned events and incidents both for internal company purposes and dispute resolution to determine root causes. This mix of skills and experience enables him to excel in boards specifically tailored to engineering and construction endeavours, and beyond the oilfield sector. With a balanced profile encompassing engineering, legal, and dispute resolution expertise, Steve is adept at navigating the intricate intersection between these domains. He can help parties reduce the time, cost, and disruption caused by potential disputes.

Experience

Experience As Sole Arbitrator

- Appointed in several arbitrations under the Arbitration Act 1996 (UK).
- International arbitration appointment between UK and Hong Kong-based parties, ad-hoc rules.

Other Arbitration Experience

Early termination of rig contract

- Expert Witness. Analysed reports, assisted Counsel in drafting the Statement of Defense on technical issues. Engaged to write Expert Report. High value UNCITRAL rules arbitration.

Liner, packer, cementing, testing, well control and HSE issues

- Expert Witness. Forensic analysis of a series of events to understand the true nature and causes of a set of problems. Advised Counsel on the Statement of Defence. High value ICC arbitration.

Subsea BOP issue

- Expert Witness. Appointed by the Tribunal to provide an expert report on a dispute between an oil exploration and production company and a drilling contractor. The subsea BOP could not be disconnected and was left connected to the subsea wellhead on the seabed for over a year.

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Incident investigation – near fatality

- Led the investigation and issued a report on a near fatal incident where part of the travelling block failed and a large steel plate fell to the rig floor, missing one person by less than 50cm.

Sub Surface Safety Valve Mandrel Welds

- Expert Opinion. Investigated and provided expert technical opinion regarding the failure of welds on sub surface safety valve mandrels. The company lawyers had advised that there were no grounds to bring an arbitration. Steve was able to show that there were breaches of contract which led to settlement negotiations.

Incident investigation – well testing incident

- Led the investigation and issued a report on an incident during a well test which came within 50 seconds of destroying a \$100m exploration well which would likely have led to loss of life, damage to offshore structures and pollution. A combination of failures in equipment, planning, supervision and failure to follow Management of Change procedures.

New Build Jack Up Rig

- Expert Opinion. Appointed by counsel for the claimant to provide expert technical opinion on test loading of spud cans on a new build jack up rig.

Subsea oil well accidental disconnection

- Expert Opinion. Appointed by counsel for the claimant to provide expert technical opinion on the merits of claim and defence for an issue with a rig causing an accidental disconnection from a subsea oil well.

Oil Well Control Issues

- Expert Witness. Appointed by counsel for the respondent to provide an expert report for an arbitration on a well control issue where procedures were not followed correctly.
- Led the investigation and issued a report on an incident during a well test. This came within 50 seconds of destroying a \$100m exploration well which would likely have led to loss of life, damage to offshore structures and pollution.

Academic & Professional Experience

Career History

- Qualified Aeronautical Engineer - 1978
- Joined Shell Internationale as a Trainee Driller in Holland 1979
- Worked as a Drilling Consultant from 1988 to 2020

Education

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- Hull College of Higher Education (September 1974 – June 1978) Queens Gardens, Hull.
- ONC and HNC Mechanical Engineering.

Professional Associations & Recognitions

- Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators
- Member of the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining
- Honorary Secretary, Oil & Gas Arbitration Club in London.

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Publications, Articles & Thought Leadership

Steve is the author of two Drilling books published by Pennwell;

- "Practical Well Planning and Drilling Manual".
- "Drilling Technology in Nontechnical Language" (now in its 2nd edition)

He has also written articles for Petroleum Africa magazine including;

- "While Drilling Technologies"
- "Old Hands New Technology"
- "Drilling Software"

Article published on the CI Arb ["Does a full house tribunal trump three of a kind for cost effective arbitrations?"](#)

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