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Wellhead Annulus Inspection – Case Study

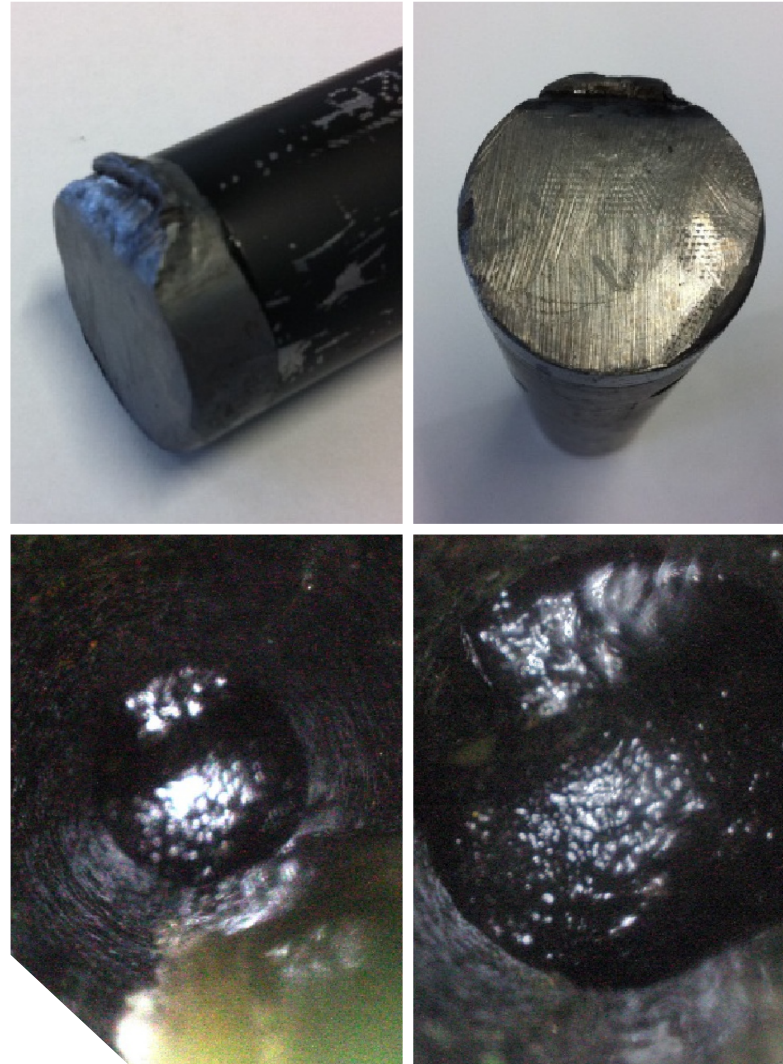
An operator in the Norwegian North Sea was concerned about the level of erosion in a platform wellhead annulus that was used for cuttings reinjection. The operator had opted for a Lead Impression Block (LIB) run but also decided to mobilise an EV Engineer and Inspection Camera to carry out an inspection following the LIB. The outcomes are detailed below:

Cuttings re injection is a common process on platform wells but has the potential side effect of erosion of the internals of the annulus valves, the entry in to the annulus itself, and in this instance threads on the internal surface of the bore of the wellhead used for placing valve change out plugs.

A lead impression block was run in through the annulus wing valves to determine the condition of the annulus entry port in the wellhead. Two runs were carried out; the first did not seem to reach the annulus because the LIB was retrieved unmarked. On the second run, the LIB was removed with scarring to the topside (see opposite) from impact with a lip or restriction.

The LIB run was followed by 2 camera runs. Following review of the footage varying degrees of wellbore clean up were carried out (flushing, soaking with diesel) to provide the best indication of the condition of the inside of the annulus, the annulus valves and the internal threads in the wellhead. For the final runs, Nitrogen was used to provide a buffer to keep the wellhead fluids in check. The results showed clear footage of the condition of the annulus port, the expected lip on the top side and the absence of threads on the inside of the wellhead body.

When compared against each other it is clear the detail provided by the LIB was far exceeded by the footage recorded using EV's SL30M. The SL30M has been used for similar inspections in both gas and fluid filled and purged annuli with successful outcomes. Providing clear images, removing guess work and making sure the operator gets the picture!



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