

AFRICA OIL+GAS REPORT · OFFSHORE

PETROCI Staffs Up to Directly Operate Newly Acquired Ivorian Offshore Asset

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PETROCI Holding, Côte d'Ivoire's national oil company, is recruiting 10 technical personnel to support the direct operation of a newly acquired offshore asset in the Ivorian sedimentary basin. The move marks a significant step toward the NOC taking on operatorship responsibilities rather than functioning solely as a concession partner or equity holder — a strategic shift that signals growing state ambition in the country's upstream sector.

The recruitment drive is directly tied to the takeover of the offshore asset, suggesting PETROCI is building internal technical capacity to manage day-to-day operations independently. While the article does not specify the asset's name, block classification, or water depth, the offshore location places it within Côte d'Ivoire's Atlantic-facing sedimentary basin, which has historically attracted international exploration and production interest.

For Norwegian oil and gas service companies, PETROCI's transition to direct operatorship is a commercially relevant development. NOCs that assume operational control of assets — particularly offshore — typically require a rapid build-out of technical support, vendor frameworks, and service contracts. An operator that is simultaneously hiring staff and managing a live asset is an operator under execution pressure, which tends to create near-term procurement opportunities across well services, maintenance, production operations, and HSE compliance support.

Côte d'Ivoire has maintained a stable investment climate relative to many of its West African peers, and PETROCI has historically partnered with international majors and independents in various offshore blocks. A move toward direct operatorship, even on a single asset, reflects a broader trend across Sub-Saharan Africa where NOCs are

seeking to capture more value from domestic production rather than ceding operational control to foreign partners. Norwegian companies with established NOC-engagement models — whether through technology transfer, embedded technical services, or joint-venture structures — are well positioned to engage at this stage.

The 10-vacancy figure is modest, but it underscores that PETROCI is not yet fully self-sufficient in offshore operations and will likely lean on external service providers and technical advisors to fill capability gaps. Companies able to offer operational support services, training programs, or embedded expertise alongside conventional service contracts may find a receptive counterpart in PETROCI as it navigates the responsibilities of direct asset management.

Why this matters to partners and clients of Saga

Norwegian service companies should monitor this development as a potential entry point into PETROCI's emerging vendor and technical support ecosystem. The NOC's shift to direct operatorship creates demand for offshore operational expertise, maintenance services, and possibly well intervention capabilities that Norwegian firms are well placed to supply. Saga recommends initiating early contact with PETROCI's technical and procurement teams to position ahead of formal tendering.

PARTNER ANGLES

- **Drilling:** PETROCI's new operatorship role may require third-party well services and drilling support — Norwegian well service firms should assess scope and approach PETROCI procurement early.
- **Subsea/FPSO:** If the acquired asset involves floating or subsea infrastructure, Norwegian FPSO and subsea specialists should engage now to understand operational support requirements before contracts are structured.
- **Service:** Capacity-building and embedded technical advisory services are a natural fit as PETROCI staffs up with only 10 hires for a full offshore asset operation.
- **Pipeline:** Offshore asset operatorship in Côte d'Ivoire may involve export infrastructure requirements where Norwegian pipeline inspection and integrity management firms can add value.

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