

1 Method and apparatus for oil and gas operations

2

3 The present invention relates to methods and apparatus for oil and gas operations, in
4 particular to methods and apparatus for fluid intervention in oil and gas production or
5 injection systems. The invention has particular application to subsea oil and gas
6 operations, and aspects of the invention relate specifically to methods and apparatus for
7 fluid intervention in subsea oil and gas production and injection infrastructure.

8

9 Background to the invention

10

11 In the field of oil and gas exploration and production, it is common to install an assembly of
12 valves, spools and fittings on a wellhead for the control of fluid flow into or out of the well.
13 A Christmas tree is a type of fluid manifold used in the oil and gas industry in surface well
14 and subsea well configurations and have a wide range of functions, including chemical
15 injection, well intervention, pressure relief and well monitoring. Christmas trees are also
16 used to control the injection of water or other fluids into a wellbore to control production
17 from the reservoir.

18

1 There are a number of reasons why it is desirable to access a flow system in an oil and
2 gas production system. In the context of this specification, the term "fluid intervention" is
3 used to encapsulate any method which accesses a flow line, manifold or tubing in an oil
4 and gas production, injection or transportation system. This includes (but is not limited to)
5 accessing a flow system for fluid sampling, fluid diversion, fluid recovery, fluid injection,
6 fluid circulation, fluid measurement and/or fluid metering. This can be distinguished from
7 full well intervention operations, which generally provide full (or near full) access to the
8 wellbore. Full well intervention processes and applications are often technically complex,
9 time-consuming and have a different cost profile to fluid intervention operations. It will be
10 apparent from the following description that the present invention has application to full
11 well intervention operations. However, it is an advantage of the invention that full well
12 intervention may be avoided, and therefore preferred embodiments of the invention
13 provide methods and apparatus for fluid intervention which do not require full well
14 intervention processes.

15
16 International patent application numbers WO00/70185, WO2005/047646, and
17 WO2005/083228 describe a number of configurations for accessing a hydrocarbon well via
18 a choke body on a Christmas tree.

19
20 Although a choke body provides a convenient access point in some applications, the
21 methods of WO00/70185, WO2005/047646, and WO2005/083228 do have a number of
22 disadvantages. Firstly, a Christmas tree is a complex and carefully -designed piece of
23 equipment. The choke performs an important function in production or injection
24 processes, and its location on the Christmas tree is selected to be optimal for its intended
25 operation. Where the choke is removed from the choke body, as proposed in the prior art,
26 the choke must be repositioned elsewhere in the flow system to maintain its functionality.
27 This compromises the original design of the Christmas tree, as it requires the choke to be
28 located in a sub-optimal position.

29
30 Secondly, a choke body on a Christmas tree is typically not designed to support dynamic
31 and/or static loads imparted by intervention equipment and processes. Typical loads on a
32 choke body in normal use would be of the order of 0.5 to 1 tonnes, and the Christmas tree
33 is engineered with this in mind. In comparison, a typical flow metering system as
34 contemplated in the prior art may have a weight of the order of 2 to 3 tonnes, and the
35 dynamic loads may be more than three times that value. Mounting a metering system (or

1 other fluid intervention equipment) on the choke body therefore exposes that part of the
2 Christmas tree to loads in excess of those that it is designed to withstand, creating a risk of
3 damage to the structure. This problem may be exacerbated in deepwater applications,
4 where even greater loads may be experienced due to thicker and/or stiffer components
5 used in the subsea infrastructure.

6
7 In addition to the load restrictions identified above, positioning the flow intervention
8 equipment on the choke body may limit the access available to large items of process
9 equipment and/or access of divers or remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) to the process
10 equipment or other parts of the tree.

11
12 Furthermore, modifying the Christmas tree so that the chokes are in non-standard
13 positions is generally undesirable. It is preferable for divers and/or ROV operators to be
14 completely familiar with the configuration of components on the Christmas tree, and
15 deviations in the location of critical components are preferably avoided.

16
17 Another drawback of the prior art proposals is that not all Christmas trees have chokes
18 integrated with the system; approaches which rely on Christmas tree choke body access
19 to the flow system are not applicable to these types of tree.

20
21 It is amongst the objects of the invention to provide a method and apparatus for accessing
22 a flow system in an oil and gas production system, which addresses one or more
23 drawbacks or disadvantages of the prior art. In particular, it is amongst the objects of the
24 invention to provide a method and apparatus for fluid intervention in an oil and gas
25 production system, which addresses one or more drawbacks of the prior art. An object of
26 the invention is to provide a flexible method and apparatus suitable for use with and/or
27 retrofitting to industry standard or proprietary oil and gas production manifolds, including
28 Christmas trees.

29
30 It is an aim of at least one aspect or embodiment of the invention to provide an apparatus
31 which may be configured for use in both a subsea fluid injection operation and a
32 production fluid sampling operation.

33
34 Further objects and aims of the invention will become apparent from the following
35 description.

1 Summary of the invention

2
3 According to a first aspect of the invention there is provided an apparatus for accessing a
4 flow system in a subsea oil and gas production system, the apparatus comprising:
5 a body defining a conduit therethrough;
6 a first connector for connecting the body to the flow system;
7 a second connector for connecting the body to an intervention apparatus;
8 wherein, in use, the conduit provides an intervention path from the intervention apparatus
9 to the flow system.

10
11 The apparatus is preferably a fluid intervention apparatus, which may be a fluid
12 intervention apparatus for fluid sampling, fluid diversion, fluid recovery, fluid injection, fluid
13 circulation, fluid measurement and/or fluid metering.

14
15 Preferably, the apparatus is an access hub which is configured for connection to the flow
16 system. The access hub may be configured to be connected to an external opening on
17 the flow system. For example, the access hub may be configured to be connected to a
18 flange of the flow system. The flow system may comprise a blind flange, removal of which
19 provides a flange connection point for the access hub.

20
21 Where the flow system comprises a subsea Christmas tree, the external opening may be
22 downstream of a wing valve of the Christmas tree.

23
24 The external opening may be a flowline connector, such as a flowline connector for a
25 jumper flowline. The apparatus may comprise a third connector for connecting the
26 apparatus to a downstream flowline such as a jumper flowline. Therefore the apparatus
27 may be disposed between a flowline connector and a jumper flowline, and may provide a
28 flow path from the flow system to the jumper flowline, and may also establish an access
29 point to the flow system, via the conduit and the first connector.

30
31 A flowline connector for a jumper flowline is a preferred location for the connection of the
32 access hub. This is because it is displaced from the Christmas tree sufficiently to reduce
33 associated spatial access problems and provides a more robust load bearing location
34 compared with locations on the Christmas tree itself (in particular the choke body).

1 However, it is still relatively near to the tree and the parts of the flow system to which
2 access is required for the intervention applications.

3
4 The apparatus may provide a further connector for connecting the body to an intervention
5 apparatus, which may be axially displaced from the second connector (in the direction of
6 the body). Therefore the apparatus may provide a pair of access points to the flow
7 system, which may facilitate certain applications including those which require fluid
8 circulation and/or sampling.

9
10 In one embodiment, the access hub is configured for connection to an external opening of
11 a choke body, which may be on a side of the choke body. Preferably in this embodiment,
12 the access hub is configured to be connected to the choke body without interfering with the
13 position or function of the choke (i.e. the choke may remain in situ in the choke body).

14
15 Preferably, the access hub is configured to be connected to a flowline at a location
16 displaced from a choke of the flow system. The access hub may be configured to be
17 connected to the flow system at a location selected from the group consisting of: a jumper
18 flowline connector; downstream of a jumper flowline or a section of a jumper flowline; a
19 Christmas tree; a subsea collection manifold system; subsea Pipe Line End Manifold
20 (PLEM); a subsea Pipe Line End Termination (PLET); and a subsea Flow Line End
21 Termination (FLET).

22
23 In embodiments of the invention, the apparatus is configured to provide access to the
24 production bore or the annulus of Christmas tree directly (i.e. without relying on access
25 through the production wing or annulus wing). In one such implementation, the apparatus
26 comprises a tree cap hub, and the first connector connects the body to a production bore
27 of a Christmas tree. Preferably, the intervention apparatus comprises a fluid injection
28 apparatus.

29
30 The tree cap hub may comprise an axial bore extending from an opening to the production
31 bore to a top opening of the tree cap hub. The apparatus may be provided with a pressure
32 cap, which may seal the top opening. The apparatus may comprise a debris cap and/or
33 insulation cap. Conveniently, the apparatus may be deployed and left in situ on the
34 subsea Christmas tree.

1 Alternatively, the apparatus may comprise a tree mandrel hub, and the first connector is
2 configured to be connected to an annulus bore of a Christmas tree. The tree mandrel hub
3 may comprise a bore extending from an opening to the annulus bore to a top opening of
4 the tree mandrel hub. The bore may comprise a first axial portion extending from the
5 opening to the annulus bore, a second axial portion extending from the top opening, and a
6 radial portion joining the first and second axial portions. The apparatus may be provided
7 with a pressure cap, which may seal the top opening. The apparatus may comprise a
8 debris cap and/or insulation cap. Conveniently, the apparatus may be deployed for a
9 subsea intervention operation or series of operations and recovered to surface.

10 Preferably, the intervention apparatus comprises a fluid injection apparatus.

11
12 According to a second aspect of the invention, there is provided a subsea oil and gas
13 production system comprising:

14 a subsea well and a subsea flow system in communication with the well; and an access
15 hub;

16 wherein the access hub comprises a first connector connected to the subsea flow system;
17 a second connector configured to be connected to an intervention apparatus; and wherein
18 a conduit between the first and second connectors provides an intervention path from the
19 intervention apparatus to the subsea flow system.

20
21 The access hub may be connected to the flow system at a location selected from the
22 group consisting of: a jumper flowline connector; downstream of a jumper flowline or a
23 section of a jumper flowline; a Christmas tree; a subsea collection manifold system; a
24 subsea Pipe Line End Manifold (PLEM); a subsea Pipe Line End Termination (PLET); and
25 a subsea Flow Line End Termination (FLET).

26
27 Where the flow system comprises a subsea Christmas tree, the external opening may be
28 downstream of a wing valve of the Christmas tree.

29
30 The external opening may be a flowline connector, such as a flowline connector for a
31 jumper flowline. The apparatus may comprise a third connector for connecting the
32 apparatus to a downstream flowline such as a jumper flowline. Therefore the apparatus
33 may be disposed between a flowline connector and a jumper flowline, and may provide a
34 flow path from the flow system to the jumper flowline, and may also establish an access
35 point to the flow system, via the conduit and the first connector.

Embodiments of the second aspect of the invention may include one or more features of the first aspect of the invention or its embodiments, or vice versa.

According to a third aspect of the invention there is provided a method of performing a subsea intervention operation, the method comprising:

- providing a subsea well and a subsea flow system in communication with the well;
- providing an access hub on the subsea flow system, the access hub comprising a first connector connected to the subsea flow system and a second connector for an intervention apparatus;
- connecting an intervention apparatus to the second connector;
- accessing the subsea flow system via an intervention path through a conduit between the first and second connectors.

Preferably the access hub is pre-installed on the subsea flow system and left in situ at a subsea location for later performance of a subsea intervention operation. The intervention apparatus may then be connected to the pre-installed access hub and the method performed.

Preferably the method is a method of performing a fluid intervention operation. The method may comprise fluid sampling, fluid diversion, fluid recovery, fluid injection, fluid circulation, fluid measurement and/or fluid metering.

The method may be a method of performing a well scale squeeze operation.

The method may comprise performing a well fluid sampling operation. A preferred embodiment of the invention comprises: (a) performing a fluid injection operation; and (b) performing a well fluid sampling operation. Preferably the fluid injection operation and the well fluid sampling operation are both carried out by accessing the subsea flow system via the intervention path of the access hub.

Embodiments of the third aspect of the invention may include one or more features of the first or second aspects of the invention or their embodiments, or vice versa.

1 According to a fourth aspect of the invention there is provided an access hub for a flow
2 system in a subsea oil and gas production system, the access hub comprising:
3 a body defining a conduit therethrough;
4 a first connector for connecting the body to a jumper flowline connector of the flow system;
5 a second connector for connecting the body to an intervention apparatus;
6 and a third connector for connecting the apparatus to a jumper flowline;
7 wherein, in use, the conduit provides an intervention path from the intervention apparatus
8 to the flow system.

9
10 Preferably, the subsea flow system comprises a Christmas tree, and the jumper flowline
11 connector is production wing flowline connector of the Christmas tree.

12
13 Embodiments of the fourth aspect of the invention may include one or more features of the
14 first to third aspects of the invention or their embodiments, or vice versa.

15
16 According to a fifth aspect of the invention there is provided a subsea oil and gas
17 production system comprising:
18 a subsea well; a subsea Christmas tree in communication with the well; a jumper flowline
19 and an access hub;
20 wherein the access hub comprises a first connector connected to a flowline connector of
21 the Christmas tree, a second connector for connecting the body to an intervention
22 apparatus, and a third connector connected to the jumper flowline; and wherein a
23 a conduit between the first and second connectors provides an intervention path from the
24 intervention apparatus to a production bore of the subsea Christmas tree.

25
26 Embodiments of the fifth aspect of the invention may include one or more features of the
27 first to fourth aspects of the invention or their embodiments, or vice versa.

28
29 According to a sixth aspect of the invention there is provided an access hub for a subsea
30 Christmas tree, the access hub comprising:
31 a tree cap comprising a tree cap connector configured to be connected to a production
32 bore of the subsea Christmas tree and an upper connector for connecting the tree cap to
33 an intervention apparatus;

1 wherein, in use, a conduit between the tree cap connector and the upper connector
2 provides an intervention path from an intervention apparatus to the production bore of the
3 subsea Christmas tree.

4
5 Preferably, the tree cap comprises a pressure cap. The tree cap may therefore be pre-
6 installed on the Christmas tree and left in situ at a subsea location for later performance of
7 a subsea intervention operation.

8
9 Embodiments of the sixth aspect of the invention may include one or more features of the
10 first to fifth aspects of the invention or their embodiments, or vice versa.

11
12 According to a seventh aspect of the invention, there is provided a subsea oil and gas
13 production system comprising:

14 a subsea well; a subsea Christmas tree in communication with the well; and an access
15 hub;

16 wherein the access hub comprises a tree cap having a tree cap connector connected to
17 production bore of the subsea Christmas tree and an upper connector configured to be
18 connected to an intervention apparatus;

19 and wherein a conduit between the tree cap connector and the upper connector provides
20 an intervention path from an intervention apparatus to a production bore of the subsea
21 Christmas tree.

22
23 Embodiments of the seventh aspect of the invention may include one or more features of
24 the first to sixth aspects of the invention or their embodiments, or vice versa.

25
26 According to an eighth aspect of the invention there is provided an access hub for a
27 subsea Christmas tree, the access hub comprising:

28 a mandrel cap comprising a mandrel cap connector configured to be connected to an
29 annulus bore of the subsea Christmas tree and an upper connector for connecting the
30 mandrel cap to an intervention apparatus;

31 wherein, in use, a conduit between the mandrel cap connector and the upper connector
32 provides an intervention path from an intervention apparatus to the annulus bore of the
33 subsea Christmas tree.

34

1 Embodiments of the eighth aspect of the invention may include one or more features of the
2 first to seventh aspects of the invention or their embodiments, or vice versa.

3
4 According to a ninth aspect of the invention, there is provided a subsea oil and gas
5 production system comprising:
6 a subsea well; a subsea Christmas tree in communication with the well; and an access
7 hub;
8 wherein the access hub comprises a mandrel cap having a mandrel cap connector
9 connected to an annulus bore of the subsea Christmas tree, and an upper connector
10 configured to be connected to an intervention apparatus;
11 and wherein a conduit between the mandrel cap connector and the upper connector
12 provides an intervention path from an intervention apparatus to an annulus bore of the
13 subsea Christmas tree.

14
15 Preferably, the tree comprises one or more pressure barriers and may comprise a dust
16 and/or debris cap. The mandrel cap is preferably deployed for a particular subsea
17 intervention operation or series of operations and recovered to surface, although it may
18 alternative be pre-installed on the Christmas tree and left in situ at a subsea location for
19 later performance of a subsea intervention operation.

20
21 Embodiments of the ninth aspect of the invention may include one or more features of the
22 first to eighth aspects of the invention or their embodiments, or vice versa.

23
24 According to a tenth aspect of the invention there is provided a combined fluid injection
25 and sampling apparatus for a subsea oil and gas production flow system, the apparatus
26 comprising:
27 a body defining a conduit therethrough;
28 a first connector for connecting the body to the flow system;
29 a second connector for connecting the body to a fluid injection apparatus;
30 wherein, in use, the conduit provides an injection path from the intervention apparatus to
31 the flow system;
32 and wherein the apparatus further comprises a sampling subsystem for collecting a fluid
33 sample from the flow system.

34

1 Preferably the sampling chamber is in fluid communication with the flow system via the
2 first connector.

3
4 The apparatus preferably comprises a third connector for connecting the apparatus to a
5 downstream flowline such as a jumper flowline. Therefore the apparatus may be disposed
6 between a flowline connector and a jumper flowline, and may provide a flow path from the
7 flow system to the jumper flowline, and may also establish an access point to the flow
8 system, via the conduit and the first connector.

9
10 The second connector may comprise a hose connector. The apparatus may comprise a
11 hose connection valve, which may function to shut off and/or regulate flow from a
12 connected hose through the apparatus. The hose connection valve may comprise a
13 choke, which may be adjusted by an ROV (for example to regulate and/or shut off injection
14 flow).

15
16 Preferably the apparatus comprises an isolation valve between the first connector and the
17 second connector. The isolation valve preferably has a failsafe close condition, and may
18 comprise a ball valve or a gate valve. The apparatus may comprise a plurality of isolation
19 valves.

20
21 The sampling subsystem may comprise an end effector, which may be configured to divert
22 flow to a sampling chamber of the sampling subsystem of the apparatus, for example by
23 creating a hydrodynamic pressure.

24
25 An inlet to the sampling chamber may be fluidly connected to the first connector. An outlet
26 to the sampling chamber may provide a fluid path for circulation of fluid through the
27 chamber and/or exit to a flowline.

28
29 Preferably, the sampling subsystem comprises a sampling port, and may further comprise
30 one or more sampling needle valves. The sampling subsystem may be configured for use
31 with a sampling hot stab.

32
33 The sampling subsystem may be in fluid communication with the flow system via a flow
34 path extending between the first and third connectors. Alternatively or in addition the

1 sampling subsystem may be in fluid communication with the flow system via a flow path
2 extending between the first and second connectors.

3
4 Alternatively or in addition the sampling subsystem may be in fluid communication with the
5 flow system via at least a portion of an injection bore.

6
7 Embodiments of the tenth aspect of the invention may include one or more features of the
8 first to ninth aspects of the invention or their embodiments, or vice versa. In particular,
9 apparatus or systems of the first to ninth aspects of the invention may be configured with a
10 sampling subsystem as described (to be used with in a sampling operation) and/or an
11 injection flow path (for use in an injection operation), and the apparatus or systems of the
12 first to ninth aspects of the invention may be configured for just one of sampling or
13 injection.

14
15 According to an eleventh aspect of the invention there is provided a subsea oil and gas
16 production system comprising:
17 a subsea well; a subsea Christmas tree in communication with the well; and a combined
18 fluid injection and sampling unit;
19 wherein the a combined fluid injection and sampling unit comprises a first connector
20 connected to the flow system and a second connector for connecting the body to an
21 intervention apparatus;
22 wherein, in use, the conduit provides an injection path from an injection apparatus to the
23 flow system;
24 and wherein the apparatus further comprises a sampling subsystem for collecting a fluid
25 sample from the flow system.

26
27 The system may further comprise an injection hose, which may be connected to the
28 combined fluid injection and sampling unit. The hose may comprise an upper hose section
29 and a subsea hose section. The upper and subsea hose sections may be joined by a
30 weak link connector. The weak link connector may comprise a first condition, in which the
31 connection between the upper hose and the subsea hose is locked, and a second
32 (operable) condition, in which the upper hose is releasable from the subsea hose.

33
34 Embodiments of the eleventh aspect of the invention may include one or more features of
35 the first to tenth aspects of the invention or their embodiments, or vice versa.

1
2 According to a twelfth aspect of the invention there is provided a method of performing a
3 subsea intervention operation, the method comprising:

4 providing a subsea well and a subsea flow system in communication with the well;
5 providing a combined fluid injection and sampling apparatus on the subsea flow system,
6 the combined fluid injection and sampling apparatus comprising a first connector for
7 connecting the apparatus to the flow system and a second connector for connecting the
8 apparatus to a fluid injection apparatus;
9 connecting an injection hose to the second connector;
10 accessing the subsea flow system via an injection bore between the first and second
11 connectors.

12
13 Preferably the combined fluid injection and sampling apparatus is pre-installed on the
14 subsea flow system and left in situ at a subsea location for later performance of a subsea
15 intervention operation. The injection hose may then be connected to the pre-installed unit
16 and the method performed.

17
18 Preferably the method is a method of performing a fluid intervention operation. The
19 method may comprise fluid sampling, fluid diversion, fluid recovery, fluid injection, fluid
20 circulation, fluid measurement and/or fluid metering.

21
22 The method may be a method of performing a well scale squeeze operation.

23
24 The method may comprise performing a well fluid sampling operation. A preferred
25 embodiment of the invention comprises: (a) performing a fluid injection operation; and (b)
26 performing a well fluid sampling operation. Preferably the fluid injection operation and the
27 well fluid sampling operation are both carried out by accessing the subsea flow system via
28 the intervention path of the access hub.

29
30 Embodiments of the twelfth aspect of the invention may include one or more features of
31 the first to eleventh aspects of the invention or their embodiments, or vice versa.

32
33

Brief description of the drawings

There will now be described, by way of example only, various embodiments of the invention with reference to the drawings, of which:

Figure 1 is a part-sectional view of a subsea production system according to a first embodiment of the invention;

Figure 3 is an enlarged sectional view of a jumper hub assembly of the embodiment of Figure 1;

Figure 2 is an enlarged sectional view of an alternative hub of the embodiment of Figure 1;

Figure 4 is a part-sectional view of a subsea production system according to an alternative embodiment of the invention;

Figure 5 is an enlarged sectional view of an alternative jumper hub, as used in the embodiment of Figure 4;

Figure 6 is a sectional view of a subsea production tree system according to an alternative embodiment of the invention, including an alternative jumper hub assembly;

Figure 7 is a sectional view of an alternative jumper hub spool piece that may be used with the embodiment of Figure 6;

Figure 8 is a sectional view of a subsea production tree system incorporating a modified tree cap according to an embodiment of the invention;

Figure 9 is an enlarged sectional view of a tree cap injection hub according to an alternative embodiment of the invention, and which may be used with the embodiments of Figure 8;

Figure 10 is a part-sectional view of a horizontal style subsea production tree system according to an embodiment of the invention; and

Figure 11 is an enlarged sectional view of a tree cap injection hub used with a system of Figure 10;

Figures 12A and 12A show schematically a subsea system used in successive stages of a well squeeze operation;

Figures 13A and 13B show schematically the subsea system used in successive stages of a production fluid sample operation; and

Figure 14 is a sectional view of a combined injection and sampling hub used in the systems of Figures 12 and 13, when coupled to an injection hose connection.

Detailed description of preferred embodiments

Referring firstly to Figure 1, there is shown a production system generally depicted at 10, incorporating a subsea manifold in the form of a conventional vertical dual bore Christmas tree 11 located on a wellhead (not shown). The system 10 is shown in production mode, in a part-sectional view to show some external components from a side elevation and some parts of the system in longitudinal section. The tree 11 comprises a production bore 12 in communication with production tubing (not shown) and an annulus bore 16 in communication with the annulus between the casing and the production tubing. The upper part of the system 10 is closed by a conventional tree cap 17.

The production bore 12 comprises hydraulically controlled valves which include a production master valve 18 and a production swab valve 20 (as is typical for a vertical subsea tree). The production bore 12 also comprises a branch 22 which includes production choke valve 24, and which may be closed from the bore 12 via production wing valve 26. The production branch 22 also includes an outlet conduit 28 leading to a flowline connector 30, which in this case is an ROV clamp, but may be any industry standard design including but not limited to ROV clamps, collet connectors, or bolted flanges. In this example the flowline connector 30 is horizontally oriented, and would conventionally be used for connection of a horizontally or vertically deployed jumper flowline.

On the annulus side, the annulus bore 16 comprises an annulus master valve 32 located below an annulus branch 34, which includes an annulus wing valve 36 which isolates the

annulus branch 34 and annulus choke valve 38 from the bore 16. An annulus outlet conduit 40 leads to a flowline connector 42 (which as above may be any industry standard design).

The production system 10 is provided with a flow jumper hub assembly, generally shown at 50, and process equipment 60. An enlarged sectional view of the flow jumper hub assembly 50 is provided at Figure 2. The assembly 50 includes a first jumper hub 51 connected into the flowline connector 30 of the production branch 22, and a second jumper hub 52 connected to the first jumper hub 51. The first jumper hub 51 defines a main flowline bore 53 and includes a valve 54 located after opening 56. The second hub 52 and continues the main flowline bore 53 for connection into the primary production flowline (not shown) and includes opening 58. The openings 56 and 58 provide access points to the production system for a range of fluid intervention operations. These might include (but are not limited to) fluid sampling, fluid diversion, fluid recovery, fluid injection, fluid circulation, fluid measurement and/or fluid metering. In this case, when the valve 54 is closed, the opening 56 of the first hub 51 provides an outlet for fluid to flow from the production flowline to the processing equipment 60, and the opening 58 of the second hub 52 provides an inlet for re-entry of the processed fluid from the process equipment 60 to the production flowline.

By providing intervention access points in the flowline jumper, a number of advantages are realised compared with the prior art proposals which rely on access via choke bodies on the tree. Firstly, the production choke valve 24 remains in its originally intended position and therefore may be accessed and controlled using conventional techniques. Secondly, the flowline jumper hub assembly 50 may be engineered to support dynamic and/or static loads imparted by a wide range of fluid intervention equipment and processes, and is not subject to the inherent design limitations of the choke body of the tree. Thirdly, while there are spatial limitations around the choke body of the tree, the flowline jumper hub assembly may be located in a position which allows larger items and/or different configurations of process equipment to be positioned, and may also provide improved access of ROVs and/or divers to the process equipment or other components of the tree (such as the choke). In addition, the described configuration has application to a wide-range of production manifolds, including those which do not have integrated choke bodies (as is the case for example with some designs of subsea tree).

1 The system 10 Figure 1 also shows an alternative hub, depicted generally at 70, which
2 may be used as an alternative or in addition to the flowline jumper hub assembly 50 in
3 alternative embodiments of the invention. An enlarged sectional view of the hub 70 is
4 shown in Figure 3. The hub 70 includes an inlet 72 for connection to a flow-block or pipe
5 of a production manifold, and an outlet 74 (shown capped in Figures 1 and 3) configured to
6 be connected to process equipment (such as for a fluid intervention operation as described
7 above). In this embodiment, the hub 70 is configured to be mounted on the choke valve
8 body (without removal of the choke valve itself). This means that is able to function as an
9 access point for fluid intervention without interfering with the position and/or functionality of
10 the production choke. In this embodiment, the inlet 72 and the outlet 74 are
11 perpendicularly oriented to provide vertical access to a horizontal connection point in the
12 manifold (or vice versa). Other configurations may of course be used in alternative
13 embodiments of the invention.

14
15 The hub 70 may be used in combination with another access hub described herein, for
16 example the hub assembly 50. In this latter case, the hub 70 may provide an inlet to
17 process equipment for a fluid intervention operation and one of the openings of the hub 50
18 (conveniently the opening 58 which is downstream of the valve 54) may provide an inlet for
19 re-entry of the processed fluid from the process equipment to the production flowline.

20
21 Although the hub assembly 50 and the hub 70 are described above with the context of a
22 production system, and are shown to provide access points for the production wing of the
23 tree, it will be appreciated that the hubs 50 and 70 may also be used in other modes and in
24 particular can be connected to the annulus wing, for example to provide similar
25 functionality in an injection process. The same applies to other embodiments of the
26 invention unless the context specifically requires otherwise. Although the hub 70 is shown
27 connected to an external opening of a choke body, other locations on the flow system may
28 be used to provide access to the flow system via the hub. For example, the hub may be
29 configured to be connected to any flange point in the flow system, the removal a blind
30 flange providing a flange connection point for the hub 70. In particular the hub may be
31 connected via any external opening may be downstream of a wing valve of the Christmas
32 tree.

33
34 Referring now to Figure 4, there is shown a production system according to an alternative
35 embodiment of the invention, generally depicted at 100, incorporating a subsea manifold

11 which is the same as the conventional vertical dual bore Christmas tree of Figure 1. Like components are indicated by like reference numerals. The system 100 is shown in production mode, in a part-sectional view to show some external components from a side elevation and some parts of the system in longitudinal-section.

The system 100 differs from the system 10 in that it is provided with an alternative jumper hub 150, which comprises a single hub opening 151 on a main flowline bore 153. An enlarged view of the jumper hub 150 is shown in Figure 5. The jumper hub 150 is connected to the flowline connector 30 of the production branch outlet conduit 28, and at its opposing end has a standard flowline connector 154 for coupling to a conventional jumper 156. The embodiment of Figures 4 and 5 provide similar benefits to the embodiment of Figures 1 and 2, albeit with a single access point to the system 100. The hub 150 is relatively compact and robust and offers the additional advantage that it may be connected to the tree at surface (prior to its deployment subsea) more readily than larger hub assemblies.

The hub 150 may be used in combination with another access hub described herein, for example the hub assembly 50 or the hub 70. In the latter case, the hub 70 may provide an inlet to process equipment for a fluid intervention operation and the hub 150 may provide an inlet for re-entry of the processed fluid from the process equipment to the production flowline.

Referring now to Figure 6, there is shown a production system according to a further alternative embodiment of the invention, generally depicted at 200, incorporating a subsea manifold 211 which is similar to the conventional vertical dual bore Christmas tree 11 of Figure 1. Like components are indicated by like reference numerals incremented by 200. The system 200 is also shown in production mode, in a part-sectional view to show some external components from a side elevation and some parts of the system in longitudinal-section.

The system 200 differs from the systems 10 and 100 in the nature of the jumper hub assembly 250 and its connection to the tree 211. In this case the hub assembly 250 comprises a first hub 251 connected to a vertically-oriented flowline connector 230 on the production outlet conduit 228, and a second jumper hub 252 connected to the first jumper hub 251. Each hub 251, 252 comprises an opening (256, 258 respectively) for facilitating

1 access to process equipment 60, and functions in a similar manner to the hub assembly
2 50 of system 10. In this case, the hub 251 does not include a valve, and instead directs all
3 of the fluid to the outlet and into the process equipment 60. However, in this embodiment
4 the first jumper hub 251 comprises a vertically-oriented spool piece 260 with a
5 perpendicular bend 262 into a horizontal section 264 on which the openings 256, 258 are
6 located. The second hub 252 is connected to a vertically oriented 'U' spool jumper flowline
7 266. This embodiment provides a convenient horizontal section for access to the
8 production flow for fluid intervention in a vertical 'U' spool configuration.

9
10 Referring now to Figure 7, there is shown a detail of an alternative configuration 300
11 according to an embodiment of the invention, which includes a simple jumper hub 350
12 analogous to the hub 150 used with the production system 100. Hub 350 comprises a
13 single hub opening 351 on a main flowline bore 353, and is connected to the flowline
14 connector 230 of the production branch outlet conduit of the tree 211. At its opposing end
15 has a standard flowline connector 354 for coupling to a vertically oriented 'U' spool jumper
16 356. The embodiment of Figure 7 provides similar benefits to the embodiment of Figures
17 4 and 5, albeit with a single access point to the system. The hub 350 is relatively compact
18 and robust compared to the hub assembly 250 and facilitates connection to the tree at
19 surface (prior to its deployment subsea).

20
21 The hub 350 may be used in combination with another access hub described herein, for
22 example the hub assembly 50 or the hub 70. In the latter case, the hub 70 may provide an
23 inlet to process equipment for a fluid intervention operation and the hub 350 may provide
24 an inlet for re-entry of the processed fluid from the process equipment to the production
25 flowline. Alternatively or in addition, the configuration 300 may be modified to include a
26 double hub assembly similar to the hub 50 in place of the hub 350, which may or may not
27 include a valve in the main flowline bore.

28
29 The above-described embodiments provide a number of configurations for accessing a
30 flow system in an oil and gas production system, which are flexible and suitable for use
31 with and/or retrofitting to industry standard or proprietary oil and gas production manifolds.
32 The invention extends to alternative configurations which provide access points through
33 modified connections to the cap or mandrel of the tree, as described below.

Figure 8 shows a production system according to a further alternative embodiment of the invention, generally depicted at 400, incorporating a subsea manifold 11 which is a conventional vertical dual bore Christmas tree as shown in Figure 1. Like components are indicated by like reference numerals incremented by 400. The system 400 is also shown in a part-sectional view to show some external components from a side elevation and some parts of the system in longitudinal-section.

In place of the conventional tree cap 17 used in the embodiments of Figures 1, 4, and 6, the system 400 comprises a tree cap hub (or modified tree cap) 417. The tree cap hub includes an axially (vertically) oriented pressure test line 418 which is in communication with the production bore 12 of the tree via a production seal sub 420. The pressure test line 418 extends axially through the tree cap to an opening 422 at the top of the cap. A debris cap 424 is placed over the tree cap 417 and includes a blind cap 426 to seal the opening 422. The blind cap 426 is removably fixed to the debris cap 424, in this case by an ROV style clamp. A dog leg 428 in the pressure test line aligns the line concentrically with the cap (from the offset position of the production bore). The pressure test line 418 is an axial continuation of the production pressure test line 430 from the position at which it extends radially through the tree cap, right through the cap and up to the top of the cap. However, the inner diameter of the pressure test line is significantly greater compared with the bore size of the conventional pressure test line 430 to facilitate fluid intervention through the cap 417. Typical dimensions would be of the order of around 40mm to 80mm inner diameter, compared with around 6mm inner diameter for a typical pressure test line (which is therefore not suitable for fluid intervention).

Also shown in Figure 8, and in an enlarged view in Figure 9, is a tree cap hub connector 450 for use with the modified tree cap 417 in the system 400. The tree cap hub connector 450 comprises a coupling 452 which allows it to be placed over the tree cap 417 after removal of the debris cap 424 and blind cap 426. The tree cap hub connector 450 has a bore 454 which is in fluid communication with the modified pressure test line 418. A valve 456 in the bore 454 allows controllable connection to process equipment, which may for example be a fluid injection system. In such a configuration, the tree cap hub 417 functions as an injection hub and provides a convenient access point for injection of fluids directly into the production bore of the tree, via the pressure test line 418, through the tree cap 417, and into the production bore 12 itself.

1 Significantly, the above-described tree cap hub 417 provides a convenient and flexible way
2 of carrying out fluid interventions which does not rely on the removal of or interference with
3 choke valves. In addition, the tree cap itself is typically able to withstand static and
4 dynamic loading far in excess of the choke bodies, which facilitates mounting of large and
5 massive process equipment associated with the fluid intervention operations onto the tree.

6
7 Referring now to Figure 10, there is shown generally at 500 a subsea production system
8 consisting of a horizontal-style Christmas tree 511 on a wellhead (not shown). The system
9 500 is shown in tree mandrel fluid injection mode, in a part-sectional view to show some
10 external components from a side elevation and some parts of the system in longitudinal-
11 section. The tree 511 comprises a production bore 512 in communication with production
12 tubing (not shown). A production wing 514 incorporates the production master valve 518
13 and a production wing valve 520 oriented horizontally in the production wing 514, and a
14 production choke valve 524 controls flow to a production outlet and vertically-oriented
15 flowline connector 530.

16
17 An annulus bore 516 is in fluid communication with the production wing via a cross-over
18 loop 519. The upper part of the tree 511 is closed by upper and lower plugs 523, 525
19 respectively.

20
21 Also shown in Figure 10, and in an enlarged view in Figure 11, is a tree mandrel hub 550
22 for use with the system 500. The tree mandrel hub 550 comprises a mandrel connector
23 hub 552 which allows it to be placed over the tree mandrel 517. The tree mandrel hub 550
24 has a bore 554 which is in fluid communication with annulus bore 516, and a valve 556 in
25 the bore 554 allows controllable connection to process equipment such as a fluid injection
26 system. In such a configuration, the tree mandrel hub 550 functions as an injection hub
27 and provides a convenient access point for injection of fluids into the production bore of
28 the tree, via the annulus bore 516, through the crossover loop 519, into the production
29 wing 514, and into the production bore 512 itself.

30
31 The tree mandrel injection hub 550 provides another convenient means of performing fluid
32 intervention, this time via the annulus of a horizontal style tree. This embodiment offers
33 similar advantages to the embodiment of Figures 8 and 9 including minimal interference
34 with the choke valves, flexibility of operation, and use of larger scale process equipment
35 and/or application to wide range of subsea manifolds. It will be appreciated that the

embodiments of Figures 8 to 11 may be used in production mode in addition to the fluid injection modes described above.

It will be appreciated that the present invention provides a hub for access to a subsea flow system that facilitates a wide range of different subsea operations. One example application to a combined injection and sampling hub will be described with reference to Figures 12 to 14.

Figures 12A and 12B are schematic representations of a system, generally shown at 600, shown in different stages of a subsea injection operation in a well squeeze application. The system 600 comprises a subsea manifold 611, which is a conventional vertical dual bore Christmas tree, similar to that shown in Figure 1 and Figure 4. The subsea tree configuration utilises a hub 650 to provide access to the flow system, and is similar to the system shown in Figure 4, with internal tree components omitted for simplicity. The flowline connector 630 of the production branch outlet conduit (not shown) is connected to the hub 650 which provides a single access point to the system. At its opposing end, the hub 650 comprises a standard flowline connector 654 for coupling to a conventional jumper 656. In Figure 12A, the hub 650 is shown installed with a pressure cap 668. Optionally a debris and/or insulation cap (not shown) may also be provided on the pressure cap 668.

The system 600 also comprises an upper injection hose 670, deployed from a surface vessel (not shown). The upper injection hose 670 is coupled to a subsea injection hose 672 via a weak link umbilical coupling 680, which functions to protect the subsea equipment, including the subsea injection hose 672 and the equipment to which it is coupled from movement of the vessel or retrieval of the hose. The subsea injection hose 672 is terminated by a hose connection termination 674 which is configured to be coupled to the hub 650. The hub 650 is configured as a combined sampling and injection hub, and is shown in more detail in Figure 14 (when connected to the hose connection 674 in the mode shown in Figure 12B).

As shown most clearly in Figure 14, the hose connection termination 674 incorporates a hose connection valve 675, which functions to shut off and regulate injection flow. The hose connection valve 675 in this example is a manual choke valve, which is adjustable via an ROV to regulate injection flow from the hose 672, through the hose connection 674

1 and into the hub 650. The hose connection 674 is connected to the hub via an ROV style
2 clamp 677 to a hose connection coupling 688.

3
4 The hub 650 comprises an injection bore 682 which extends through the hub body 684
5 between an opening 686 from the main production bore 640 and the hose connection
6 coupling 688. Disposed between the opening 688 and the hose connection coupling 688
7 is an isolation valve 690 which functions to isolate the flow system from injection flow. In
8 this example, a single isolation valve is provided, although alternative embodiments may
9 include multiple isolation valves in series. The isolation valve 690 is a ball valve, although
10 other valve types (including but not limited to gate valves) may be used in alternative
11 embodiments of the invention. The valve 690 is designed to have a fail-safe closed
12 condition (in embodiments with multiple valves at least one should have a fail-safe closed
13 condition).

14
15 The hub 650 is also provided with a sampling chamber 700. The sampling chamber
16 comprises an inlet 702 fluidly connected to the injection bore 682, and an outlet 704 which
17 is in fluid communication with the main production bore 640 downstream of the opening
18 686. The sampling chamber 700 is provided with an end effector 706, which may be
19 pushed down into the flow in the production bore 640 to create a hydrodynamic pressure
20 which diverts flow into the injection bore 682 and into the sampling chamber 700 via the
21 inlet 702. Fluid circulates back into the main production bore via the outlet 704.

22
23 In an alternative configuration the inlet 702 may be fluidly connected directly to the
24 production bore 640, and the end effector 706 may cause the flow to be diverted into the
25 chamber 700 directly from the bore 640 via the inlet.

26
27 The sampling chamber 700 also comprises a sampling port 708, which extends via a stem
28 710 into the volume defined by the sampling chamber. Access to the sampling port 708 is
29 controlled by one or more sampling needle valves 712. The system is configured for use
30 with a sampling hot stab 714 and receptacle which is operated by an ROV to transfer fluid
31 from the sampling chamber into a production fluid sample bottle (as will be described
32 below with reference to Figures 13A and 13B).

33
34 The operation of the system 600 in an application to a well squeeze operation will now be
35 described, with reference to Figures 12A and 12B. The operation is conveniently

1 performed using two independently operated ROV spreads, although it is also possible to
2 perform the operation with a single ROV. In the preparatory steps a first ROV (not shown)
3 inspects the hub 650 with the pressure cap 668 in place, in the condition as shown in
4 Figure 12A. Any debris or insulation caps (not shown) are detached from the hub 650 and
5 recovered to surface by the ROV. The ROV is then used to inspect the system for
6 damage or leaks and to check that the sealing hot stabs are in position. The ROV is also
7 used to check that the tree and/or jumper isolation valves are closed. Pressure tests are
8 performed on the system via the sealing hot stab (optionally a full pressure test is
9 performed), and the cavity is vented. The pressure cap 668 is then removed to the ROV
10 tool basket, and can be recovered to surface for inspection and servicing if required.

11
12 The injection hose assembly 670/672 is prepared by setting the weak link coupling 680 to
13 a locked position and by adjusting any trim floats used to control its buoyancy. The hose
14 connection valve 675 is shut off and the hose is pressure tested before setting the hose
15 pressure to the required deployment value. A second ROV 685 is deployed below the
16 vessel (not shown) and the hose is deployed overboard to the ROV. The ROV then flies
17 the hose connection 674 to the hub 650, and the connection 674 is clamped onto the hub
18 and pressure tested above the isolation valve 690 via an ROV hot stab. The weak link 680
19 is set to its unlocked position to allow it to release the hose 670 from the subsea hose 672
20 and the hub 650 in the event of movement of the vessel from its location or retrieval of the
21 hose.

22
23 The tree isolation valve is opened, and the injection hose 672 is pressurised to the desired
24 injection pressure. The hose connection valve 675 is opened to the desired setting, and
25 the isolation valve is opened. Finally the production wing isolation valve is opened to allow
26 injection flow from the hose 672 to the production bore to commence and the squeeze
27 operation to be performed. On completion, the sequence is reversed to remove the hose
28 connection 674 and replace the pressure cap 668 and any debris/insulation caps on the
29 hub 650.

30
31 It is a feature of this aspect and embodiment of the invention that the hub 650 is a
32 combined injection and sampling hub; i.e. the hub can be used in an injection mode (for
33 example a well squeeze operation as described above) and in a sampling mode as
34 described below with reference to Figures 13A and 13B.

35

1 The sampling operation may conveniently be performed using two independently operated
2 ROV spreads, although it is also possible to perform this operation with a single ROV. In
3 the preparatory steps, a first ROV (not shown) inspects the hub 650 with its pressure cap
4 668 in place (as shown in Figure 13A). Any debris or insulation cap fitted to the hub 650 is
5 detached and recovered to surface by a sampling Launch and Recovery System (LARS)
6 720. The ROV is used to inspect the system for damage or leaks, and to check that the
7 sealing hot stabs are in position.

8
9 The sampling LARS 720 subsequently used to deploy a sampling carousel 730 from the
10 vessel (not shown) to depth and a second ROV 685 flies the sampling carousel 730 to the
11 hub location. The pressure cap 668 is configured as a mount for the sampling carousel
12 730. The sampling carousel is located on the pressure cap locator, and the ROV 685
13 indexes the carousel to access the first sampling bottle 732. The hot stab (not shown) of
14 the sampling bottle is connected to the fluid sampling port 708 to allow the sampling
15 chamber 700 to be evacuated to the sampling bottle 732. The procedure can be repeated
16 for multiple bottles as desired or until the bottles are used.

17
18 On completion, the sample bottle carousel 730 is detached from the pressure cap 668 and
19 the LARS 720 winch is used to recover the sample bottle carousel and the samples to
20 surface. The debris/insulation cap is replaced on the pressure cap 668, and the hub is left
21 in the condition shown in Figure 13A.

22
23 The invention provides an apparatus and system for accessing a flow system (such as a
24 subsea tree) in a subsea oil and gas production system, and method of use. The
25 apparatus comprises a body defining a conduit therethrough and a first connector for
26 connecting the body to the flow system. A second connector is configured for connecting
27 the body to an intervention apparatus, such as an injection or sampling equipment. In use,
28 the conduit provides an intervention path from the intervention apparatus to the flow
29 system. Aspects of the invention relate to combined injection and sampling units, and
30 have particular application to well scale squeeze operations.

31
32 Embodiments of the invention provide a range of hubs and/or hub assemblies which
33 facilitate convenient intervention operations. These include fluid introduction for well scale
34 squeeze operations, well kill, hydrate remediation, and/or hydrate/debris blockage
35 removal; fluid removal for well fluid sampling and/or well fluid redirection; and/or the

1 addition of instrumentation for monitoring pressure, temperature, flow rate, fluid
2 composition, erosion and/or corrosion. Aspects of the invention facilitate injection and
3 sampling through a combined unit which provides an injection access point and a sampling
4 access point. Other applications are also within the scope of the invention.

5

6 It will be appreciated that the invention facilitates access to the flow system in a wide
7 range of locations. These include locations at or on the tree, including on a tree or
8 mandrel cap, adjacent the choke body, or immediately adjacent the tree between a
9 flowline connector or a jumper. Alternatively the apparatus of the invention may be used in
10 locations disposed further away from the tree. These include (but are not limited to)
11 downstream of a jumper flowline or a section of a jumper flowline; a subsea collection
12 manifold system; a subsea Pipe Line End Manifold (PLEM); a subsea Pipe Line End
13 Termination (PLET); and/or a subsea Flow Line End Termination (FLET).

14

15 Various modifications may be made within the scope of the invention as herein intended,
16 and embodiments of the invention may include combinations of features other than those
17 expressly described herein.

18

1 Claims

- 2
- 3 1. A combined fluid injection and sampling apparatus for a subsea oil and gas
4 production flow system, the apparatus comprising:
5 a body defining a conduit therethrough;
6 a first connector for connecting the body to the flow system;
7 a second connector for connecting the body to a fluid injection apparatus;
8 wherein, in use, the conduit provides an injection path from the intervention
9 apparatus to the flow system;
10 and wherein the apparatus further comprises a sampling subsystem for collecting a
11 fluid sample from the flow system.
- 12
- 13 2. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the sampling chamber is in fluid
14 communication with the flow system via the first connector.
- 15
- 16 3. The apparatus according to claim 1 or claim 2, further comprising a third connector
17 for connecting the apparatus to a downstream flowline.
- 18
- 19 4. The apparatus according to any preceding claim, wherein the apparatus is disposed
20 between a flowline connector and a jumper flowline, and provides a flow path from
21 the flow system to the jumper flowline..
- 22
- 23 5. The apparatus according to any preceding claim, wherein the second connector
24 comprises a hose connector.
- 25
- 26 6. The apparatus according to claim 5, further comprising a hose connection valve
27 which functions to shut off and/or regulate flow from a connected hose through the
28 apparatus.
- 29
- 30 7. The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the hose connection valve comprises a
31 choke.
- 32
- 33 8. The apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the choke is operable to be adjusted by
34 an ROV to regulate and/or shut off injection flow.
- 35

- 1 9. The apparatus according to any preceding claim, further comprising an isolation
2 valve between the first connector and the second connector.
3
- 4 10. The apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the isolation valve has a failsafe close
5 condition.
6
- 7 11. The apparatus according to claim 9 or claim 10, wherein the isolation valve
8 comprises a ball valve or a gate valve.
9
- 10 12. The apparatus according to any of claims 9 to 11, wherein the apparatus comprises
11 a plurality of isolation valves.
12
- 13 13. The apparatus according to any preceding claim, wherein the sampling subsystem
14 comprises an end effector.
15
- 16 14. The apparatus according to claim 13, wherein the end effector is configured to divert
17 flow to a sampling chamber of the sampling subsystem of the apparatus..
18
- 19 15. The apparatus according to any preceding claim, wherein an inlet to a sampling
20 chamber of the sampling subsystem is fluidly connected to the first connector.
21
- 22 16. The apparatus according to any preceding claim, wherein an outlet to a sampling
23 chamber of the sampling subsystem is provides a fluid path for circulation of fluid
24 through the sampling chamber and/or an exit to a flowline.
25
- 26 17. The apparatus according to any preceding claim, wherein the sampling subsystem
27 comprises one or more sampling needle valves.
28
- 29 18. The apparatus according to any preceding claim, wherein the sampling subsystem is
30 configured for use with a sampling hot stab.
31
- 32 19. The apparatus according to any of claims 3 to 18, wherein the sampling subsystem
33 is in fluid communication with the flow system via a flow path extending between the
34 first and third connectors.
35

- 1 20. The apparatus according to any preceding claim, wherein the sampling subsystem is
2 in fluid communication with the flow system via a flow path extending between the
3 first and second connectors.
4
- 5 21. The apparatus according to any preceding claim, wherein the sampling subsystem is
6 in fluid communication with the flow system via at least a portion of an injection bore.
7
- 8 22. A subsea oil and gas production system comprising:
9 a subsea well; a subsea Christmas tree in communication with the well; and a
10 combined fluid injection and sampling unit;
11 wherein the a combined fluid injection and sampling unit comprises a first connector
12 connected to the flow system and a second connector for connecting the body to an
13 intervention apparatus;
14 wherein, in use, the conduit provides an injection path from an injection apparatus to
15 the flow system;
16 and wherein the apparatus further comprises a sampling subsystem for collecting a
17 fluid sample from the flow system.
18
- 19 23. The system according to claim 22, further comprising an injection hose connected to
20 the combined fluid injection and sampling unit.
21
- 22 24. The system according to claim 23 wherein the hose comprises an upper hose
23 section and a subsea hose section.
24
- 25 25. The system according to claim 24 wherein the upper and subsea hose sections are
26 joined by a weak link connector.
27
- 28 26. The system according to claim 25 wherein the weak link connector comprises a first
29 condition in which the connection between the upper hose and the subsea hose is
30 locked, and a second operable condition, in which the upper hose is releasable from
31 the subsea hose.
32
- 33 27. The system according to any of claims 22 to 26 wherein the combined fluid injection
34 and sampling unit is the apparatus according to any of claims 1 to 21.
35

- 1 28. A method of performing a subsea intervention operation, the method comprising:
2 providing a subsea well and a subsea flow system in communication with the well;
3 providing a combined fluid injection and sampling apparatus on the subsea flow
4 system, the combined fluid injection and sampling apparatus comprising a first
5 connector for connecting the apparatus to the flow system and a second connector
6 for connecting the apparatus to a fluid injection apparatus;
7 connecting an injection hose to the second connector;
8 accessing the subsea flow system via an injection bore between the first and second
9 connectors.
10
- 11 29. The method according to claim 28 wherein the combined fluid injection and sampling
12 apparatus is pre-installed on the subsea flow system and left in situ at a subsea
13 location for later performance of a subsea intervention operation.
14
- 15 30. The method according to claim 29 comprising connecting an injection hose to the
16 pre-installed unit.
17
- 18 31. The method according to any of claims 28 to 30 comprising performing a fluid
19 intervention operation.
20
- 21 32. The method according to claim 31 comprising performing a fluid intervention
22 operation selected from the group consisting of: fluid sampling, fluid diversion, fluid
23 recovery, fluid injection, fluid circulation, fluid measurement and/or fluid metering.
24
- 25 33. The method according to claim 31 or claim 32 comprising performing a well scale
26 squeeze operation.
27
- 28 34. The method according to any of claims 31 to 33 comprising performing a well fluid
29 sampling operation.
30
- 31 35. The method according to any of claims 31 to 34 comprising performing a fluid
32 injection operation; and performing a well fluid sampling operation.
33

- 1 36. The method according to claim 35 wherein the fluid injection operation and the well
2 fluid sampling operation are both carried out by accessing the subsea flow system
3 via an intervention path of the combined fluid injection and sampling apparatus.
4
- 5 37. An apparatus for accessing a flow system in a subsea oil and gas production
6 system, the apparatus comprising:
7 a body defining a conduit therethrough;
8 a first connector for connecting the body to the flow system;
9 a second connector for connecting the body to an intervention apparatus;
10 wherein, in use, the conduit provides an intervention path from the intervention
11 apparatus to the flow system.
12
- 13 38. The apparatus according to claim 37, wherein the apparatus is a fluid intervention
14 apparatus configured for use in a fluid sampling, fluid diversion, fluid recovery, fluid
15 injection, fluid circulation, fluid measurement and/or fluid metering operation.
16
- 17 39. The apparatus according to claim 37 or claim 38, wherein the apparatus is
18 configured as an access hub for connection to an external opening on the flow
19 system.
20
- 21 40. The apparatus according to claim 39, wherein the access hub is configured to be
22 connected to a flange of the flow system.
23
- 24 41. The apparatus according to claim 40, wherein the flow system comprises a blind
25 flange, removal of which provides a flange connection point for the access hub.
26
- 27 42. The apparatus according to any of claims 39 to 41, wherein the flow system
28 comprises a subsea Christmas tree, and the external opening is downstream of a
29 wing valve of the Christmas tree.
30
- 31 43. The apparatus according to any of claims 39 to 42, wherein the external opening
32 comprises a flowline connector, such as a flowline connector for a jumper flowline.
33
- 34 44. The apparatus according to any of claims 37 to 43, wherein the apparatus is
35 configured to be disposed between a flowline connector and a jumper flowline and
36 provide a flow path from the flow system to the jumper flowline..

1

2 45. The apparatus according to any of claims 37 to 44, wherein the apparatus comprises
3 a further connector for connecting the body to an intervention apparatus, which may
4 be axially displaced from the second connector in the direction of the body.

5

6 46. The apparatus according to any of claims 37 to 45, wherein the apparatus provides a
7 pair of access points to the flow system..

8

9 47. The apparatus according to any of claims 39 to 46, wherein the access hub is
10 configured for connection to an external opening of a choke body, which may be on
11 a side of the choke body.

12

13 48. The apparatus according to claim 47, wherein the access hub is configured to be
14 connected to the choke body without interfering with the position or function of the
15 choke.

16

17 49. The apparatus according to any of claims 39 to 46, wherein the access hub is
18 configured to be connected to a flowline at a location displaced from a choke of the
19 flow system.

20

21 50. The apparatus according to any of claims 39 to 49, wherein the access hub is
22 configured to be connected to the flow system at a location selected from the group
23 consisting of: a jumper flowline connector; downstream of a jumper flowline or a
24 section of a jumper flowline; a Christmas tree; a subsea collection manifold system;
25 subsea Pipe Line End Manifold (PLEM); a subsea Pipe Line End Termination
26 (PLET); and a subsea Flow Line End Termination (FLET).

27

28 51. The apparatus according to any of claims 37 to 50, wherein the apparatus is
29 configured to provide access to the production bore or the annulus of Christmas tree
30 directly without relying on access through the production wing or annulus wing.

31

32 52. The apparatus according to claim 51, wherein the apparatus comprises a tree cap
33 hub, and the first connector connects the body to a production bore of a Christmas
34 tree.

35

- 1 53. The apparatus according to claim 51, wherein the apparatus comprises a tree
2 mandrel hub, and the first connector is configured to be connected to an annulus
3 bore of a Christmas tree.
4
- 5 54. The apparatus according to claim 53, wherein the tree mandrel hub may comprise a
6 bore extending from an opening to the annulus bore to a top opening of the tree
7 mandrel hub.
8
- 9 55. The apparatus according to any of claims 37 to 54, wherein the apparatus comprises
10 a fluid injection apparatus.
11
- 12 56. A subsea oil and gas production system comprising:
13 a subsea well and a subsea flow system in communication with the well; and an
14 access hub;
15 wherein the access hub comprises a first connector connected to the subsea flow
16 system;
17 a second connector configured to be connected to an intervention apparatus; and
18 wherein a conduit between the first and second connectors provides an intervention
19 path from the intervention apparatus to the subsea flow system.
20
- 21 57. The system according to claim 56, wherein the access hub is connected to the flow
22 system at a location selected from the group consisting of: a jumper flowline
23 connector; downstream of a jumper flowline or a section of a jumper flowline; a
24 Christmas tree; a subsea collection manifold system; a subsea Pipe Line End
25 Manifold (PLEM); a subsea Pipe Line End Termination (PLET); and a subsea Flow
26 Line End Termination (FLET).
27
- 28 58. The system according to claim 56 or claim 57, wherein the flow system comprises a
29 subsea Christmas tree, and the access hub is connected to an external opening of
30 the flow system downstream of a wing valve of the Christmas tree.
31
- 32 59. The system according to claim 58, wherein the access hub is disposed between a
33 flowline connector and a jumper flowline, and provides a flow path from the flow
34 system to the jumper flowline, and establishes an access point to the flow system,
35 via the conduit and the first connector.

1

2 60. A method of performing a subsea intervention operation, the method comprising:
3 providing a subsea well and a subsea flow system in communication with the well;
4 providing an access hub on the subsea flow system, the access hub comprising a
5 first connector connected to the subsea flow system and a second connector for an
6 intervention apparatus;
7 connecting an intervention apparatus to the second connector;
8 accessing the subsea flow system via an intervention path through a conduit between
9 the first and second connectors.

10

11 61. The method according to claim 60, wherein the access hub is pre-installed on the
12 subsea flow system and left in situ at a subsea location for later performance of a
13 subsea intervention operation.

14

15 62. The method according to claim 61, comprising connecting an intervention apparatus
16 to the pre-installed access hub and the performing the subsea intervention operation.

17

18 63. The method according to claim 60 comprising performing a fluid intervention
19 operation.

20

21 64. The method according to claim 63, comprising performing a fluid intervention
22 operation selected from the group consisting of: fluid sampling, fluid diversion, fluid
23 recovery, fluid injection, fluid circulation, fluid measurement and/or fluid metering.

24

25 65. The method according to any of claims 60 to 64, comprising performing a well scale
26 squeeze operation.

27

28 66. The method according to any of claims 60 to 65, comprising performing a well fluid
29 sampling operation.

30

31 67. The method according to any of claims 60 to 66, comprising performing a fluid
32 injection operation; and performing a well fluid sampling operation.

33

1 68. The method according to claim 67 wherein the fluid injection operation and the well
2 fluid sampling operation are both carried out by accessing the subsea flow system
3 via an intervention path of the access hub.
4

5 69. An access hub for a flow system in a subsea oil and gas production system, the
6 access hub comprising:
7 a body defining a conduit therethrough;
8 a first connector for connecting the body to a jumper flowline connector of the flow
9 system;
10 a second connector for connecting the body to an intervention apparatus;
11 and a third connector for connecting the apparatus to a jumper flowline;
12 wherein, in use, the conduit provides an intervention path from the intervention
13 apparatus to the flow system.
14

15 70. The access hub as claimed in claim 69, configured for connection to a subsea flow
16 system comprising a Christmas tree, via a production wing flowline connector of the
17 Christmas tree.
18

19 71. A subsea oil and gas production system comprising:
20 a subsea well; a subsea Christmas tree in communication with the well; a jumper
21 flowline and an access hub;
22 wherein the access hub comprises a first connector connected to a flowline
23 connector of the Christmas tree, a second connector for connecting the body to an
24 intervention apparatus, and a third connector connected to the jumper flowline; and
25 wherein a
26 a conduit between the first and second connectors provides an intervention path
27 from the intervention apparatus to a production bore of the subsea Christmas tree.
28
29
30