



At left, NANA/Colt engineers Gil Johnson and Todd Smith working on a project. Above, NANA/Colt engineers managing the construction of L Pad at Prudhoe Bay.

NANA/Colt Engineering diversifies, grows its business

The company is establishing a track record in the non-oil sector as well as building on its established oil industry business

By Alan Bailey
PNA Contributing Writer

Motivation and enthusiasm underlie the creative skills required to design and build any major industrial facility — pull together a skilled and energetic engineering team and chances are that your construction project will meet with success.

That's the central philosophy of NANA/Colt Engineering LLC, a full-service engineering company that designs North Slope oilfield facilities and other industrial structures.

"We are a very people-oriented company," John Minier, president and general manager of NANA/Colt Engineering, told PNA. "We sell brains per minute — to do that you have to have motivated people, you have to have energetic people."

The company's steady growth over the last few years attests to the success of this people-focused mantra.

"When we first formed our company five years ago we were about 70 people — now we're up in the vicinity of about 170 to 200 people," Minier said. "We have a full range of engineering disciplines. ... we also have full project management capabilities."

Partnership with Colt Engineering

NANA/Colt was formed in November 1997 as a 50/50 partnership between NANA Development Corp. and Colt Engineering Corp. The new partnership evolved from what had previously been NANA Technical Services.

"NANA Technical Services was providing engineering services in Alaska — mostly providing engineers and designers," Minier said. "What we wanted to do was become a true full-service engineering partner."

Colt Engineering, a large Canadian oil and gas contractor, has amassed broad experience of Arctic construction and is a world-renowned pipeline company. With its wealth of experience, Colt brought know-how and well-developed engineering procedures to the partnership. NANA Technical Services already possessed some policies and procedures, but the Colt material rounded them out, Minier said.

NANA/Colt can also draw on expertise from Colt's staff of over 2,000 people.

"At any given point in time we'll have about five or six people up from Colt, who are assigned to NANA/Colt," Minier said.

However, Minier stressed that Alaska employment is very important to the company.

"We have well over 90 percent of our employment as Alaska residents," Minier said.

NANA/Colt services

NANA/Colt's services now extend across the complete engineering life cycle, from conceptual engineering through detailed design to final commissioning. The company's expertise encompasses the whole gamut of engineering disciplines, including process, mechanical, civil, electrical and instrumentation engineering, and pipeline design.

As well as dealing with the engineering aspects of a project, the company provides construction management oversight, including project management, startup support, functional checkout and commissioning.

"We do procurement for projects as well, if the client requests all buying and supplier quality surveillance," Minier said.

Last year NANA/Colt also extended its services into the construction industry by forming NANA Pacific, which is 49 percent owned by NANA/Colt and 51 percent owned by NANA Development Corp.

"They're targeting basically government construction projects — Department of Defense, Department of Transportation — as well as the industrial sector," Minier said.

Multiple contractors

One of the biggest challenges facing construction management nowadays is working effectively with the large number of different contractors that are involved in a project. Each contractor specializes in some particular aspect of the project, but successful project completion requires close synchronization of all contract work.

NANA/Colt excels in this type of management challenge.

"It's really a multi-company, multi-discipline road that we work with the client," Minier said. "You have to work with a fabricator in Anchorage or Fairbanks or Nikiski. ... you have to coordinate with the North Slope ... on the installation of the new facility ... and you may have to work

with another crew on the functional checkout and commissioning."

Oilfield work

Prior to the partnership with Colt, NANA Technical Services provided engineering services for ARCO in the Prudhoe Bay field.

NANA/Colt has maintained the tradition of working on Prudhoe Bay projects — BP

projects on the North Slope.

"I guess the area we will be most proud of is in the general area of new satellite developments that we are becoming the hallmark company for," Minier said.

Minier cited the example of BP's Milne Point S Pad project and Drill Site 3S for Kuparuk.

"These are projects that came in ... on schedule and on budget," he said.

The non-oil sector

With NANA/Colt's strong track record in the oil and gas industry, the company is finding business in other industry sectors such as electrical power generation.

"What we're trying to do is diversify," Minier said. "We would like to have about 30 percent of our business in the non-oil sector — as an Alaska engineering company you have to be less dependent on the price of a barrel of oil."

For example, the company has been carrying out a major project for Golden Valley Electric Corp.

"They're looking at adding some additional power generation at their North Pole plant," Minier said. "We were the owner engineer in support of power plant expansion."

In addition to its work for Golden Valley, NANA/Colt has done projects for Matanuska Electric and Alaska Village Electric Coop.

Poised for the future

With NANA/Colt's established track record in the oil and gas industry and its burgeoning non-oil business, Minier sees a bright future ahead for the company.

"We've been in a fairly steady growth mode," Minier said. "We're expecting substantial growth in 2003 and we're well poised for the future."

And Minier sees the company's staff as the key to success. The company's core values — honesty, honoring commitments and treating individuals with dignity and respect — drive employee motivation.

"We have a very involved workforce. ... they're decision-makers, they know the business," Minier said. "We create an environment they enjoy working in ...and we have a long waiting list of people who would like to come and work for us." ♦



A NANA/Colt team uses the company's videoconferencing facility.

has continued to be a prime customer since the establishment of a single field operatorship. But a continuing track record of successful projects has led to more customers and involvement in a variety of oil industry projects.

"Currently about 90 percent of our work is in support of the oil and gas industry — we have done work for all of the producing fields on the slope," Minier said. "We're now an alliance partner for engineering — we have an evergreen contract with Conoco Phillips to support its Alpine field as well as to do work on all of their fields."

Although NANA/Colt's work for the oil industry has included many different types of projects, the partnership with Colt has given the company a particular advantage in projects that involve pipeline construction.

"Our goal is to be the number one pipeline engineering contractor in Alaska," Minier said. The company has engineered many of the recent pipeline jobs that have been bid in the state, he said.

"So we do the pipelines, the on-pad facilities," Minier said. "We also do the operation and maintenance engineering support of ongoing operations in operating plants."

Minier feels particularly proud of his company's success in some high-profile