

Key dates in North Sea gas leak

■ **Jan 2011:** Total stops production and plugs problematic **Elgin G4** well

■ **Feb 25, 2012:** Sharp spikes in pressure and temperature detected

■ **Mar 4:** Total decides to cap well permanently by injecting drilling mud

■ **Mar 25:** Sudden pressure increase followed by escape of mud and gas. All 238 personnel evacuated

■ **Mar 30:** Safety flare – just 100m from gas cloud – extinguishes itself, reducing risk of explosion

■ **Apr 5:** Team of crisis engineers to fly to platform to assess how best to cap well

Elgin PUQ

Bridge

Wellhead platform

200,000 cubic metres of methane, hydrogen sulphide and carbon dioxide, escape daily

Sheen of gas condensate

93m

Gas leaks into annulus between outer and inner steel casings

Gas pocket: 1.5km away from gas field

Well G4

Gas field

5,300m