



PROJECT COMPLETION & CONTROLS

CASE STUDY

HOW IPC HIT FIRST STEAM EARLY ON AN \$850M USD BET.

International Petroleum Corporation | Blackrod SAGD Project | Alberta Oil Sands



Background

IPC Canada is an independent oil and gas company with production assets across Western Canada and Southeast Asia. Their flagship development at Blackrod, an \$850M USD Steam Assisted Gravity Drainage (SAGD) facility in the Alberta Oil Sands, represents one of the most significant capital projects in the company's history. Designed to unlock a resource potential of over 1 billion barrels, Blackrod required an execution standard that left no margin for error.

When IPC engaged Arbiter Completions to support their digital commissioning and completions strategy, the mandate was clear: deliver First Steam ahead of industry expectations, on budget, and without compromise to safety or asset integrity.

"IPC's ability to aggressively target First Steam well ahead of industry expectations was not a matter of fortune, but the result of a purposeful digital control framework."

The Challenge

Managing Complexity at the \$850M USD Scale

The Blackrod project presented a convergence of challenges typical of industrial megaprojects, but at a scale where the consequences of failure were magnified.

IPC faced:

- Coordinating hundreds of contractors and subcontractors across a remote SAGD facility
- Maintaining a real-time, accurate picture of completions progress across thousands of ITPs and punch list items
- Eliminating the Emotional Friction that causes field staff to delay or obscure deficiency reporting to leadership
- Ensuring executive leadership could make data-driven decisions without relying on retrospective, paper-based status reports
- Protecting an \$850M USD capital investment from the systemic delays that claim most megaprojects in the sector

In the volatile energy market, a 10% schedule slip on an asset of this size translates to hundreds of millions in deferred revenue and threatens the company's commitments to shareholders. IPC needed more than software. They needed a partner capable of operationalizing digital completions in one of Canada's most complex industrial environments.

The Solution

The Hybrid Advantage: Platform + Partnership

A foundational insight behind Arbiter's engagement at Blackrod was that software alone cannot de-risk a megaproject. The Arbiter team functioned as on-site integrators, managing complex workflows, training field personnel, and ensuring the platform was fully operationalized within the specific technical context of a SAGD facility.

1. Real-Time Deficiency Management (Actions)

Arbiter's Actions module digitized deficiency tracking across the entire facility, enabling the project team to operate on a Pace over Perfection principle. Bottlenecks were identified and cleared in real time, dramatically reducing the time-to-value of the construction phase and keeping the asset on the critical path to First Steam.

2. Digital Inspection Test Plans (ITP and Soft Checks)

Digital ITPs ensured that safety and regulatory compliance were non-negotiable throughout every phase. This rigorous digital approach directly supported Blackrod's zero-incident safety record, a remarkable achievement at this project scale and a testament to the systemic accountability Arbiter established across all contractor groups.

3. Executive-Grade Reporting

Real-time visibility transformed both internal and external communication. By maintaining absolute data integrity, IPC's leadership team could report progress to shareholders with full confidence, moving beyond retrospective summaries to genuinely proactive project governance.

4. Doculink: The Digital Handover Record

Professionals on large capital projects typically spend over 11 hours per week searching for information across disconnected tools. Arbiter's Doculink feature centralized all technical documentation, linking it directly to the commissioning record. This bridged the gap between construction completion and operational start-up, ensuring the operations team had everything they needed on Day One.

The Results

Ahead of Schedule. On Budget. Zero Incidents.

Operational Excellence Outcomes

By maintaining a single source of truth throughout the construction and commissioning phases, IPC achieved the following measurable outcomes:

- First Steam milestone achieved ahead of industry timeline expectations
- Zero safety incidents throughout the commissioning and start-up phase
- Full documentation handover to operations on Day 1 via Doculink
- Real-time deficiency resolution reduced commissioning drag across all contractor groups
- Executive leadership empowered with live project data, no reliance on retrospective reporting
- Phase 1 established a repeatable digital blueprint for Phase 2 and Phase 3 expansions

"By prioritizing the Path to First Steam through rigorous digital completions, IPC transitioned from the reactive posture typical of legacy construction projects to a proactive, data-driven methodology."



Future Readiness

Phase 1 as a Blueprint for 1 Billion+ Barrels

For an asset with over 1 billion barrels of potential, Phase 1 at Blackrod is not an isolated project. It is the foundational blueprint. Through the Arbiter Completions platform, IPC has established a repeatable, scalable digital framework across five key maturity stages:

- **Readiness:** Full team confidence in the digital commissioning and start-up process

- **Adoption:** Arbiter now serves as the living operational asset record for IPC
- **Productivity:** Workflows are optimized. The Path to First Steam is a known, repeatable quantity
- **Risk Reduction:** Phase 1 established a compliant, predictable framework that dramatically lowers execution risk for future phases
- **Growth:** IPC is positioned to scale toward full billion-barrel potential with significantly lower commissioning risk

The partnership between IPC and Arbiter Completions has proven that digitizing Phase 1 of a megaproject de-risks all subsequent expansions, providing a template for industrial excellence in the Canadian Oil Sands.

**Arbiter Completions did not replace IPC's expertise.
It amplified it at scale.**

About Arbiter Completions

Arbiter Completions is a digital commissioning and project completions software platform purpose-built for the energy, EPC, and renewables sectors. Arbiter replaces paper-based processes with real-time deficiency tracking, digital ITPs, and seamless turnover documentation, enabling project teams to deliver faster, safer, and with complete confidence.

De-risk your next capital project.

We'll walk you through it.

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