



M.O.S.T.

McMillan Offshore Survival Training

148 Waterville Road
Belfast ME 04195
207-338-1603

M.O.S.T. Newsletter – November 2009

From the desk of John McMillan

To Our Friends:

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL SUGGESTIONS

Recently, we have seen an increase of trainees going to various parts of the world to work in foreign offshore waters. Mexico, West Coast of Africa, Thailand, Vietnam and Russia are some of the destinations. In conversation with these folks it brought back a few of my memories when international travel was part of my job.

My first international trip was in 1984 to Ciudad del Carmen in Mexico conducting training for Schlumberger. My Spanish was limited so a translator was brought in to assist. He was also our after hours tour guide as he was a local man. We were told to stay away from the water so other beverages of choice were selected. On the 3rd night of our trip while having supper, the waiter brought out a beautiful salad. Being a salad person, I enjoyed every piece of green, crisp lettuce, red ripe tomatoes and other salad favorites. All of these items as you may guess were "freshly" washed with local water. For the next 3 days I was out of commission. Welcome to Mexico!

From 1989 - 1999, I had the opportunity and experience of training in Nigeria for Chevron and other companies. To prepare for my initial trip to Nigeria, we had to get shots and medication. When I told the nurse who I was and why I was there, a man said, "Are you the guys going to Escravos to teach the Water Survival program". When I said "Yes" he immediately said "Don't go into the water with them as there health issues are not sanitary and when you get hungry, don't look in the meat lockers as you never know what you will be eating." I brought beef jerky sticks and did get in the water with the trainees after showers were taken by all.

Flying into the Lagos airport always created high blood pressure and some anxiety for me once the pilot indicated Lagos was in his sights. I would tell the instructor with me before landing "The next 45 minutes of your life will create lasting memories that only you will enjoy. Even when you try to tell the story about the Lagos airport, no one will

really understand."and then we had to return to the airport for departure with all of our "antique " wood carvings recently made in Benin. Without proper paperwork, a "dash" was required and paperwork was never available! Always have something of minimal value for unexpected "dash". Welcome to Africa!

For those that go overseas for their jobs, it is a very exciting opportunity to see the world. It does allow us to realize that living in the United States is a wonderful thing especially when the Airport Homeland Security Guard says "Welcome Home".

John McMillan, President
McMillan Offshore Survival Training