

## INDUSTRY

Energy

## CHALLENGE

Long-term storage for geological data, including mineral samples collected during exploration for hydrocarbons

## SOLUTION

Bespoke offsite storage solution for core samples, seismic tapes, maps and reports, as well as corporate files

## VALUE

- Secure storage underpins compliance obligations
- Easy local access and Iron Mountain industry knowledge aids productivity
- Reduced cost and security risk of sample transportation

## CASE STUDY

### OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

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## ROCK SOLID BESPOKE STORAGE SOLUTION

### VITAL INTELLIGENCE

Exploration and extraction of hydrocarbon deposits beneath the earth's surface is an expensive and highly complex science. Stringent regulations ensure that information collected during drilling and exploration is preserved and, after a period of three years, made available for the industry as a whole. This process is called common data access (CDA).

Arguably, the greatest challenge is the storage of cores collected during drilling. These rock and soil samples can yield vital information about the presence of hydrocarbons and indicate the degree of difficulty involved in extraction. Even if the results were inconclusive at the time, they can yield vital intelligence in years to come and must be preserved and stored carefully.

Other data stored includes seismic reflection surveys, well logs, depth conversion analysis and sedimentology studies, as well as maps and reports produced by petroleum geologists and geophysicists to create a profile of the earth's substructure.

### EXTENSIVE SCALE AND COVERAGE

Iron Mountain® operates a specialist storage facility for the oil and gas industry in Aberdeen. A spokesperson for a leading energy company confirms: "We've been working together for as long as I can remember. We have over 60,000 core samples in store and each can comprise several hundred sub-samples."

Iron Mountain also stores more conventional paper-based records for oil and gas industry clients, as well as other specialist items such as seismic tapes and mapping data. All resources are recorded on eSearch, an Iron Mountain application that enables clients to catalogue, locate and, as necessary, order assets for retrieval through an online portal.

The scale of the operation is impressive. Iron Mountain store around 60% of all core samples ever taken from UK fields, generating nearly half-a-million boxes of rock and ground-up drill cuttings, plus thousands of boxes of reports and other data.

### PRESERVING INTEGRITY

All boxes pertaining to the same core samples are stored together sequentially, rather than being filed randomly as is often the practice with documents. Each box contains typically six feet of core samples. The facility includes specialist racking and handling equipment to aid easy transit of these heavy containers.

Iron Mountain also offers designated private areas to facilitate inspection and sampling, each featuring special benches and offering different lighting options (such as daylight and UV). Each year the facility hosts around 1,500 people on 600 inspection days, laying out over 24 miles of rock samples.

“BEING ABLE TO VIEW AND TAKE SAMPLES IN ABERDEEN IS FAR MORE EFFICIENT FOR US AS IT AVOIDS THE NEED FOR OUR PEOPLE TO TRAVEL”

**Spokesperson**  
**Oil and Gas Company**

## LOCAL CONVENIENCE

With many oil and gas companies located in and around Aberdeen, the specialist offsite storage service provides companies with easy and highly efficient local access to core samples and other vital geological data and helps enhance compliance with industry regulations.

“Our company conducts about 20 viewings each year,” confirms one oil company spokesperson. “The private inspection rooms are a fantastic facility and Iron Mountain makes them available to us at a very reasonable rate. Being able to view and take samples in Aberdeen is far more efficient for us as it avoids the need for our people to travel to the BGS national core store in Nottingham, where the facilities for inspection are often oversubscribed.”

Companies can also use the Iron Mountain inspection rooms to view and extract information from stored paper files. Not only does this facilitate easy access it reduces the cost and security risk of transportation.

## ADDING VALUE

Working with Iron Mountain has other benefits too. “Iron Mountain also know who we need to contact at oil companies to gain permission to view and extract samples that are not owned by us. We see a lot of change in our industry, with people coming and going all the time, so that knowledge and those contacts are enormously valuable,” says the oil company spokesperson.

In addition, Iron Mountain offers a data transfer service for the industry. Many oil and gas companies have a wealth of data stored on obsolete media such as floppy discs or magnetic tapes. Iron Mountain has the capability to organise the transfer of this data onto modern media drives as required.

“IRON MOUNTAIN PROVIDES A FANTASTIC SERVICE. THEY ARE ALWAYS AVAILABLE FOR GUIDANCE ON BEST PRACTICE AND THEIR FACILITIES ARE GREAT. THEY NEVER LET US DOWN.”

**Spokesperson**  
**Oil and Gas Company**

[WWW.IRONMOUNTAIN.CO.UK](http://WWW.IRONMOUNTAIN.CO.UK)

### ABOUT IRON MOUNTAIN

Iron Mountain operates in major markets worldwide, serving thousands of customers throughout the UK, Europe, US, Canada, Asia Pacific and Latin America. For more information, visit our website at [www.ironmountain.co.uk](http://www.ironmountain.co.uk) or at [www.ironmountain.ie](http://www.ironmountain.ie)

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