At 50, PHI rules Acadiana’s skies

Anniversary promises to be bittersweet for president

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LAFAYETTE — The familiar yellow helicopters that soar over the bayou every day through acrobatic maneuvers and are the official carrier of the governor and the president of the United States have long seemed to promise an unbroken flow of success for Phillips Petroleum Co., the company that operates them.

But things have been a bit more erratic over the past year, and the company has weathered a storm.

"It’s been a rough year," said Paul G. Deisz, chief executive officer of Phillips Petroleum Co. "We’ve had some challenges, but overall we’ve done well." He noted that the company’s stock price has climbed more than 50 percent since the start of the year.

Despite the challenges, Deisz said Phillips is well positioned for the future and remains committed to its core business of producing oil and natural gas.

"We’re optimistic about the future," he said. "We believe we can continue to grow and remain competitive."