

Open Government Status:
FULLY OPEN

OIAC HLG/11 M1

**HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE
OFFSHORE INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
HELICOPTER LIAISON GROUP (OIAC HLG)**

Minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2011 at HSE, Norwich

Present

Representing

Chair: Tom McLaren

HSE

Members: Robert Paterson
Mike Crabb
Alex Knight
Kevin Payne
Dave Howson
Simon Webb
Ian Evans
John Taylor
Mark Robinson
Tony Ridley
Pat Naylor

Oil & Gas UK
HCA
HCA
CAA
CAA
CAA
IADC/BROA
Unite, TGWU Section
Unite, Amicus Section
BALPA
HSE

Secretary: Phil Sumner

HSE

Item 1 – Introduction / Apologies

1. Apologies had been received from Peter Norton, BHA. Willie Gibson, OCA had tendered his resignation. Advice on a replacement was awaited. It was noted that Paul Bayliss would be representing IMCA, following the retirement of Phil Wiggs.

Item 2 – Status of Action outstanding from minutes of the previous meeting

ACTION 2: Pat Naylor to investigate the requirements for the storage of helifuel as covered in the latest draft of COSHH Essentials with OSD's Occupational Health Team

Advice was awaited. It was assumed, however, that there would be no specific requirements regarding the storage of aviation fuel in COSHH Essentials.

NO FURTHER ACTION

Item 3 – Action from OIAC meeting held on 18/11/10 to report on OIAC sub-group overlaps

2. Tom McLaren explained that he was seeking members' views on the viability of retaining HLG as a separate sub-Group of OIAC and would present these to OIAC's meeting on 17 March 2011 when HLG's remit for a further year would be decided. He noted that the Secretary had compiled a tabular comparison of HLG's Terms of Reference with those of HSSG, ASTG and HSRMC in order to assist consideration. The following points were amongst those made in discussion:

- Oil & Gas UK - Robert Paterson advised that HSSG was a broad-based steering group, comprised of senior industry representatives, which could commission technical advice from specialist sub-groups on a wide-range of helicopter related issues; membership could be open to all members of HLG. He felt there was a total overlap with HLG and that the time was now right to consider closing HLG with all outstanding issues remitted to HSSG.
- HSE - Pat Naylor pointed out that HLG was an OIAC sanctioned Group having a key role in ensuring effective co-operation between HSE and CAA as Regulators, and with HCA as the Certifying body; as such it should not be subsumed into an industry-led Group. He did not see HSSG's role as being long-term and felt that HLG should in due course take it over.
- Unite - John Taylor advised that he was a long-standing member of OIAC and HLG and more recently of HTG (which preceded HSSG). He had always regarded HLG as distinct from other Groups as it provided a forum for discussing helideck issues which was not available elsewhere. It was fundamental that as a TU representative, he was able to sit on HLG as a right and not by invitation, as was the case with industry helicopter Groups. HLG also provided an important source of information of benefit to the workforce which was not available elsewhere, research in particular.
- CAA - although Kevin Payne saw some overlaps, he felt that HLG provided a regular 'face to face' liaison forum as prescribed by the terms of the MoU between CAA and HSE.
- In a written response, Phil Ley, OCA, advised that although little had been received from its member companies, he saw a need to rationalise where possible the work of the four groups discussing helicopter issues in order to avoid duplication, while ensuring representation was not affected.

3. In conclusion, the Chairman stated that it was clearly the majority view that the discussions held within HLG were unique and that OIAC should be requested to confirm HLG's mandate for a further year, whilst registering dissension from Oil & Gas UK.

ACTION 1: Tom McLaren to request that HLG's mandate should be extended for a further year when presenting HLG's annual report to OIAC's meeting on 17 March 2011

Item 4 – NUI fire-fighting provisions: review of current position and the way forward

4. Robert Paterson advised that he was leading a small industry group which was considering fire-fighting arrangements on helidecks of normally unattended installations. Oil & Gas UK had been advised by HSE that CAA as the principle producer of helideck requirements in CAP 437 would be responsible for prescribing fire-fighting arrangements; their proposals (which it was subsequently agreed would be presented in the form of a letter to industry and later adopted as an Appendix in CAP 437) were awaited in order that a proper consultation process with industry could take place.

5. Pat Naylor referred to recent discussions involving HSE, CAA and HCA which had confirmed CAA's primacy in defining active NUI fire-fighting systems. The agreed approach could be summarised as follows:

- Newbuild NUIs must comply with the current revision of CAP437 in respect of helideck fire-fighting requirements.
- In relation to existing NUIs an Appendix to CAP 437 will be developed by CAA from a letter to industry outlining a methodology for assessing helideck fire-fighting requirements. Factors influencing fire-fighting requirements will include practicability considerations and should enable prioritisation for case by case review.

ACTION 2: CAA, to prepare a NUI fire-fighting methodology initially incorporated as a letter to industry and later to be added as an Appendix to CAP437. Prior to formal issue CAA will arrange a process of consultation with major stakeholders

Item 5 – Update of Guidelines for the Management of Aviation Operations

6. Robert Paterson advised that the revised Guidelines were in the final stages of preparation and a launch date of 14 April 2011 had been fixed.

Item 6 – Further consideration of SINTEF Helicopter Safety Study HSS 3

7. Pat Naylor advised that it was evident from a statistical analysis of SINTEF's report that there was little difference between helicopter safety performance on the UKCS and NCS; the three major accidents which had occurred in recent years on the UKCS had given a distorted picture of UKCS safety performance and added there were no procedures or regulations in place which would have prevented similar accidents occurring in the Norwegian sector. HSE did not intend to undertake further evaluation of the report. Dave Howson agreed to advise at the next meeting whether CAA had identified any specific issues. In response to concerns expressed by John Taylor it was agreed to place an article in the next issue of Teashack News refuting the negative publicity about helicopter safety performance on the UKCS which had been generated in Norway as a result of the report.

ACTION 3: Dave Howson to advise at the next meeting whether CAA had identified any specific issues in SINTEF's report

**ACTION 4: Pat Naylor to produce a draft article for Teashack News:
Robert Paterson to circulate for comments within industry**

Item 7 - Draft HSE Offshore Information Sheets

a) Offshore helideck design considerations – environmental effects

Pat Naylor advised that a draft OIS was currently in the consultation stage – members had received a draft including CAA's comments. Tom McLaren requested that any further comments be forwarded to the Secretary by 16/2/11. Alex Knight explained the process by which testing could be carried out in order to model and design out the effects of turbulence on offshore helidecks. Where severe problems remained, HCA would, if necessary, publish limitations and/or restrictions for operations to the helideck. Pat Naylor undertook to consider how Safety Representatives could be advised of the rationale when helideck restrictions and/or limitations needed to be put in place on particular installations.

ACTION 5: Pat Naylor to consider how Safety Representatives could be informed of the rationale when restrictions and/or limitations needed to be imposed by HCA

b) Testing of helideck foam production systems

The Secretary advised that the OIS was now in final form following completion of consultation and would be processed for issue.

Item 8 – Research update

8. Dave Howson briefly summarised progress on helideck related and other HSE co-funded research projects within the HSRMC programme which were contained within the update which had been circulated to members. Future updates would include a dictionary of 'acronyms'.

He agreed to keep John Taylor updated on developments taking place within EASA regarding helicopter ditching and water impact rules and advisory material, including emergency breathing systems.

Item 9 – Any other business

9. No issues were raised.

Item 10 – Date and venue for next meeting

10. It was agreed to hold the next meeting in London on Monday 20 June 2011. The Secretary was requested to enquire about the possibility of using IMCA's facilities. **POST MEETING NOTE:** IMCA has agreed to the use of its offices at 52, Grosvenor Gardens, SW1 for the meeting.

SUMMARY OF AGREED ACTIONS

- ACTION 1:** Tom McLaren to request that HLG's mandate should be extended for a further year when presenting HLG's annual report to OIAC's meeting on 17 March 2011
- ACTION 2:** CAA to prepare an NUI fire-fighting methodology initially incorporated as a letter to industry and later to added as an Appendix to CAP437. Prior to formal issue CAA will arrange a process of consultation with major stakeholders
- ACTION 3:** Dave Howson to advise at the next meeting whether CAA had identified any specific issues in SINTEF's report
- ACTION 4:** Pat Naylor to produce a draft article for Teashack News:
Robert Paterson to circulate for comments within industry
- ACTION 5:** Pat Naylor to consider how Safety Representatives could be informed of the rationale behind when restrictions and/or limitations needed to be imposed by HCA