

**HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION
OFFSHORE INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
HELICOPTER LIAISON GROUP**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2006 in Lord Cullen House,
Aberdeen**

Present

Chair:	Rae McIntosh	HSE
Members:	John Monaghan	HCA
	Mike Crabb	HCA
	Kevin Payne	CAA
	Dave Howson	CAA
	John Taylor	TGWU
	Ian Evans	BROA
	Mike Lunt	HSE
	Graham Morrison	HSE
Secretary:	Phil Sumner	HSE

Item 1 – Introduction/Apologies

1. The Chairman welcomed John Monaghan, HCA.
2. Apologies had been tendered by Peter Norton (BHAB), Phil Wiggs (IMCA), Russ Brown (IADC), Rab Wilson (AMICUS) and Brian Teeder (UKOOA).

Item 2 – Identify AOB

3. The following items were tabled for discussion;
 - OGP report – Safety performance of helicopter operations in the oil and gas industry 2004 data (Kevin Payne) – taken under Item 4
 - Consultation on changes to survival course training (John Taylor)
 - Dangerous goods by air – offshore training requirements (John Monaghan) – taken under Item 4
 - EC Noise and Vibration Directives (Kevin Payne)

Item 3 – Status of matters arising from minutes of the previous meeting

4. **Action 1: HSE to compile a listing of the issues to be addressed in the review of the Offshore Helideck Design Guidelines, with CAA assistance.**

Covered under agenda Item 6.

- Action 2: Members to provide any comments on the interim helideck inspection summary report to Mike Lunt.**

Comments had been received only from CAA. Mike Lunt would provide a more comprehensive report on the continuing helideck inspection programme at HLG's next meeting.

- Action 3: Bill Quinn to ascertain the scope of the proposed EC Noise and Vibration Directives.**

Advice had been provided to Brian Teeder based on information provided by CAA. The issue would be discussed further under AOB.

Item 4 – UKOOA Aviation Safety Technical Group Open Meeting/Seminar, 3 May 2006

5. In Brian Teeder's absence, Mike Lunt provided a summary of the topics covered at this event. Its objective was to provide an update on projects undertaken and progress made by ASTG in its first year of business and consider its future direction. (Copies of the presentations are available for viewing on the UKOOA website at www.ukooa.org.uk).

6. Presentations on the four new helicopter types shortly due to enter service on the UKCS had been given and Dave Howson expressed concern over the apparently poor crashworthiness of the S92 emergency flotation system. This was surprising in view of the previous work on water impact crash resistance which had been published. The European Aviation Safety Agency took over responsibility for the helicopter airworthiness rules in September 2003, and the changes highlighted by the JAA/FAA Rotorcraft Study Group had not yet been progressed. The Chairman pointed out that although the matter was outside HLG's remit it was open for the Group to make an input to the responsible authorities if appropriate.

- Action 1: CAA to produce an Information Note for HLG summarising the issue.**

Dangerous Goods by Air – offshore training requirements

7. John Monaghan reminded members of the responsibilities of duty holders to provide training to appropriate staff which would meet the requirements of the Air Navigation (Dangerous Goods) Regulations 2002.

CAA had written to duty holders in March 2006 detailing methods of providing dangerous goods training to these personnel that would meet the applicable requirements and the issue needed to be addressed widely across the offshore industry. Members agreed to do what they could to ensure wider awareness of the Regulations.

Action 2: HLG members to raise awareness of this issue.

OGP 2004 Data Report

8. Kevin Payne provided an overview of OGP's latest annual report presenting the safety performance of that part of the world-wide helicopter industry involved in oil and gas exploration and production during 2004 (available on the OGP website at www.ogp.org). The report contained a considerable amount of useful comparative data on offshore helicopter activities and accidents and causes based on submissions from helicopter operators placed in a five year context. A total of 20 helicopter accidents were reported during 2004 with 26 fatalities. This was a 43% reduction in total accidents over 2003 and the lowest number in the last five years.

Item 5 – UKOOA Joint Industry Guidance – testing of helideck perimeter safety nets

9. Mike Lunt outlined the four main areas to be addressed in the helideck safety net testing programme which was identified in the guidance. It was important that the document was widely circulated offshore and any problems in its implementation identified. HCA believed from evidence so far that there was good awareness of the guidance in the southern sector of the North Sea. John Taylor voiced concern that guidance such as this was not always reaching the offshore workforce as it should – this had been acknowledged by Step Change.

Item 6 – Update of the Offshore Helideck Design Guidelines

10. Kevin Payne reported that statistics on the extent of usage of the Guidelines which had been supplied by HSE's Webteam indicated an upward trend of interest in the document, both within the UK and internationally. An initial assessment which he had conducted with Mike Lunt revealed there was a considerable amount of information duplication between the Guidelines, CAP437 and UKOOA's Guidelines for Managing Offshore Helidecks, requiring substantial textual editing. The Chairman stressed the importance of eliminating overlap between each document in order to ensure that they complemented each other.

Item 7 – HSRMC research programme for joint funding and SRG Safety Plan 2006/07 – 2010/11

11. Dave Howson provided an overview of the current status of each project within the helicopter safety research programme managed by CAA, based on the update circulated to members. HLG noted, in particular, that the

funding available for the final stage of the project covering egress from ditched side floating helicopters, which had recently been raised by TGWU with Ministers, was still insufficient to enable the project to proceed at present.

12. Dave Howson circulated for members' information copies of the Chapter within the CAA SRG Safety Plan for 2006/7 – 2010/11 which covered planned activities connected with large public transport helicopters supporting the UK's offshore oil and gas industry. The chapter covers SRG's plans for continuing work in the areas of helicopter airworthiness, operational improvements and helideck safety.

Item 8 - AOB

EC Noise and Vibration Directives

13. Kevin Payne reported that he had written separately to Andie Michael and Brian Coles, HSE setting out what he understood was the applicability of each Directive in respect of offshore helicopter operations. He offered to arrange a meeting with CAA's Health, Safety and Environment adviser if any uncertainties remained.

Action 3: HSE to check the position with its policy staff and provide advice to HLG.

Consultation on changes to offshore survival training

14. John Taylor expressed concern at changes to the OPITO BOSIET and HUET training standards which were being proposed in a document currently out for consultation. The key change was the inclusion in HUET of a requirement for egress with an exit mechanism. Whilst stressing that TGWU had yet to agree its position on the issue, he said there was widespread opposition to its inclusion amongst the UK workforce on the grounds that this additional requirement was likely to cause stress. There was no equivalent requirement in Norwegian survival training courses.

Item 9 – Timing of future meetings, including possible agenda items

15. Members supported the continuation of twice yearly HLG meetings. It was agreed to meet again in November 2006 (HSE to propose dates).

Agenda items to include;

- BP project Jigsaw update (a BP representative should be invited to speak)
- Offshore Helideck Design Guide update
- Offshore helideck inspection programme
- Feedback from HCA on findings from its offshore helideck inspection programme (this to be made a standing item).

Actions agreed at OIAC HLG meeting on 23 May 2006

- Action 1: CAA to produce an Information Note for HLG summarising the issue of the crashworthiness of the S92 emergency flotation system.**
- Action 2: HLG members to raise awareness of the offshore training requirements of the Air Navigation (Dangerous Goods) Regulations 2002.**
- Action 3: HSE to check the position with its Policy staff and provide advice to HLG about the applicability of the EC Noise and Vibration Directives.**