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Minutes of the meeting of the Offshore Industry Advisory Committee held on
23 March 2010 in Lord Cullen House, Aberdeen

ATTENDEES

Present

Steve Walker, Chairman, HSE
Lyndsey Bennett, Secretariat, HSE
Jim Neilson, HSE
Peter Mills, HSE
Fraser Easton, HSE
Rob Ashdown, BROA
Andrew Campbell, WSCA
Graham Duff, DNV
Susan Elston, COTA
Bob Kyle, O&GUK (attending on behalf of Robert Paterson)
John Monks, IADC
Phil Ley, OCA
Simon Alletson, MCA (attending on behalf of Neaz Hyder)
Jake Molloy, RMT
Ian Tasker, STUC
Glen White, IADC

Observers

None

Presenters

George Boothby, HSE

Apologies

Jane Bugler, IMCA
Allan Graveson, Nautilus UK
Neaz Hyder, MCA
Robert Paterson, O&GUK
Mark Robinson, Unite (Amicus Section)
John Taylor, Unite (TGWU)

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1	Introduction, apologies and minutes from last meeting	
1.1	Steve Walker welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
1.2	Steve welcomed new members, Rob Ashdown from BROA and Glen White from IADC. Rob has replaced Edmund Brookes who retired in October; and Glen will take over from John Monks.	
1.3	The draft minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2009 were accepted as a true record of the meeting.	
1.4	Apologies were received from Jane Bugler (IMCA), Allan Graveson (Nautilus UK), Neaz Hyder (MCA), Robert Paterson (O&GUK), Mark Robinson (Unite) and John Taylor (TGWU).	
1.5	Steve confirmed that all actions from the previous meeting were complete.	
2	HLG Update – Tom McLaren	
2.1	Tom McLaren had prepared a paper which had been circulated to	

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	members prior to the meeting.	
2.2	<p>Tom provided an overview of the Helicopter Liaison Group for new members. Tom explained that he was at OIAC for two purposes: to highlight the key points in the paper; and to seek continuation of HLG for another year. He explained that the past year had been demanding due to the helicopter ditch in February and the Miller crash in April, both of which raised a lot of issues which were outlined in the paper.</p> <p>Tom highlighted a couple of the issues from the paper, such as Personal Locater Beacons (PLBs) and fire-fighting equipment on Normally Unmanned Installations (NUIs). Tom explained that the CAA had produced a paper on the latter proposing a potential system that may suit the industry, in terms of cost and maintenance, and this was currently out for consultation.</p>	
2.3	<p>Steve Walker offered members the opportunity to raise any questions they had from the HLG paper.</p> <p>Jake Molloy asked what matters had been considered regarding the new helideck lighting scheme and highlighted that it was a big issue for the Helicopter Taskforce Group (HTG). Jake asked if HLG could assist with raising the profile of this issue. Tom provided an overview of the issue for members who were not familiar with it, explaining how this new lighting scheme will make improvements for helicopters approaching a helideck. Tom confirmed that he would like OIAC to help with this issue.</p>	
2.4	Glen White raised the issue about lighting systems on helidecks changing regularly. Tom agreed this was a valid point and stressed how there is a need to drive for continuous improvement on aircraft safety. Tom added that this system was definitely an improvement.	
2.5	Jake Molloy commented that light played a part in the two helicopter incidents last year and welcomed the CAA research on helideck lighting.	
2.6	Rob Ashdown asked about the ancillary issues with regards to LED systems and if they had been resolved. Tom believed they had. Tom went on to say that a decision has not been made about the new helideck lighting system; however, it is currently being evaluated. Steve added that he will encourage consistency from regulators (through the global offshore regulators) in other countries if the UK decides this system is suitable.	
2.7	Steve asked if members were happy for HLG to continue for another years. All members agreed. John Monks added that having sat on the HLG he found the group very worthwhile.	
3	Policy Update – Jim Neilson	
3.1	Jim Neilson explained the purpose of his presentation was twofold: to provide an update on amendments to the AOGBO, offshore regulations and the recent stakeholder events; and to inform members about HSE's involvement with the North Sea Offshore Authorities Forum (NSOAF) which was a request from OIAC members from the previous meeting.	
3.2	Jim informed members about the two stakeholder events which took	

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	<p>place in Aberdeen and Liverpool during February. The purpose of these events was to give HSE an early opportunity to explain to stakeholders the changes it was proposing to the offshore regulatory framework and to give them a chance to comment. 48 bodies representing government and industry attended the two events. The proposals were welcomed, however, stakeholders raised several issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ When does the decommissioning/dismantling of an offshore installation end ▪ Will the Environment Agency allow the storage of radioactive waste from drilling offshore, and do we need to legislate ▪ Plan for hydrocarbon gas storage in a range of geological formations that do not have petroleum, not just salt caverns ▪ Should the Confined Spaces Regulations be extended to offshore regulations ▪ What legislative cover does HSE want for compressed air storage offshore ▪ What subsequent activities do we want notification of in relation to onshore hydrocarbon gas storage. Is it initial fill up, subsequent maintenance or every top up activity ▪ Although stakeholders understand why we want there to be a requirement for a UK Registered office, there is concern about how this would work in practice 	
3.3	<p>Jim explained that with regards to the Confined Spaces Regulations, it is too late in the process for this issue to be included in the proposed amendments. HSE has taken the decision to park this for a future legislative review. There were valid reasons as to why the Regulations were not initially included which will requiring reviewing with industry.</p>	
3.4	<p>John Monks sought clarification on the non-application of the Confined Spaces Regulations offshore. Jim explained that AOBGO is written to exclude the Regulations from offshore, pipeline and wells work. However, Jim clarified that where the Health and Safety at Work etc Act applies then HSE would expect duty holders to apply the principles.</p>	
3.5	<p>Jim advised members that the consultation document will be available to share informally with OIAC members at the end of May. This is before formal consultation begins in June.</p> <p>Steve Walker added that he values the views of OIAC members on this consultation. He clarified that it would be shared with individual members of OIAC rather than members' organisations.</p>	
3.6	<p>Jim continued his presentation to inform members about the NSOAF EU Working Group. Jim provided members with two handouts; the terms of reference; and the mandate for the working group. Jim explained this is a formal working group set up to discuss issues offshore legislative issues between member countries. The working group is chaired by Norway, who also acts as Secretariat. Denmark, Netherlands and the UK are active members of the group. Germany, France, Faroe Islands and Sweden are papers only members.</p> <p>The group meet twice a year to discuss EU Directives, emerging issues</p>	

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	<p>and the potential impact they have offshore. Jim confirmed that he finds it a useful forum. Jim added that although the group tries to achieve a common understanding, each member state individually implements Directives or raises issues with the EC.</p> <p>Jim explained that the group have two main objectives in the plan of work for the year: to maintain 'working manuals'; and to take forward projects (this being the main vehicle for delivery of work). The working manuals are a list of Directives in place, or proposals for Directives, and provide details on how each country has implemented the Directive. There are currently two projects: one on market research surveillance lead by Norway; and the other on Directive 92/91, which is due for review in 2013. The group are tasked with identifying areas of this Directive that require improvement and the UK is the Chair for this project. Jim agreed to update OIAC on progress with this project.</p>	
3.7	<p>Steve Walker clarified that the NSOAF is not EU driven; it is a forum for all offshore regulators who work in the North Sea and adjoining areas. He added that there are many working groups under NSOAF such as health and safety, carbon capture and storage, training etc.</p>	
3.8	<p>Rob Ashdown commented that BROA members have expressed their concerns regarding the perceived distance between NSOAF and industry. Rob recognised that the group is for regulators but asked if there was any intention to share with industry. Tom McLaren advised that there was an NSOAF event at the Hague which gave industry the opportunity to discuss issues.</p>	
3.9	<p>Tom McLaren added that NSOAF were organising another conference which will take place at Ardoe House in Aberdeen in April. CEO's of offshore organisations have been invited and an agenda is available for this conference.</p>	
4	Operational Update – Peter Mills	
4.1	<p>Peter informed members that the purpose of this update was to provide information on accident and incident statistics, enforcement activity and HSE's regulatory approach to novel type installations.</p>	
4.2	<p>Peter informed members of the one main issue, hydrocarbon releases (HCR). Peter explained that every year there is a reducing target for significant hydrocarbon releases and this year it is 66 and so far the industry are likely to exceed this target. Peter explained that in an attempt to address this situation HSE are planning to do more in depth investigations.</p>	
4.3	<p>Bob Kyle expressed his disappointment at the industry not being able to drive down significant HCR, even with the considerable effort that is being made in terms of guidelines, competencies, asset integrity events etc. Bob believes that there is a need to gain a better understanding of the underlying root causes of these 66 releases. He also ventured that there is a need to compare releases with the number of installations, adding that per company the numbers are low but collectively the statistics show a different picture. Bob highlighted that we have reached a plateau and stressed that people don't realise the effort it has taken to achieve this.</p>	

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4.4	<p>Andrew Campbell asked if there was a breakdown of where the releases had occurred. Tom McLaren mentioned the report HSL produced last year on Underlying Causes of HCR's, which is on the HSE website, and explained that it is the usual places such as small bore pipework, flanges and boreholes, reciprocating gas compressors. Tom added that HSE are about to embark on a more in depth analysis of HCR's which will look at isolation of plant, permit to work, competence/supervision. Bob said these are disturbing root causes and thought the industry had eradicated these.</p>	
4.5	<p>Peter went on to update members on enforcement activity. Ian Tasker enquired about the occupational health issues that required improvement notices. Steve Walker explained it was legionella (drinking potable water).</p>	
4.6	<p>Peter concluded his presentation with HSE's approach to regulating novel type installations, such as Solan, the articulated tower. He explained that Solan is a project that is moving fairly rapidly and should be ready by late next year. He explained there is a need for external expertise to understand the uncertainties with a novel approach and this includes going the extra regulatory mile.</p>	
5	Health and Safety Statistics – Peter Mills	
5.1	<p>This item was included as part of the Operational Update.</p>	
6	WIG – Fraser Easton	
6.1	<p>Fraser explained how members had endorsed the programme of work for WIG for the forthcoming year at the previous OIAC meeting. The programme had three main objectives: events; training; and inspection programme.</p> <p>The purpose of planned events is to show a continued commitment to hearing the views and concerns of those on the front line, and to gather first-hand examples of good practice that can be disseminated to industry. The first event on 2 March in Aberdeen hosted 60 delegates and 10 members of WIG, and this event was over-subscribed. The second event is taking place on 25 March and will take the same format, i.e. two thirds safety representatives and other workforce members covering the various disciplines and duty holders offshore.</p> <p>Following this event, WIG will gather the information and feedback to OIAC for their consideration.</p>	
6.2	<p>Fraser explained there were two reoccurring issues emerging from the event: the need to review and revise training for safety representatives, and the need to secure better understanding of the powers and duties of safety representatives – among both the workforce and management.</p>	
6.3	<p>Jake Molloy confirmed the success of the event and added that he felt the smaller events helped promote discussion. Steve Walker echoed this. Jake added that feedback from the event was excellent and believed this was down to the changed concept which encouraged engagement.</p>	
6.3	<p>Fraser went on to talk about the current OPITO SI971 training course</p>	

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	<p>which is currently undergoing three-yearly review and re-accreditation. WIG has been represented at two meetings with training providers and provided advice and information on where changes are seen to be necessary. It was felt that while the current course is, subject to some modest changes in emphasis, a good foundation course for SI 971 representatives, there is a growing consensus regarding the need to identify a suite of additional courses which would better equip representatives to carry out their duties to full effect.</p>	
6.4	<p>Fraser informed members on progress with OSD's inspection programme targeted at assessing the level/securing compliance with SI971. The inspection pack is almost complete and was piloted last week and awaits evaluation. The roll out of the inspection programme is due for early May and will target a representative sample of 30-40 installations in the UKCS over a period of approximately 6-8 months. Fraser confirmed that enforcement action will be taken as necessary and the programme will give HSE intelligence on where gaps exist. Findings will be fed back to WIG for consideration.</p>	
6.5	<p>Fraser explained that the WIG section on HSE's website is potentially a powerful tool but is aware of the deficiencies of this site. It is used by safety representatives to obtain information on workforce involvement and he is looking at ways in which the site can be improved and be used as a better vehicle to inform and engage the offshore workforce.</p>	
6.6	<p>Fraser finished his update by asking members to endorse new member Alan Caldwell who has replaced John Skeggs as IADC representative. Fraser added that Alan had already made a good contribution to the group. Fraser gave formal thanks for John Skeggs' excellent contribution to WIG. Members gave endorsement for new member Alan Caldwell.</p>	
7	Permit to Work – Jim Neilson	
7.1	<p>Steve Walker apologised to members for Rob Miles not being able to attend OIAC and explained this was due to travel problems.</p> <p>Jim Neilson summarised the discussion from the previous meeting and explained that at the adjournment debate in October 2009, the Minister had given OIAC the task of identifying how to improve the use of Permit to Work systems offshore. Jim updated members on the three action points that arose from the last meeting which were: to circulate the PTW guidance and ask HSE to consider if this guidance needed to be updated; for HSE to analyse its incident and investigation data to try to identify any incidents associated with PTW failures; and for HSE to help the trade unions prepare a questionnaire that would be used to consult the workforce on this issue.</p>	
7.2	<p>Jim explained how Jake Molloy and John Taylor had highlighted at the last meeting that the workforce views would need to be considered. Jim thanked Rob Miles for producing the draft questionnaire for trade unions. The next step is for Jake and John (and other union members as appropriate) to use the questionnaire to engage with the workforce on this issue.</p> <p>Susan Elston commented that she felt the questionnaire would be difficult to evaluate in its current form and thought it was potentially off-</p>	

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	putting for people to respond and suggested tick box options would be more user-friendly. Jim confirmed that we could look to amend the questionnaire following this feedback.	
7.3	Andrew Campbell asked if it was worth sharing with Wells Services Contractors as they operate in lots of different situations. Jake confirmed that feedback from across the board would be useful. Jim Neilson asked Jake when the feedback from the questionnaire would be available for feeding back to OIAC. Jake confirmed this would be available for the November OIAC.	Jake Molloy to provide feedback on questionnaire at November OIAC
7.4	Jim went on to talk about the work that had been done to analyse if permit to work systems had any impact on incidents. Jim confirmed that Rob Miles has recently completed this analysis and will provide feedback at the November meeting. The early indications show factors include inadequate risk assessment, permits not being completed properly and follow up action not being taken.	Permit to Work to be included as an agenda item for November OIAC
7.5	Jim went on to talk about the final action, which was deciding whether HSE's current guidance on Permit to Work was suitable. Jim confirmed that this guidance is not just for the offshore industry, it also covers the petroleum and chemical industries. The current view from colleagues in HSE is that it does not require updating as it is still relevant for their industries. However, there was feedback that often permit to work systems are used too extensively onshore, often for minor activities and HSE is looking to produce information sheets to tackle this issue. For offshore, OIAC needs to consider what this means for us, for example, do we follow this approach and use information sheets where the guidance requires updating. Jim concluded by saying that these three strands of work will need to be pulled together in a paper for the November meeting, where OIAC will be asked to finalise their proposal on how to improve the use of PTW systems offshore.	
7.6	Bob Kyle informed members that OPITO have been developing standards on training as a theory is, if training is common then that goes a long to ensuring commonality. Bob advised that the first draft of these standards will be available in the second quarter of the year (April-June) and he has agreed to share a copy with Jim Neilson as it is important that OIAC links in with these issues. Bob also raised the issue about companies auditing their own permit to work systems. Jim suggested that the trade unions could add a question around this into the questionnaire.	
7.7	Phil Ley asked Jake Molloy how the questionnaire would be distributed to the workforce. Jake confirmed this would be by websites, publications, shop stewards etc – basically as wide as possible. Jake added that he felt this is an area that could bring improvement and we should definitely employ efforts towards it. Jake confirmed that John Taylor and he would co-ordinate the feedback for Jim Neilson.	
7.8	Jake Molloy added that members should engage their own bodies and associations and encourage them to respond to the questionnaire.	Secretariat to re-circulate permit to work paper
8	EERTAG Update – George Boothby	

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8.1	George Boothby provided this update. The annual report had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. George agreed to provide members with a little more detail on several issues outlined in the paper.	
8.2	<p>George began by explaining how the British Airline Pilot's Association (BALPA) have concerns about the Dacon scoop used by emergency response vessels as they do not believe this equipment is a suitable method of recovery. HSE are of the opinion that this is a piece of rescue equipment that is of use to rescuers and have attended a number of meetings with BALPA to discuss their concerns about the scoop. There is no agreement on this with BALPA. Jake Molloy agrees with BALPA's policy.</p> <p>Simon Alletson asked for the issue on the Dacon scoop to be confirmed. Bob Kyle advised about video footage which shows recovery with nets. Bob explained how helicopter pilots do not want to fly if this is the only option for recovery with Dacon scoops. George confirmed that this piece of equipment is meeting standards set by HSE and can be used in adverse weather conditions.</p>	
8.3	George went on to provide details on the monitoring of steps taken by duty holders and manufacturers to confirm the fitness for purpose of freefall lifeboats in use on the UKCS. George explained that this started in Norway following a commissioning exercise. A number of other issues unravelled from the incident such as canopy deflection, acceleration and issues regarding the testing of freefall lifeboats and 'On-Load Release Hooks'. The Norwegians (OLF and Norwegian Ship Owners Associations) have carried out a lot of research on this issue and produced a report with actions and recommendations – HSE will feed this back to the industry.	
8.4	<p>Members went on to have a discussion around suitable weight restrictions. Graham Duff raised the point about modification to davits rather than the lifeboat. Members discussed how the maximum weight had been increased to 98kg. The marine industry had originally provided a guideline of 75kg. However, the Petroleum Institute had highlighted this figure as not being accurate for the average person working offshore. Duty holders have been advised to adjust their lifeboat loading accordingly.</p> <p>Members went on to discuss how there should be caution when deciding on a suitable weight. George confirmed that HSE have issued guidance on this. There is also a Step Change working group to discuss the problems around this issue.</p>	
8.5	Steve Walker recognised that it had been a busy year for EERTAG and thanked the group for their efforts.	
9	OSD Plan of work 2010/11 – Steve Walker	
9.1	Steve provided members with an update on the issues OSD will be majoring on over the forthcoming year. Steve drew on the climate the regulator is in due to planning for tight resources. However, because of OSD's cost recovery regime there is a lot more certainly about retention of resources and Steve confirmed that a recruitment campaign will go	

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	ahead next month.	
9.2	Steve explained how the HSE strategy (launched last year following formal consultation) provides OSD with legitimacy for what they are doing – prevention of catastrophe, leadership and workforce involvement. He went on to say that these issues are priorities for both OSD and industry. Steve confirmed that he does not see any big sea changes in the work of OSD and sees no great changes in their approach.	
9.3	<p>Steve highlighted the key areas where OSD would like to make significant improvements. This included putting more resources into understanding the root causes of hydrocarbon releases and Steve confirmed the work completed last year highlighted the issues but further detail is required.</p> <p>Steve explained how OSD would be looking for a change of emphasis with regards to asset integrity. HSE needs to identify the industry's ability for anticipating ageing structures and this will involve a 3 year programme to be launched in May.</p> <p>Steve talked about safety leadership and the information senior managers are using, and relying upon to steer their organisations appropriately. He advised that a pilot project will be launched to look at this topic during 2010/11.</p>	
9.4	Steve went on to talk about workforce engagement and how this was an area which OSD inspectors gave a high priority to when offshore. The project on compliance with SI971 was a key part of OSD's overall plan of for 2010/11.	
9.5	Steve explained to members how he wanted HSE to work as a regulator in an appropriate and effective way. Steve acknowledged Step Change's coverage and the influence they have and would like to explore how OIAC and Step Change can align their respective roles to be more effective.	
9.6	Members had a discussion around competence. Steve confirmed that competence is an area that causes HSE problems. He informed members that a project has been developing over the past two years, from which the results have been variable and still under evaluation. Steve suggested that this could be a future topic for OIAC to discuss.	Secretariat to include as an agenda item for next meeting
9.7	Rob Ashdown queried the cost recovery climate and how HSE would recoup costs for offshore wind farms since a lot of work was being carried out in this area. Steve explained that this was not the case, HSE was carrying out more work on offshore renewables and confirmed that offshore wind farms are not an activity covered by a permissioning regime and therefore not subject to cost recovery.	Secretariat to include as an agenda item for next meeting
10	Future priorities for OIAC – Steve Walker	
10.1	Steve confirmed that the next OIAC meeting would be taking place at the Health and Safety Laboratories in Buxton. This would involve a tour of HSL which would be focused around offshore and energy related research.	Secretariat to organise accommodation/travel arrangements

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11	Any other business	
11.1	Jake Molloy confirmed that there would be an unveiling of a memorial to commemorate the anniversary of the helicopter accident last year in Aberdeen.	
11.2	Steve thanked members for their contributions and closed the meeting.	