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## HSE Offshore Health and Safety Strategy to 2010

This document provides HSE staff and all our stakeholders with an outline of our strategy for offshore health and safety to 2010 and beyond. Comments are welcome and should be sent to [dave.salmon@hse.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:dave.salmon@hse.gsi.gov.uk) by Friday 27 November 2004.

### OUR VISION

To gain recognition of health and safety as a cornerstone of a civilised society and, with that, to achieve a record of workplace health and safety that leads the world.

### OUR MISSION

To protect people's health and safety by ensuring that risks in the changing workplace are properly controlled.

### OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

HSE's continuing goals for the upstream petroleum industry are:

- to prevent major accidents with catastrophic consequences offshore;
- to secure a step change improvement in injury rates and work related ill health, and consequent days lost from work;
- to work with industry and support its ambition to make the United Kingdom Continental Shelf (UKCS) the safest offshore sector in the world by 2010;
- to improve workforce involvement in securing better health and safety performance; and
- to maintain an effective regulatory framework.

In addition, we aim to have the necessary systems, processes and resources in place to deliver our operational goals efficiently and effectively.

### BACKGROUND TO THE OFFSHORE SECTOR

The UK sector is one of the largest producers of offshore oil and gas in the world, and remaining reserves are likely to be equivalent to those produced already. There are about 19,000 people directly employed offshore and about 260,000 other jobs either dependent on or supported by the offshore sector; direct investment offshore by industry is expected to be £8.6bn in 2004. The contribution of oil and gas production to the UK economy is enormous. Interruption of supply, for example through adverse unplanned events such as a serious injury, accident or a hydrocarbon escape has a huge financial impact. Therefore as well as being a high hazard industry, the offshore industry is an important part of the UK's social and economic system.

Following the Piper Alpha tragedy in July 1988 in which 167 people perished, Lord Cullen made 106 recommendations for improving control of major hazards offshore,

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all of which were accepted by government. Responsibility for the regulation of the offshore industry transferred to HSE and the pre-existing suite of regulations (so-called prescriptive regulations because they set specific requirements on duty holders) were replaced by goal setting regulations. The corner stone of the current regime is the creation of a safety case for each installation that demonstrates how major accident hazards are adequately controlled and that the management system is suitable. HSE must accept the safety case before the duty holder can bring his installation into use on the UKCS.

In the period after Piper Alpha, the offshore industry traditionally comprised large international companies with considerable health and safety expertise, but the industry is now changing. Trade associations are restructuring, companies are amalgamating and assets are being sold to newcomers, many of whom are small and without experience of operating on the UKCS. New technology is being introduced for which there is little or no operational experience. Questions are being asked as to whether ageing equipment should be kept going, reused elsewhere or decommissioned. Environmental concerns, such as demands for complete removal of redundant installations, may also have safety implications.

HSE's Offshore Division (OSD) and a supporting policy unit are together working to raise standards of health and safety in the offshore industry. However the Regulator cannot act alone. Responsibility for health and safety lies mainly with those who own, manage, and work in industrial and commercial undertakings.

HSE has a role in helping to secure for Britain a safe, clean offshore industry with a long future. The Health and Safety Commission's (HSC) "[Four Point Strategy](#)" includes our commitments to develop closer partnerships with stakeholders and others, to stimulate, orchestrate, audit, assure and promote high standards of health and safety and take appropriate action when things go wrong. HSE will help ensure that risks in a changing workplace are properly controlled and endeavour to communicate the benefits of health and safety to business and society.

## KEY FUNCTIONS

HSE's offshore plan of work is based on 3 key functions. These contribute to both national ('[Revitalising Health and Safety](#)', '[Securing Health Together](#)') and sector based programmes that deliver HSE's public sector agreement targets as required by HM Government. Click on the links to view targets for the national health and safety system. For offshore there are additional targets: to reduce by 2010 fatal and major injuries by 50%; and significant hydrocarbon releases by 10% year on year from the 2001/02 baseline.

Offshore, our 3 key functions are:

1. securing compliance with the law;
2. maintaining the confidence of our stakeholders; and
3. managing HSE's resources and systems.

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## 1. Securing compliance with the law

To secure compliance we will conduct planned inspection programmes and fit for purpose investigations to target risk and comply with the [HSC's Enforcement Policy Statement](#). Our programmes include particular focus on the prevention of major hazard events, and of fatal and major injury accidents.

### ***Being clear about our priorities***

We will explain to our staff and duty holders and other stakeholders what it is we aim to achieve with our resources, and the basis of the work programme. We will maintain the currency of our offshore strategy, and issue plans of work that make plain what it is we shall be doing in any period of time. We shall make our plans available on the Internet, in a biennial poster and through presentations to stakeholders. We will also be clear about what we won't do, or where functions are better done by others.

### ***Intervention Strategy***

OSD's regulatory functions include:

- Visits to offshore installations to inspect activities on and in connection with the installation;
- Investigation of incidents and complaints;
- Assessment of safety cases; and
- Provision of advice, guidance and technical information.

OSD's approach to inspection combines local knowledge of the duty holder, gained through safety case assessment, inspection and investigation, with overall general knowledge of the offshore sector. We will also look specifically at management systems, in particular how jobs are organised, the quality of supervision and monitoring of work activities and how risks are assessed before the job.

We target, through a key programme, fatal and major injuries associated with heavy lifting on decks and on the drill floor because the risks from such activities are currently very high.

### ***Enforcement***

Where necessary, formal enforcement action will be taken. OSD's Inspectors apply the HSE [Enforcement Management Model](#), a framework that helps inspectors make fairer and more consistent enforcement decisions in line with HSC's [Enforcement Policy Statement](#). This sets out principles that Inspectors should apply when determining what enforcement action to take in response to breaches of health and safety legislation. Enforcement action should be proportional to the health and safety risks and the seriousness of the breach.

### ***Strategic Partnerships***













