

# Legacy of neglect

## Corrosion

HSE has serious concerns about the extent of corrosion and the poor physical condition of a number of offshore installations. Ian Whewell, Head of Offshore Division, said, 'Corrosion is a serious problem in the harsh offshore environment. Unfortunately this has not always been a high priority, with the result that many installations require major investment to tackle the legacy of neglect. It is essential that the industry faces up to this problem and gets a grip on it.'



### What are we doing to tackle the problem?

- HSE will be undertaking 'targeted' inspections to gauge if the Offshore Companies Corrosion Management Systems are right and are working properly offshore.
- We have recently published an *Offshore external corrosion guide*. You can view this at: [www.hse.gov.uk/offshore/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/offshore/index.htm).
- We are also working closely with UKOOA/Installation Integrity Working Group (IIWG) to produce guidance on good industry practice for corrosion.
- UKOOA are organising seminars on corrosion awareness aimed at operations managers, supervisors, contractors and senior management. HSE will be participating in these awareness sessions.

Remember you are often best placed to know the problems encountered, so please do not hesitate to let us know about the concerns you have.

## Where to go for more information

### GENERAL HSE ENQUIRIES

HSE Infoline:  
Tel: 0845 345 0055 Fax: 0845 408 9566  
E-mail: [hse.infoline@natbrit.com](mailto:hse.infoline@natbrit.com)

### WEB-BASED INFORMATION

HSE's Offshore safety home page at:  
[www.hse.gov.uk/offshore](http://www.hse.gov.uk/offshore)

*Some useful offshore leaflets can be downloaded free from the HSE website.*

### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

We would like to know what you think of this news sheet – send your comments and ideas for future editions to:

Tea-shack News, Health and Safety Executive,  
Lord Cullen House, Aberdeen AB25 3UB  
E-mail: [osd.tnews@hse.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:osd.tnews@hse.gsi.gov.uk)

## Stop press...

### Offshore industry struggling to recruit

OPITO will be recruiting for the industry Modern Apprenticeship in March 2007, the next intake is planned to start September 2007. See: [www.opito.net/TechnicalSolutions/UpstreamMAScheme.html](http://www.opito.net/TechnicalSolutions/UpstreamMAScheme.html)

Do you know of members of the public who want to join the oil and gas industry but don't know where to start?  
See: [www.oilandgas4u.com](http://www.oilandgas4u.com)

Why not make the difference by becoming a regulator of the industry. See 'careers' link at: [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)



## Have you got the right skills?

The increase in offshore activity and hook-up projects has meant that the UK has a shortfall in competent labour in the UK market. More non-UK labour is therefore being recruited and used on offshore projects.

However, UK offshore legislation still applies to this non-UK labour, and requires them to be competent for the role they are being asked to carry out, as well as being provided with adequate health and safety training.

In a recent inspection of a major hook-up project, HSE inspectors assessed trades where non-UK labour was being used, specifically looking at aspects such as:

- language skills of all involved;
- demonstrations of competence;
- emergency response preparedness.

Over this coming year we will be looking closer at the contractual arrangements between dutyholders and their contractors, making sure that they are robust enough to cope with the current competency challenges in the offshore industry.

## Whose responsibility?

In September, at Preston Crown Court, EnSCO Offshore (UK) Ltd pleaded guilty to criminal offences under section 2 of the HSW Act and regulation 3(1) of the Management Regulations and was fined a total of £115 000. The charges followed a fatal fall into the sea during installation of temporary deluge to protect the lifeboats during well testing. His Honour Judge A Russell QC acknowledged that the company had a strong safety culture and had safety procedures in place which – had they been implemented – would have prevented the death.

The Recorder emphasised that, in addition to other measures, ‘the fitting of a guard to this ladder and other similar ladders was indeed a reasonably practicable measure which ought to have been foreseen as a practical safeguard.’

The Recorder went on to say that, for all dutyholders, ‘it is not sufficient where a simple measure such as a guard can prevent injury... to rely upon others doing their jobs properly, however good the instructions and safety culture, because human errors can arise and the possibility of them should be accounted for (by dutyholders) and the provision of a guard would have taken account of such a possibility.’

## Getting goods to and from installations safely

Getting goods to and from installations has caused a significant number of incidents offshore. UKOOA has produced practical advice to promote safe packing and handling of cargo: *Guidelines for safe packing and handling of cargo to and from offshore locations*. This is a free publication, which is available at: [www.oilandgas.org.uk](http://www.oilandgas.org.uk).

The guidance provides practical advice for a number of activities relating to transportation and handling of goods. Topics included are:

- vessel, aircraft and offshore operators;
- responsibilities and duties;
- lifting and slinging;
- inspection and packing of containers; and
- transportation of dangerous goods and bulk material.



HSE has a work programme for inspection that seeks to ensure that the handling and transportation of goods to and from offshore installations are conducted safely and in accordance with the UKOOA industry guidelines.

## Wireline operations

Each time a wireline toolstring is lifted it has the potential to fall to deck, striking and injuring those in the area. The industry has seen several incidents of this kind lately where tools have hung up on top sheaves causing the wire to part.

The cable head cannot be certified in the same manner as normal lifting gear. The wireline has been subject to harsh down hole conditions, corrosion, jarring, overpull etc, on previous runs.

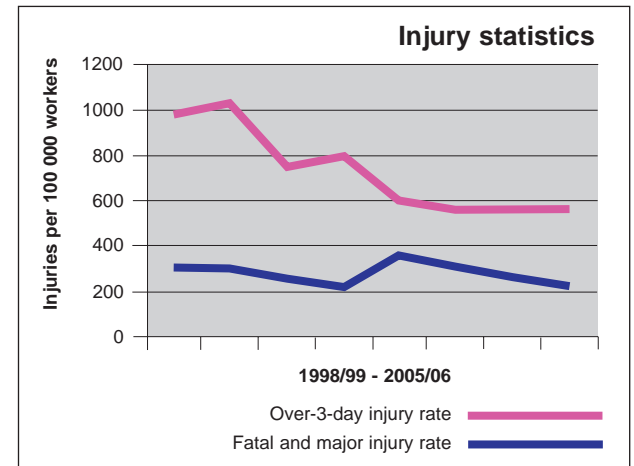
HSE recommends that whenever a wireline tool is being lifted into or out of the well bore from the deck or drill floor that a certified lifting clamp and tugger are used. This practice is known as ‘spading’. Sometimes it will not be convenient but it could save a life.

For further information contact the installation’s LOLER competent person and ensure you use the correct equipment your employer supplies.

## Latest safety statistics

We have good news as the latest offshore statistics show a continuing improvement in rates for fatal/major accidents. However, there is no room for complacency as the over-3-day incidents have shown a slight increase; though the trend since 2002 continues to be downwards overall. The size of the offshore workforce has increased by over 22% since the beginning of 2005.

Being trapped, struck by or striking against equipment were the main causes of accidents.



Further details on the 2005/06 accident statistics can be found in the Offshore Safety Statistics Bulletin at: [www.hse.gov.uk/offshore/statistics/stat0506.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/offshore/statistics/stat0506.htm). HSE and Step Change comments about the Bulletin can be found in a press release at: [www.hse.gov.uk/press/2006/e06089.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/press/2006/e06089.htm).