

# OCE<sup>0</sup>

## Offshore COSHH essentials



**This information will help offshore dutyholders (owners, operators and contractors) to comply with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH), as amended, to protect workers' health.**

**This guidance consolidates good control practice and reinforces existing knowledge with additional information.**

**It will help you carry out COSHH assessments, review existing assessments, deliver training and in supervising activities involving substances hazardous to health.**

**It is aimed at staff whose responsibilities include the management of substances hazardous to health on offshore installations (eg occupational health specialists, COSHH assessors, supervisors etc). It is also useful for trade union and employee safety representatives.**

**Following this guidance is not compulsory and you are free to take other action. But if you do follow this guidance, you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Health and safety inspectors seek to secure compliance with the law and may refer to this guidance as illustrating good practice.**

# Advice for managers

## Introduction

This sheet describes how to use the Offshore COSHH essentials (OCE) guidance sheet series as part of your COSHH assessments. The sheets in this series (listed on the back of this sheet) refer to Offshore COSHH method sheets (OCMs), which give more detailed cross-cutting advice on specific aspects of control such as local exhaust ventilation (LEV), respiratory protective equipment, health surveillance etc. This adds to the overall task/process-specific control approach advice given in the OCE sheets.



This series is a part of a suite of guidance on health risks and includes offshore essentials guidance on food, radiation, noise and vibration.

The OCE and OCM sheets are not your COSHH assessments, but they will help you to assess the risks for named tasks. Following the advice means that you observe good control practice and will normally comply with exposure limits.

## Planning and personnel

Management arrangements offshore are often complex. COSHH duties fall mainly on employers, in respect of their employees and others who may be affected by their activities. For offshore installations, this means owners, operators and contractors. As effective control depends on co-operation and co-ordination, relevant information should be exchanged between employers about roles and responsibilities.

COSHH assessors should have the knowledge, skills and experience to assess the risks and identify control measures. They must be familiar with and have a good understanding of the work activity and how it uses or produces substances hazardous to health.

- ✓ Involve the relevant specialists, contractors and workers in risk assessment, developing control measures and implementing them.

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- ✓ Make specific arrangements for work in confined spaces and for dealing with emergencies.
  - ✓ Decide your needs for engineering controls (eg LEV), personal protective equipment, monitoring and health surveillance.

### Action

- ✓ Whoever is in control of an operation must:
  - Appoint a competent COSHH assessor.
  - Make an adequate risk assessment.
  - Take steps to use appropriate control measures.
- ✓ Look at all parts of the advice – don't pick and choose. All the points work together to provide 'adequate control'.
- ✓ Decide how best to make changes that are required 'across the board', eg arrangements for examination and testing of all LEV systems on all offshore installations.
- ✓ If you are in doubt, get help from an expert. Ask your trade association, trade union or log onto [www.oshcr.org/](http://www.oshcr.org/) for a list of health and safety consultants.

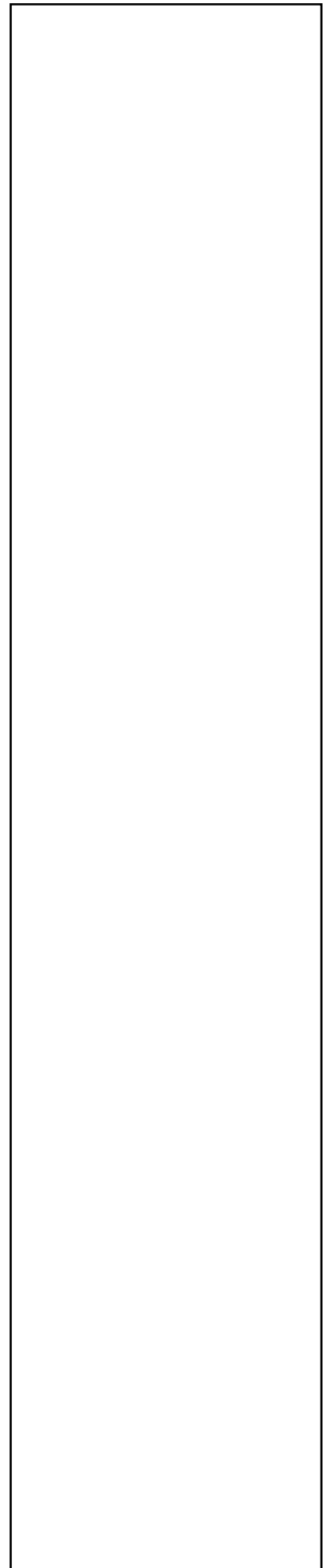
### Hazards

- ✓ Individual guidance sheets give some of the health hazards associated with a stated task. You may need additional information from current safety data sheets (SDSs) in carrying out your COSHH assessments.
- ✓ Prevention or control of exposure needs to consider all routes of exposure, ie inhalation, skin/eyes and ingestion.
- ✓ EH40/2005 *Workplace exposure limits* lists those substances that have been assigned a workplace exposure limit (WEL) and identifies what can be absorbed through the skin with a skin notation (SK).
- ✓ Safety data sheets are useful sources of information on substances that have the potential to affect and be absorbed through the skin.
- ✓ Where a WEL is not available, it may be possible to identify an exposure standard in consultation with supplier, trade association or specific advisors.
- ✓ Check if less harmful substances and products are available. Substitute where possible.
- ✓ Substances and products used offshore are usually harmful to the marine environment.

**NB:** An SDS is not in itself the COSHH assessment but provides some of the information needed to determine appropriate control measures to protect employees.

### Control

- ✓ COSHH requires dutyholders to use the principles of good control practice (COSHH, Schedule 2A) to control exposure. These sheets give practical advice on good control practice and how to implement it.
- ✓ Make sure that the advice in each OCE sheet you download really fits your work situation. Compare it with what you do now and take steps to improve/fill any gap in control practice.
- ✓ Where substances have WEL:
  - take account of the longer shift patterns of work offshore;
  - take account of any work at higher pressures (hyperbaric).



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- ✓ You might already have the right control measures. Check they are all being used correctly and working properly.
  - ✓ Keep all controls in good working order. This means:
    - engineering controls such as LEV;
    - operator behaviour, such as following methods of work and putting training into practice;
    - personal protective equipment, including RPE;
    - administrative controls such as supervision and health surveillance.

### **Facilities for personal hygiene**

- ✓ Provide appropriate washing facilities, storage for clean and contaminated clothing and PPE, and a refreshment area.

### **Information, training and supervision**

- ✓ Tell workers what the hazards are and how to stop the hazards causing harm to health. Hold 'toolbox talks'.
- ✓ Train them how to use control equipment properly.
- ✓ Show them how to report when equipment is not working properly.
- ✓ Check that they have understood, and follow good practice.
- ✓ Include managers and supervisors in health and safety training.

### **Useful links**

International Association of Drilling Contractors  
[www.iadc.org/](http://www.iadc.org/)

International Association of Oil and Gas Producers  
[www.ogp.org/](http://www.ogp.org/)

Oil and Gas UK  
[www.oilandgas.org.uk/](http://www.oilandgas.org.uk/)

British Rig Owners Association  
[www.broa.org/whatis.htm](http://www.broa.org/whatis.htm)

Occupational Safety and Health Consultants Register  
[www.oshcr.org/](http://www.oshcr.org/)

Occupational health professionals (doctors and nurses) [www.nhsplus.nhs.uk/](http://www.nhsplus.nhs.uk/)

### **Environment guidelines**

Wastes may be regulated within the Pollution Prevention and Control (PPC) framework. Consult the Environment Agency (England and Wales) or the Scottish Environment Protection Agency in Scotland  
[www.netregs.gov.uk](http://www.netregs.gov.uk)

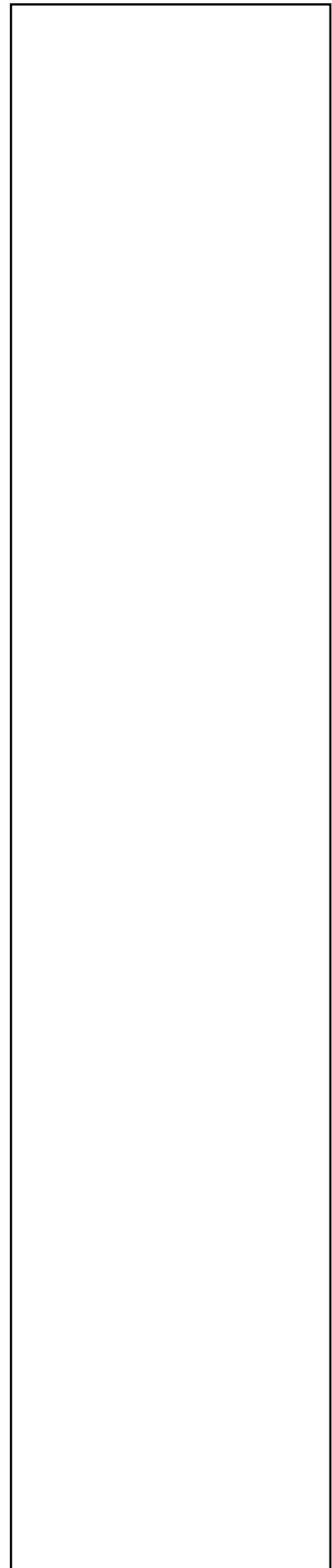
### **Further information**

*COSHH a brief guide to the Regulations: What you need to know about the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) Leaflet INDG136(rev3)*  
HSE Books 2005  
[www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg136.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg136.pdf)

You can find the full Offshore COSHH essentials series at [www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/index.htm)

**OCE0 Advice for managers**

No.	Title
OCE0	Advice for managers
OCE1	Preparing surfaces for painting
OCE2	Painting by brush/roller
OCE3	Painting by spraying
OCE4	Soldering
OCE5	Insulation – removal
OCE6	Hydrogen sulphide
OCE7	Pigging operations
OCE8	Mixing of drilling muds (sack room)
OCE9	Use of drilling muds (shale shaker and mud pit areas)
OCE10	Chemical injection
OCE11	Breaking containment – non-hydrocarbon lines
OCE12	Breaking containment – hydrocarbon lines
OCE13	Breaking containment – process cleaning operations
OCE14	Breaking containment – mercury
OCE15	Potable water and legionella control
OCE16	Bulk sampling
OCE17	Laboratory practice
OCE18	Design and use of pressurised habitats for welding and hot work
OCE19	Pressure cleaning – external structures
OCE20	Sewage system maintenance
OCE21	Laundry
OCE22	Cleaning accomodation and facilities
OCE23	Cleaning up body fluids
OCE24	Cementing
OCE25	Well servicing – chemical injection
OCE26	Drilling waste treatment
OCM1	Confined spaces
OCM2	Local exhaust ventilation (LEV)
OCM3	Personal protective equipment (PPE)
OCM4	Respiratory protective equipment (RPE)
OCM5	Emergency planning
OCM6	Exposure monitoring
OCM7	Health surveillance
OCM8	Storing chemicals
ORE1	Breaking containment – naturally occurring radioactive materials (NORM)
OFE1	Food safety and hygiene



**This guidance was developed by representatives from the UK offshore oil and gas industry and trade unions, with HSE.**