



NOPSA CEO's Newsletter : Issue No 49 : 25 January 2007

NATIONAL OFFSHORE PETROLEUM SAFETY AUTHORITY

A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Our Vision

Health and safety risks in the Australian offshore petroleum industry are properly controlled.

This series of messages is aimed at keeping you informed of the operations of NOPSA. Please let us know if you would like to be added to the [distribution list](#)

INDUSTRY MATTERS:

- Diamond Offshore has issued a brief “flash” safety alert following a serious incident where a floorman suffered traumatic amputation of his toes on the Ocean Bounty MODU. While the incident was one that is only likely to occur on a MODU, hazard identification was a factor in the incident and all operators are reminded of the need to consistently and diligently assess the risks of their ongoing operations.
- NOPSA draws your attention to a recent [safety alert](#) published by the UK HSE warning of the dangers of breathing paint mist that contains isocyanate.
- There is much anecdotal evidence that personnel shortages and related competency issues are becoming more severe in the Australian offshore oil & gas sector. The availability of experienced personnel for both offshore and onshore support is already a crucial issue for most companies. NOPSA is concerned that these pressures will have adverse safety impacts on operations, and reminds Operators of the requirement to have sufficient number of experienced personnel to manage operations both in normal and emergency situations (Schedule 7 of the PSLA, Clause 3 – Duties of Operators).

STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS:

- NOPSA will be holding two Safety Case Workshops, one in Melbourne on 27 February 2007, and one in Perth, on 2 March 2007.
- There was a meeting of the IMCA Asia-Pacific Section at Fremantle on 18 January 2007. Workshops were conducted on lifting and diving operations. IMCA also identified skills shortages and competencies as being major issues facing the industry. Issues raised with NOPSA included:
 - consistency in the application of regulatory processes
 - entry of vessels into the safety case regime
 - confirmation that the safety case is to address the risks of all activities at a facility, both MAE and OHS, noting that the formal safety assessment (FSA) covers MAE's only.
 - the level of detail in safety cases must be appropriate to demonstrate that all health and safety risks are properly controlled.

CONFERENCES:

NOPSA is exhibiting at the [Australasian Oil and Gas Show](#) at the Perth Conference and Exhibition Centre, on 21-23 February, 2007. Come and discuss your health and safety issues, concerns and success stories with our representatives at [stand 453](#).

WEBSITE:

Material posted to the NOPSA website this month included:

- A draft policy on safety case assessment: [seeking further information, and resubmission following rejection](#). Feedback is sought on this issue through to 31 January 2007.
- A complete list of all [Memoranda of Understanding](#) (MOUs). These MOUs are an important mechanism with which NOPSA works with other agencies to reduce the regulatory burden on Operators.
- Guideline N-4000 GL75: The question as to whether a revision to the pipeline safety management plan (PSMP) is 'major' or 'minor' will determine whether the pipeline safety management plan levy (PSMP levy) is applicable to that pipeline in that year. NOPSA has developed a [guideline](#) that outlines the principles adopted in determining whether a revision to a PSMP is major or minor.

INTERNATIONAL:

- Further to our recent link to the US Chemical Safety Board [CSB Reports](#) on the BP Texas City refinery explosion, we note BP's [own report](#) (document may be temporarily unavailable) on the incident and also the BP commissioned [Baker Report](#) on refinery safety. There are many observations in all three reports that are pertinent to offshore operations. NOPSA encourages Operators to study the reports, and investigate any implications for their own activities.
- NOPSA notes with sadness the recent [fatal accident](#) on the Bleo Holm FPSO in the UK North Sea and also the [fatal accident](#) in the US Gulf of Mexico when a person boarded a platform that had missing deck grating following storm damage.
- On 23 January a delegation from the China State Administration of Work Safety and from PetroChina met in Canberra with representatives of the Department of Industry Tourism and Resources, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and NOPSA (Melbourne Team Leader Ray Wells) to learn about the OHS regulatory arrangements for Australia's resources industries.

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REGULATORY ACTIVITIES in January 2007:

The following activity occurred during January. Activity and incident quantities identified here may vary as further information becomes available.

Safety Case Assessment

Three revised and one new Safety Case were accepted; no Diving Project Plans and no Pipeline Safety Management Plans were assessed.

As at 25 January, seven Safety Cases (including two PSMPs), are still under assessment.

Inspections

Three inspections were conducted. Issues of concern included competency levels, noise management and facility integrity.

Incidents & Complaints

Two accidents, nine dangerous occurrences were reported. Of the reported accidents, one was a traumatic amputation of toes and one was a serious hand injury. Of the dangerous occurrences, issues related to dropped objects, lifting and damage to safety critical equipment.

No complaints were reported this month.

Enforcement

One Improvement Notice and one Prosecution Brief were issued, both relating to the failure to provide a safe place of work.

Past issues of this newsletter are available from the NOPSA website at:

http://www.nopsa.gov.au/CEO_emails/