



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](#)*

#### PERSONNEL:

- NOPSA will shortly offer the position of Executive Assistant with details published on the NOPSA website, the West Australian on 24 February and the APSC Gazette on Thursday 1 March.

#### INDUSTRY MATTERS:

- The amended Western Australian Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1982 is expected to be proclaimed shortly. This will introduce a modern occupational health and safety regime including general duties and supporting safety regulations to offshore petroleum operations in WA coastal waters. The safety regulations to the WA PSLA (82) are consistent with the Commonwealth Regulations and cover Management of Safety of Offshore Facilities, Pipelines, Occupational Health and Safety and Diving Safety. The amended WA PSLA 82 confers powers on NOPSA as regulator for occupational health and safety matters in WA coastal waters.
- NOPSA received a report on the Australian offshore helicopter industry, from Hart Aviation. The report was commissioned by NOPSA to provide further information on this important (and potentially high risk) sector of the offshore industry. NOPSA is reviewing the report, and will discuss its implications with the industry and CASA. NOPSA thanks all parties who contributed information to the review.
- NOPSA participated in a DITR led working group that is examining the regulation of operations that consist solely of subsea elements. As this sector is expected to become increasingly important in the future, options for the management and regulation of such facilities are being examined.
- The Australian Safety Transport Bureau has released its [report into the hawser failure on 'Dampier Spirit' FSO](#) preceding cyclone Hubert in April 2006. The report has findings that may be applicable to other facilities.

<continued next page>

#### **STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS:**

- The Commonwealth policy function, responsible for offshore petroleum legislation, and overview of NOPSA, has transferred to the Environment, Safety and Security Section in the Offshore Resources Branch in the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources (DITR) in Canberra. Steve Tantala is the team leader.

#### **HEALTH AND SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES:**

- NOPSA is aware that many offshore petroleum HSRs were selected or elected in early 2005, shortly after NOPSA's commencement. Clause 14 of Schedule 7 to the PSLA limits the term of office of offshore HSRs to 2 years, unless a different term has been agreed between the facility operator, facility workforce and relevant employers. Therefore a new round of HSR selection/election may be needed on some facilities.
- The 2007 HSR Forum is to be held at the Burswood convention and entertainment complex in Perth, WA, on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> August. NOPSA will be represented on the organising committee of this event, together with APPEA, DITR and others. This year the HSR Forum is being held back-to-back with the National Oil and Gas Safety Conference. Further details are available at the [APPEA website](#), or from [Tim McGrath](#) at APPEA.

#### **CONFERENCES:**

- The 2007 National Oil and Gas Safety Conference will be held on Wednesday and Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> August at the Burswood convention and entertainment complex in Perth, WA, immediately following the HSR Forum. Again, NOPSA will be represented on the organising committee, together with APPEA, DITR and others.
- Bookings for the Safety Case Workshop being conducted in Melbourne are now closed and very limited places remain available for the Perth workshop on 2 March. To attend the Perth workshop please contact [Melanie Jones](#).

#### **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE:**

- The NOPSA Board held its eleventh meeting in Perth on 31 January 2007. Issues examined included NOPSA's safety case decision review process; a review of each of the strategic studies identified by the Board; a review of the strategic corporate governance arrangements for both NOPSA and the Board; progress of the status of WA OHS legislation and a review of the Board's communication strategy and business plan. The next NOPSA Board meeting is to be held on the 19th and 20th April and will coincide with the APPEA conference in Adelaide.

<continued next page>

## **WEBSITE:**

Information added to the website this month:

- NOPSAs continues to develop guidance on aspects of interpreting the facility definition. NOPSAs has recently developed draft guidelines on [vessels laying equipment other than pipe for petroleum](#) and [heavy lift construction vessel activities – ‘facility’ interpretation](#).
- Safety Alert 11 regarding potential [man overboard hazards in the design of jettison skids](#)
- Safety Alert 12 on [failure to follow safe systems of work \(PTW\)](#)
- The [guidelines on reporting accidents and dangerous occurrences](#) have been amended to mention the detailed reporting requested for hydrocarbon releases.

## **INTERNATIONAL:**

- NOPSAs notes that the issue of skilled and experienced personnel shortages in the worldwide oil & gas sector, and the potential implications upon safety, is causing mounting concern. Recent comments [1] and [2] from the new BP CEO, and from the [US MMS](#) highlight these concerns. NOPSAs shares these concerns, and urges Operators to consider the safety implications of such issues on project and operational plans. The importance of operators’ pre qualification auditing of potential subcontractors is also highlighted.
- NOPSAs notes with regret the recent helicopter incidents in [Malaysia](#) and the US [Gulf of Mexico](#).
- Further details on the recent [fatal incident during lifting operations](#) on the UK FPSO ‘Bleo Holm’ have been made available. This tragic incident highlights the importance of sound lifting practices.
- NOPSAs will shortly be writing to operators and industry associations to ask for support in promoting and seeking nominations for the [International Regulators Forum \(IRF\) safety awards 2007](#). The award scheme aims to acknowledge and promote outstanding contributions to global safety in the offshore industry.

## **NATIONAL PROGRAMMES:**

- Facility Integrity – minor revisions to the standard hydrocarbon release reporting form have been agreed with APPEA and the [revised form](#) is now available on the NOPSAs website.

<continued next page>

### **REGULATORY ACTIVITIES in February 2007:**

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

#### **Safety Case Assessment**

Two new and four revised Safety Cases were accepted during February. Advice was given on one Diving Project Plan.

As at 23 February, 13 Safety Cases (including 2 PSMP's) and one Diving Safety Management System, are still under assessment.

#### **Inspections**

Three Inspections were conducted. Issues included the condition of the facility structure, out of date drawings and scaffolding management.

#### **Incidents & Complaints:**

Nine dangerous occurrences were reported. There were no complaints reported. Of the reported incidents, one was a gas release, there was a flame at a valve positioner, a man overboard, and three were injuries likely to result in lost time of three days or more..

#### **Enforcement**

No Notices were issued in February.

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

[http://www.nopsa.gov.au/CEO\\_emails/](http://www.nopsa.gov.au/CEO_emails/)