

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 welcomes Grant Brow as a member of our team of OHS Inspectors. Grant comes to us from Bureau Veritas where he was Oil and Gas Operations Manager for Western Australia.

INDUSTRY MATTERS:

- There is a significant history of fatalities and serious injuries associated with the testing of lifeboats. Santos, with industry participation, conducted an assessment workshop to determine the relative risk of launching davit launch lifeboats with personnel on board as opposed to having personnel transferred by alternative means to the lifeboat when in it is the water. The results of the risk assessment are:
 - Update current lifeboat testing procedures with the use of safety chains and pins (as per AMSA Marine Notice 20/2003) during lifeboat lowering and hoisting. [Note that [Marine Notice 12/2007](#)¹ superseded Marine Notice 20/2003 following the workshop]
 - Standardise as much as practicable the make and model of lifeboats on each facility/vessel.
 - Manage crew retention to maintain competency with vessel/facility specific lifeboats and lifeboat drill procedures.
 - Consider having a trained and competent lifeboat OEM representative on board the facility/vessel during lifeboat drills to train and supervise the crew.

Note: A [video](#)² is also available from the UK HSE on this topic.

- On 30 May 2007, NOPSA staff met with officials of the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) and the Australian Institute of Marine and Power Engineers (AIMPE) in Sydney, to discuss areas of mutual interest.
- NOPSA is aware of allegations of some offshore workers being intimidated into not raising safety concerns. This was raised at a recent meeting convened by the

¹ http://www.amsa.gov.au/Shipping_Safety/Marine_Notices/2007/12_07.pdf

²

<http://www.hsebooks.com/Books/product/product.asp?catalog%5Fname=HSEBooks&category%5Fname=&product%5Fid=3678&cookie%5Ftest=1>

MUA and AWU in Fremantle. Whilst NOPSA did not attend that meeting, we have approached both organisations to request more information, and will take any necessary steps that may be required if the allegations are supported by appropriate evidence.

- NOPSA advises offshore workers to raise legitimate safety issues with their line managers and supervisors in the first instance. If no reasonable resolution can be found between the parties, and the issue warrants further investigation, offshore personnel are able to contact a NOPSA Inspector to discuss issues further.
- The Australian Transport Safety Bureau has released its [report³](#) into two electrical fires that occurred at the Safe Concordia accommodation support vessel in September 2005 whilst it was in Bass Strait en route to the Yolla gas platform. The report contains recommendations for action by classification agencies, owners and operators of vessels and facilities.
- The Board met on 7-8 June primarily to workshop the methodology for an internal examination as to how the Board can improve its efficiency and effectiveness. The Board also discussed a number of strategically important health and safety related issues that have the potential to become problematic and met with the Hon. Peter Batchelor MLA, Minister for Energy and Resources, with representatives from Trades Unions and with Mr. Tim McGrath from APPEA.
- Note that over time, NOPSA, as part of its planned inspection program, will be reviewing the internal auditing aspects of Operators' Safety Management Systems and will be using a [prompt sheet⁴](#) that can be found on the NOPSA website.
- NOPSA staff attended presentations in Perth and Melbourne organised by the Plastics and Chemical Industries Association (PACIA). The presenter, Paul Tebo, a member of the Independent Panel that reviewed BP's US refineries process safety management (Baker Panel), stressed leadership commitment to the goal of "zero harm".

STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS:

- NOPSA signed a revised Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the West Australian Department of Industry and Resources (DoIR). This revised MOU simplifies Notification and Reporting arrangements.
- NOPSA has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Ballarat to auspice competency based training for NOPSA inspectors. The arrangement sees NOPSA's Team Leaders trained as accredited Workplace Competency Assessors, enabling them to assess the Inspectors' level of core competency. The NOPSA course is compulsory for all inspectors and should they decide to add a small number of external units offered by Ballarat University, they will be awarded a nationally recognised qualification by the University, upon successful completion of the course.

³ http://www.atsb.gov.au/publications/investigation_reports/index.aspx?mode=mar

⁴ <http://www.nopsa.gov.au/document/Auditing%20Audits%20Checklist.pdf>

NATIONAL PROGRAMMES:

- A summary of all reported Accidents and Dangerous Occurrences (from 1 Jan 2005 to 30 March 2007) that relate to the Facility Integrity programme is available on the [NOPSA website](#)⁵.

HEALTH AND SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES:

- As mentioned in previous newsletters, the 2007 HSR Forum is to be held at the Burswood convention and entertainment complex in Perth, WA, on Tuesday 7 August 2007. NOPSA encourages HSRs to participate in this event. Further details regarding the Forum and the associated safety conference are available from Tim McGrath at APPEA: 08 9321 9775 / tmcgrath@appea.com.au.
- NOPSA would like to repeat its call for nominations for the 2006 offshore HSR award, the winner of which will be announced at the 2007 HSR Forum Dinner. Any person may be nominated who was an offshore petroleum industry HSR during 2006. Nominations should outline the HSR's contribution to offshore safety during 2006, give the names and contact details of one or more referees, and be sent by e-mail to information@nopsa.gov.au. Deadline for nominations is Friday 27 July 2007.

CONFERENCES:

- NOPSA, in conjunction with Ernst and Young, presented a paper "[Achieving Excellence through Risk Management](#)⁶" at the Enterprise Risk Management for Government 2007 conference, held 29-30 May 2007. The presentation described how Risk Management is being embedded in NOPSA's internal business processes, and the use of external consultants in development of risk management plans.
- A NOPSA OHS Inspector recently attended the IADC World Drilling conference in Paris and also visited Holland, Norway and Scotland to discuss regulation of Well Operations with regulators and oil companies.

WEBSITE and COMMUNICATIONS:

- New presentation on [Notifying and Reporting Accidents and Dangerous Occurrences](#).
- The explanatory note "[Safety Case Assessment Administration](#)⁷" has been updated. The main changes relate to instructions 1 e, 1f and 1g of the document.

INTERNATIONAL:

- NOPSA notes the [recent fine](#)⁸ (~A\$260,000) imposed on Well Ops, following the death of an offshore worker onboard the "Seawell" intervention vessel in

⁵ <http://www.nopsa.gov.au/presentation/FI%20overview%20-%20A&DO%20July07.pdf>

⁶

<http://www.nopsa.gov.au/presentation/NOPSA%20EY%20Achieving%20Excellence%20through%20Risk%20Management%2029052007.pdf>

⁷ <http://www.nopsa.gov.au/document/Safety%20Case%20Assessment%20Administration.pdf>

⁸ <http://www.gnn.gov.uk/content/detail.asp?NewsAreaID=2&ReleaseID=287124>

February 2006, in the UK North Sea. The incident related to a large dropped object and highlights the need for robust lifting procedures – a focus of one of the NOPSA National Programmes.

REGULATORY ACTIVITIES in June 2007:

Disclaimer: Activity and incident quantities identified here may vary as further information becomes available. Statistics are prepared just prior to the last Friday of the month.

Safety Case Assessment

0 new and 9 revised Safety Cases were commenced.

4 Safety Cases were accepted.

As at 29/06/2007, 15 Safety Cases (including 2 PSMP) and 1 Diving Safety Management Systems are still under assessment.

Inspections

8 Inspections were conducted. Issues included: Training and Competency Compliance.

Incidents & Complaints:

11 dangerous occurrences and 3 Lost Time Injuries were reported. There were 2 complaints reported.

Of the reported incidents, 2 were gas releases; 1 could have caused death or serious injury (top of mud pump pulsation damper failed whilst running, damaging mud pump); 1 was an unplanned event that required implementation of emergency response plan, 2 were other kinds of incidents needing immediate investigation and 5 incidents could have caused lost time of three days or more.

Enforcement

1 Prohibition Notice was issued, relating to unsafe launching of Fast Rescue Craft; 1 Improvement Notice was issued for failing to notify and report an incident within 3 days; and 2 Written/Verbal Advices were issued.

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

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