

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 Jill Bagley as Executive Assistant to Team 1.

INDUSTRY MATTERS:

- Arising from the findings of NOPSA's planned inspections, NOPSA is planning to conduct themed audits of petroleum Operators' noise management systems, to determine consistency with NOHSC 2009 – National Code of Practice for Noise Management and Protection of Hearing at Work. These inspections will commence this quarter. Operators considering revision of their management systems may wish to consider AS/NZS-4801(OH&S Management Systems).
- During July work crews were stranded overnight at two separate not-normally staffed facilities. As part of their duty of care, Operators should take steps to minimise the likelihood of such an eventuality; should provide adequate amenities for any persons that may become stranded, and should develop operational rules to minimise the risks to such persons until they are returned to shore.
- NOPSA notes with interest the military Board of Inquiry into the Black Hawk helicopter ditching off Fiji last year. Testimony to the Inquiry has revealed a number of potential areas of interest relevant to the offshore industry. In particular, NOPSA is interested in the comments made by survivors regarding the benefit that their re-breather bags provided them in egress, and the effectiveness of their training in all matters related to helicopter egress after ditching. Furthermore, NOPSA has related interests in the areas of:
 - Use of immersion / survival suits for flights over cold water. The UK HSE, and Naval Authorities, have conducted [research into cold water survival](#)¹;
 - Integration of such suits with lifejackets and re-breathers into a single 'system' of clothing;
 - The potential use of Personal Locator Beacons / Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons, (EPIRB's), now being widely used in the North Sea;

¹ <http://www.hse.gov.uk/RESEARCH/otopdf/1995/oto95038.pdf> (Warning: 1.8.mb)

- The content of the various HUET courses available in Australia and the differences between these;
- The adequacy of Operators' Emergency Response Plans in relation to any scenario involving personnel in the water.

STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS:

- The results of the NOPSA Stakeholder Survey will soon be posted on the NOPSA website.
- NOPSA Team 4 held an informal meeting of local stakeholders in Sale, Victoria, to update them on NOPSA's activities, industry performance, and current initiatives.
- NOPSA Team 2 held a forum with a number of their Operators to share safety related experience regarding the changing workforce, including issues relating to ageing workforce, levels of competence and experience and turnover.
- NOPSA notes the retirement of Mike Balsdon (AMSA). Mike has made a significant contribution to the marine industry and in providing advice to NOPSA. We wish him well in his retirement.

HEALTH AND SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES:

There may still be vacancies at the 2007 HSR Forum at the Burswood Convention and Entertainment complex, Perth, WA, on Tuesday 7 August 2007. Contact Tim McGrath at APPEA on 08 9321 9775 or via tmcgrath@appea.com.au.

The annual review of accredited HSR training providers commenced during July, with 4 out of 6 completed. NOPSA is pleased to note that in excess of 200 HSRs and other members of the offshore workforce have now attended these courses, and that the feedback received from attendees has been overwhelmingly positive.

CONFERENCES:

In addition to the HSR Forum, there may still be vacancies at the 2007 National Oil and Gas Safety Conference at the Burswood convention and entertainment complex, Perth, WA, on 8 and 9 August 2007. Contact Tim McGrath at APPEA on 08 9321 9775 or via tmcgrath@appea.com.au.

WEBSITE and COMMUNICATIONS:

The following new postings have been included on our website:

- [Notifying and Reporting Accidents and Dangerous Occurrences](#)²
- [A presentation on Duties of Care](#)³
- [A presentation on workplace arrangements and HSR powers](#)⁴

²

<http://www.nopsa.gov.au/presentation/NOPSA%20presentation%20on%20Notifying+Reporting%20Accidents%20and%20Dangerous%20Occurrences%20-%20May%202007.pdf>

³ <http://www.nopsa.gov.au/presentation/NOPSA%20Duty%20of%20Care%20presentation.pdf>

- [Safety Alert 13 – Management of change and quality assurance processes](#)⁵
- [Safety Alert 14 –Fast Rescue Craft safety](#)⁶
- [Boot Room Gossip News Sheet](#)

INTERNATIONAL:

NOPSA notes the 19th anniversary of the Piper Alpha tragedy in which 167 people died in massive fires and explosions on an oil and gas platform in the North Sea. Many of the lessons learned are still pertinent to today's operations. A current NOPSA Inspector who was formerly a UK Dept of Energy Safety Inspector, and who arrived on the "Tharos" (multi purpose vessel adjacent to the Piper Alpha platform) the day after the disaster and stayed on site for six weeks, gave a moving presentation to NOPSA staff on the reality of the event.

REGULATORY ACTIVITIES in July 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

One new and 6 revised Safety Cases were accepted.

As at 27 July 2007, 24 Safety Cases (including one PSMP) are still under assessment, of which 16 are the 5 year revisions of a large group of related facilities.

Inspections

5 Inspections were conducted. Issues included noise management, corrosion and erosion maintenance and preparedness to sail away.

Incidents & Complaints:

23 Dangerous Occurrences and 4 Lost Time Injuries were reported.

There were 3 complaints reported that included issues regarding diesel fumes and lifting operations.

Of the reported incidents, significant points to note include:

- 2 were fires (engine and motor);
- 3 were significant gas releases;
- 4 LTI's involving injuries to hand, arm and feet, caused by incorrect procedures, no training and inappropriate storage of equipment;
- 3 could have caused death or serious injury (all involved dropped objects);

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<http://www.nopsa.gov.au/presentation/NOPSA%20presentation%20on%20Workplace%20Arrangements%20for%20HSRs.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.nopsa.gov.au/alert/alert13.asp>

⁶ <http://www.nopsa.gov.au/alert/alert14.asp>

- 5 incidents could have caused lost time of three days or more;
- 7 were events requiring immediate further investigation.

Enforcement

2 Improvement Notices were issued for inappropriate use of electrical equipment and for performing work that did not comply with the safety case. Three letters of warning/advice were issued for commencing work prior to acceptance of the safety case, insufficient safety procedures and inappropriate use of electrical equipment.

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

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