



From CEO John Clegg

We are committed to encouraging the sharing of good practice in offshore health and safety so I am pleased to see that learning opportunities such as joint NOPSA/industry workshops and presentations are valued. NOPSA is organising a workshop on noise management and competency in May so I urge you to nominate for this quickly if you are interested. On another note, it has been brought to my attention there is occasionally some uncertainty over which spills should be reported to NOPSA. As the offshore health and safety regulator we are concerned with the loss of containment of hydrocarbons as this may directly affect the safety of people - environmental effects are dealt with by other agencies. Finally, I note that a new NOPSA board has been appointed. We look forward to working closely with the new board to ensure improved occupational health and safety and major accident risk reduction for the industry.

Industry matters

Dropped object danger

A recent incident in which a 10 kilogram piece of steel - the bottom half of a drill string compensator chain magazine - fell 30 metres to the drill floor on a MODU, narrowly missing a Floorman, has highlighted a number of areas that need systematic attention. Areas identified for improvement include: the need to have a comprehensive and well implemented Dropped Object Prevention Program; the importance of having a maintenance management system that is thoroughly implemented and populated by both vendor data and operational experience and the need to have complete knowledge of any non-'Original Equipment Manufacturer' (OEM) equipment that may be installed at a facility.

Workshops to focus on training, noise

NOPSA is organising workshops expected to appeal to those responsible for offshore training and competency as well as those responsible for noise management in their organisations. The workshops will be held in Perth (27 May) and Melbourne (29 May). Speakers drawn from industry will share their experiences and knowledge and will be joined by expert presenters from NOPSA. As places for these workshops are strictly limited people interested in attending are advised to register their interest as soon as possible to: information@nopsa.gov.au

New number for notifying incidents

The phone number for notifying NOPSA of incidents, dangerous occurrences and complaints will change from April 22. The new number to call is 08 6461 7090. Letters and leaflets advising of the change have been sent to all industry operators and other organisations. Please remember to update your records with the new number.

Answer to query on spills

NOPSA has recently been asked if a spill of more than 80 litres of Synthetic Based Mud (SBM) to the sea is reportable. The answer provided may help others not clear about our agency responsibility. NOPSA regulates offshore health and safety, not environmental matters. Therefore a spill of SBM, which is not considered to be a 'petroleum liquid', to the sea would not be reportable to NOPSA but it may be reportable to the environmental authorities, under the Petroleum (Submerged Lands) (Management of Environment) Regulations.

NOPSA's criteria for reporting Accidents and Dangerous Occurrences are specified in the *Petroleum (Submerged Lands) (Management of Safety on Offshore Facilities) Regulations 1996* (MoSOF) regulation 45 and include "an uncontrolled release of petroleum liquids exceeding 80 litres."

Offshore accommodation comments - next steps

The recent discussion paper on offshore accommodation standards which was presented by NOPSA for public comment has drawn a wide range of submissions. NOPSA wishes to thank all those who took the time to consider the issue and submit their ideas and concerns. NOPSA is suggesting that the next step should be the formation of a working group.

International

Warning on lifeboats

A [recently released report](#)¹ from the Norwegian Oil Industry (OLF) highlights problems with free fall lifeboats in certain wind conditions. The report recommends restriction on the use of GES40 and GES40MB free fall lifeboats due to wind loads. The report is available on the NOPSA website.

Warning on HVAC systems

The Norwegian Petroleum Safety Authority (PSA) has issued a very useful report on issues arising from a fire on an offshore facility. There are lessons to be learnt about communications, emergency preparedness as well as system-specific issues on management of change and vulnerabilities of Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems. NOPSA encourages operators of offshore facilities, of all types, to consider how these lessons may apply to their operations. The most detailed version can be found by following the link on the PSA website to the [investigation report](#)² (English Summary)

International expectations for asset integrity

Asset integrity may be defined as the state in which an asset meets design performance standards for effective control of risks and the management systems that effectively support that state.

We have summarised what the International Regulators Forum (IRF) considers reasonable for companies to have in place to demonstrate effective management of asset integrity.

- Effective leadership from the top demonstrating understanding of integrity issues and commitment to safe operation.
- Clear and effective performance indicators.
- Appropriate management metrics at all levels of management.
- Effective management of integrity data.
- Meaningful and effective performance standards.
- Comprehensive maintenance management system.
- Effective audit of integrity management performance.
- Effective cross business and cross industry learning.
- Continuity of records during the lifetime of the asset.
- Trained and competent workforce.
- Clear management of change procedures.
- Knowledge and understanding of risk control barriers at all levels.

National Programmes

NOPSA'S NATIONAL RISK FOCUS

Workshops on lifting and facility integrity well received

There was strong interest in NOPSA's recently organised workshops in Perth and Melbourne focusing on the two National Programmes – lifting operations and facility integrity. There have been many requests for [copies of the presentations](#)³, which are now available on NOPSA's website under Presentations.

Stakeholder relations

Meetings conducted

Meetings were held between the NOPSA CEO, John Clegg, General Manager (Regulatory) Simon Schubach and stakeholders including the Minister for Resources and Energy the Hon. Martin Ferguson AM, and the Secretary of the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism Peter Boxall. Other meetings were held with the Chair of the Australian Safety and Compensation Council (ASCC), the Federal Safety Commissioner and the Assistant National Secretary of the ACTU. Discussions included ways of working and sharing information more effectively. NOPSA also reinforced its support for the ASCC 10 year health and safety strategy targeting noise management and competency.

APPEA conference and exhibition fast approaching

The APPEA conference and exhibition, "Energising Change" at the Perth Convention Centre from 6-9 April is expected to provide a wealth of information on the state of the oil and gas industry in Australia. With a mix of domestic and international speakers the conference looks set to focus on new challenges facing the industry. NOPSA will have an exhibition booth and you are welcome to call in and give us feedback on safety initiatives in your organisation.

Website

Vessels in the Offshore Petroleum OHS Regime - guidelines removed

NOPSA is working with the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism to change the *Petroleum (Submerged Lands) (Management of Safety on Offshore Facilities) Regulations 1996* (MoSOF) to specifically exclude vessels performing certain tasks from being 'facilities'. In the interim, NOPSA has withdrawn its guidance on this matter from the website.

NOPSA personnel

New inspector joins team

Andy Green has been appointed as an OHS Inspector for NOPSA's Team Three which predominantly regulates drilling operations. Formerly a marine chief engineer with 16 years experience on MODUs, drill ships and supply vessels, Andy's most recent operational work was on a fifth generation deep water MODU off West Africa. He also spent four years in onshore management of offshore supply vessels in both New Zealand and Australia. He is a member of the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science & Technology.

Regulatory activities

As at 28 March 2008

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 Assessments

Assessment Type	Accepted (4)	Rejected (0)	Withdrawn (2)	Under Assessment (34)
Safety Case NEW				6
Safety Case REVISED	1		1	10
Pipeline SMP	2			4
Diving SMS				1
Diving Project Plan				
Scope of Validation	1		1	13
Field Development Plan				

Inspections

Eight inspections and no audits were conducted. Issues arising included:

- Auditing deficiencies
- Noise levels
- Inefficient Procurement Systems
- Safety-based Industrial Relations
- Overall fabric maintenance

Incidents and complaints

There were 24 Dangerous Occurrences and one Lost Time Injury reported.

Major incidents included:

- five dropped objects – two objects weighing >10 kg
- one crane collapse
- one electric shock – related to moisture ingress
- two fires – one electrical and one involving nearby combustible material

Significant incidents included:

- three back strain injuries
- four equipment failures - three of which were valve failures

- two hydrocarbon releases <300 kg
- one petroleum liquid release >80 L
- two medivacs for chest pain

Two complaints were reported.

Enforcement

Four Improvement Notices were issued for:

- failure to meet noise regulations
- failure to complete repairs
- failure to provide a safe work environment
- ineffective maintenance management

Two Written Advice/Warnings were issued for:

- excessive work hours by personnel
- integrity of safety critical equipment

Subscribe

Past [issues of this newsletter](#)⁴ are available from the NOPSA website. Operators and other employers are encouraged to circulate this newsletter to their workforce. Please add your details to our distribution list to receive future copies of this newsletter by emailing information@nopsa.gov.au

Find out more

¹ http://nopsaas02/alert/index.asp#selected_topics

² http://www.ptil.no/English/Helse+miljo+og+sikkerhet/Tilsyn+og+raadgivning/8_gransking_songadee_brann.htm

³ <http://www.nopsa.gov.au/presentation/>

⁴ http://www.nopsa.gov.au/CEO_emails/