

Norway confirms acceptance of Oil & Gas UK medical certificates

Dr Morten Hellang of the Rogaland County Medical Office in Norway spoke at a recent Oil & Gas UK examining doctors conference in London, where he confirmed that Norway has been accepting unrestricted Oil & Gas UK medical certificates since early 2013.

Dr Hellang repeated assurances also given to Oil & Gas UK at a meeting of UK, Norwegian and Dutch oil industry associations in Stavanger. The meeting discussed the longstanding informal 'Hardanger agreement' between Oil & Gas UK, OLF (now NOG), and NOGEPa, which had been intended to achieve mutual recognition of medical certificates but which had been difficult for OLF/NOG to implement because of Norwegian law.

The change in circumstance has arisen because Norway is changing the qualifications required for doctors to issue Norwegian medical certificates: from 2014 onwards no doctor will be able to issue a Norwegian certificate unless they have completed a training course – details of the course are not yet confirmed, but it is expected that it will only be run in Norway, and in Norwegian.

The practical implications of the new training requirement are that from 2014 only Norwegian doctors will be able to undertake Norwegian medical examinations for offshore work, and that Oil & Gas UK members with employees working in the Norwegian sector will encounter difficulties in obtaining certification for employees. The acceptance of UK certificates by Rogaland County Medical Office greatly reduces the expected problems as a result.

Oil & Gas UK members may wish to discuss future international certification procedures for their offshore employees with their usual medical provider – all major medical providers will be aware of the forthcoming change and the decision by the Norwegian authority to accept UK medical certificates.

Full details of the Norwegian position on accepting UK (and Dutch) offshore medical certificates can be seen at: <http://www.fylkesmannen.no/en/Rogaland/Health-and-care-services/Offshore-health-services/Helseerklaring/Acceptance-of-British-and-Dutch-medical-certificates/>