## HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT 2021





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Our vision is to ensure the UK Continental Shelf becomes the most attractive mature oil and gas province in the world with which to do business.

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#### Foreword

### OGUK

Welcome to OGUK's 2021 Health & Safety Report, which provides an overview of the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS) oil and gas industry's health and safety performance in 2020. It also summarises the continuous work that various OGUK groups do in order to improve the performance and protect the people who work in our industry.

In writing about 2020, we need to first reflect on the impact COVID-19 has had on society and our industry in particular.

OGUK was quick to recognise the potential risks. To help address these it set up the Pandemic Steering Group (PSG) in April 2020. The group, consisting of operators, contractors, unions, external agencies and other associations, had three specific aims: to ensure the health and safety of the workforce; to maintain the UK's security of supply; and to demonstrate an industry in control. I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the huge effort everyone made to ensure that we met all three: those working in the PSG and its many subgroups; the key workers in our offshore and onshore sites; and the many stakeholder groups and bodies who pulled together during a period of incredible challenge, while all the time maintaining safe and stable operations.

Throughout the disruption, industry also kept its focus on process safety. Preventing hydrocarbon releases (HCR) remained key and 2020 saw a

welcome reduction. In terms of overall numbers, there has been a 22% reduction in RIDDOR reportable releases since 2018. This is the first year where there were no major releases since our records began over 25 years ago. We are not yet below the numbers seen in 2016 and the challenge for industry is to ensure these gains are sustained as activity levels increase. This report details the actions industry has taken and those planned for the coming months, along with a description of the intense cross-industry collaboration and co-operation dedicated to reducing HCR.

As in previous years, the most common cause of personal injuries was slips, trips and falls. It was the fourth consecutive year without a fatality. The longer-term reportable non-fatal injury rate is also continuing to fall. As an example, we see the lowest injury rate in 25 years, for both over seven-day injuries and specified injuries.

During the pandemic, the numbers of people working offshore was considerably reduced. In the period between April and June, the average weekly number dropped from 12,500 to 7,500 although this has now increased to around 10,000. This resulted in project and drilling/well work being postponed and non-essential maintenance deferred into backlog. While the accepted view is that maintenance backlog has been an ongoing issue for industry, the pandemic has highlighted the need to arrest a rising trend. In 2021, OGUK established an industry Maintenance Reduction

#### Foreword continued

### OGUK

Task Group to develop a unified understanding of maintenance backlog, its status and improvement intentions across the sector. An agreed set of key performance indicators, their intent and reporting mechanism will be created to support this objective which will allow each operator to use common language to articulate control and improvement mechanisms.

Matters pertaining to the health of the workforce were dominated by COVID-19 and it is difficult to draw any relevant conclusions on the broader health topics. OGUK produced some excellent COVID-19 related guidance. This includes the Vulnerable Persons Technical Note and the Guide to Action on COVID-19 Test Results. OGUK also worked with the Scottish Government to produce the authoritative Safe Working for UKCS Offshore Installations; and it assisted Public Health Scotland in drafting the Guidance for Preventing and Management of Cases of COVID-19 on Offshore installations. OGUK also enabled the remote medical examination – a first for our industry.

Across UKCS helicopter operations, 2020 was a year free from accidents and serious incidents. But owing to significantly fewer flying hours, the UKCS' five-year average of all accident and serious incident rate increased from 0.26 to 0.27/100,000 flying hours, with one serious incident occurring during the five-year period in 2016. This performance reflects the amount of work being undertaken in the areas of operational effectiveness, reliability and the introduction of new technology and equipment. The findings from this

report will help shape OGUK's health and safety activities for the year ahead. The focus areas will include HCR prevention; major hazard management; addressing the maintenance backlog challenge; and ensuring the health and wellbeing of the offshore workforce is maintained. As an industry, we can be proud that our performance in 2020 was robust, improved in many areas and stood up to the pressure that COVID-19 brought. But we are not complacent and the challenge to continuously improve lies at the heart of everything we do.

All these matters and more are expanded upon in this report. We hope you find the content to be both interesting and informative. Any queries should be directed to OGUK HSE Director, Trevor Stapleton, at tstapleton@oguk. org.uk.

Trevor Stapleton

Trevor Stapleton Health, Safety and Environmental Director OGUK



### 2. Key findings 2.1 Process safety

The number of reportable incidents decreased by 30%, with 204 recorded.

Of that, hydrocarbon releases (HCR) was the single largest category (47% of the total), followed by dropped objects (19%).





There were zero confirmed major HCR and, overal since 2018, there has been a 22% decrease in HCR under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR 1)

### **2.2** Personal safety

There were no work-related fatalities for the fifth year running.

2016 2017 2018 2019 2020



reportable injury rate decreased by 20%. with 2.867 per 100,000 workers, down from 3,380 per 100,000 workers in 2019.

The overall



**Fractures remained** the most common type of reportable injury, followed by strains and sprains.



Average safety critical maintenance backlog increased by 86% compared with 2019, a direct impact of the pandemic.



Slips, trips and falls, and lifting and handling remained the most common causes of injuries.

The UKCS lost-time injury frequency is HALF the all-European average, at 0.36/million man-hours compared with 0.73/million man-hours, and is lower than Denmark, Norway and Netherlands



100,000 hrs

# **2. Key findings** continued**2.3** Health



111,647 OGUK medicals were performed by registered doctors in more than 70 countries, down from 146,479 in 2019. 8,530 of these medicals were conducted remotely, following COVID-19 protocols.





Blood pressure remained the most common cause for failure of an offshore medical, with 15% of all failures attributable to associated health conditions.

The most common reason for medical evacuation (medevac) was for suspected cardiac incidents.



### 2.4 Aviation

Offshore helicopter operations were accident-free.

The fatal accident rate per 100,000 flying hours remained at zero for the third year running.



Flying hours decreased by **41%** to **42,540** in 2020, down from **72,227** in 2019. This was reflected in the number of passengers transported and was due to the COVID-19 pandemic causing non-essential operation to pause, and a proportion of the workforce to self-isolate.

The AgustaWestland AW169 was a new addition to the helicopter types supporting the UKCS operations. But the Sikorsky S92 continues to dominate.

Nearly 500 flights were organised to remove personnel with suspected COVID-19, or those who were identified as close contacts of confirmed COVID-19 cases, transporting over 1,000 passengers.



### 3. Performance

### 3.1 Summary

- There were zero fatalities.
- There were no major cases of hydrocarbon releases (HCR).
- Slips, trips and falls account for 26% of all injuries.
- Over 111,500 OGUK offshore medicals were conducted, with remotely conducted medicals occurring for the first time.
- The most common causes of failed medicals were blood pressure and diabetes.
- The number of significant HCR under RIDDOR has decreased by 25%, with no major HCR being reported for the first time since our records began.

The UK offshore oil and gas industry is committed to protecting people, the natural environment and assets by maintaining safe operations. The industry continually strives to improve personal and process safety, using performance indicators to monitor how well this is being managed. Personal safety metrics point to industry's performance in managing risks to an individual. However, to minimise harm to people, the primary focus must be on process safety. This means effective containment of hydrocarbons and associated hazards. Major accidents are rare and so lagging indicators, such as HCR, are combined with leading indicators to give a better picture of safety performance. Leading indicators include maintenance backlogs for safety-critical elements and overdue verification findings. These show how well safety-critical elements, which are designed to prevent, control or mitigate the effects of major incidents on an installation, are being managed. Process safety performance indicators, while perhaps not as obviously about "safety" as the injury statistics, are nevertheless critical to measuring performance and ensuring the industry continues to manage major accident risk effectively.

It is also important to manage the health and well- being of the offshore workforce effectively, given the remoteness of the worksite and the nature of the work they perform. A suite of occupational health-related legislation regulates the offshore working environment to control risks to health. In addition, it is industry policy that all persons working offshore are examined regularly by a medical professional before travelling offshore. The registered examining doctors who conduct assessments in line with the OGUK medical standard help to ensure that each person is fit for work offshore.

### 3.2 Process and personal safety

#### 3.2.1. Incident reporting

RIDDOR and the EU Offshore Safety Directive (OSD) Implementing Regulation No 1112/2014, transposed into UK law, define reportable incidents. Under this legislation, defined incident types with high potential to cause significant injuries, termed dangerous occurrences, and other defined incidents such as failure of a safety critical element, must be reported to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE).

The reporting requirements in the European regulations are broadly aligned with RIDDOR categories, but additional reportable incident categories have been introduced, and the category names are different<sup>1</sup>. The section below includes information on both RIDDOR and EU reportable offshore incidents.

As seen in Figure 1, the downward trend in the overall number of incidents since the peak in 2000–01 continued in 2020, when there were 204 such incidents. This was a 30% decrease from 2019 and the lowest incident number since 1995.

### OGUK

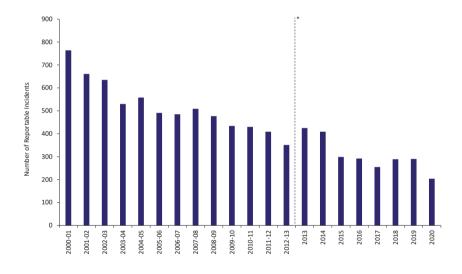


Figure 1: Reportable Incidents

\*Period of reporting changed from fiscal to calendar year

Source: Health and Safety Executive, 2021

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See The Health and Safety (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 (legislation.gov.uk)



Figure 2 breaks down the reportable incidents by type. Categories from the EU Implementing Regulations and RIDDOR have been combined where appropriate, eg "release or escape of a dangerous substance" and "unintentional release of hazardous substances" have been combined into the "loss of containment (non-HCR)" category. As in 2019, HCR are the largest single type of reportable incident, followed by dropped objects.

That latter category saw 42% fewer incidents in 2020, to 38 from 66 in 2019. HCR incidents were also down 23%; 96 compared with 125 incidents in 2019.

#### 3.2.2. Hydrocarbon releases

The HSE collates data on HCR, most of which are identified as such in the figure above. But it should be noted that "well incidents", "pipeline incidents" and "fire or explosion" may also include HCR.

The HSE assigns a severity classification to HCR, defining them as minor, significant or major. A minor release has the potential to cause serious injuries or a fatality within the immediate vicinity but would not be expected to result in a multiple fatality event or significant escalation. A significant release is one with the potential to cause serious injury or fatality to personnel within the local area and to escalate within that local area — for example, by causing structural damage, secondary leaks or damage to safety

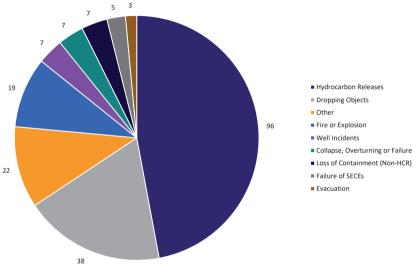


Figure 2: Breakdown of Reportable Incidents

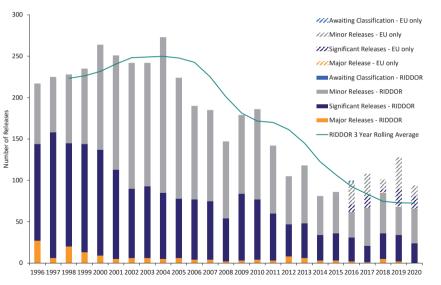
Source: Health and Safety Executive, 2021

systems — while a major HCR is one with the potential, if ignited, to cause multiple casualties or rapid escalation affecting, for example, other modules, the temporary refuge or escape routes.

### 3. Performance continued

Figure 3 shows the total number of reportable HCR in 2020, under RIDDOR and the EU regulation. There was a 26% decrease in HCR in 2020 (from 128 to 94). In addition, there were no major HCR reported in 2020. This is the first time the figure has been zero in over 25 years.

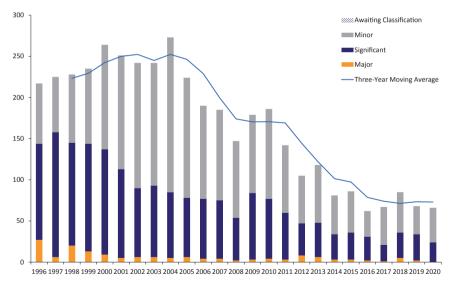
Figure 4 shows the same data with the additional EU-reportable HCRs excluded to allow for comparison. The three-year moving average in 2020 resumed the downward trend that was broken in 2019.



#### Figure 3: Hydrocarbon Releases Occurring Offshore

Source: Health and Safety Executive, 2021





Source: Health and Safety Executive, 2021

Figure 5 shows only the HCRs classified as major. Six major releases were reported in 2018, and three in 2019, meaning that the three-year average has plateaued at three per year. Annual fluctuations aside, the general trend has been downward, with none in 2020.

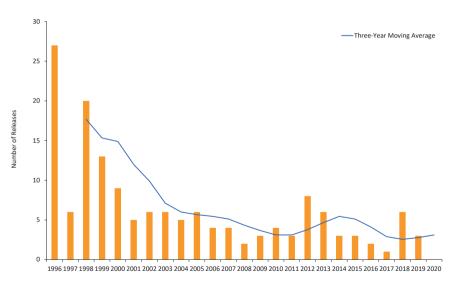


Figure 5: Major Hydrocarbon Releases

Source: Health and Safety Executive, 2021



#### 3.2.3. Personal injuries and fatalities

Reportable injuries in the UK fall into two categories: those that result in seven or more days off work; and specified injuries and fatalities. Figure 6 shows work-related fatalities at offshore installations recorded in over 25 years (excluding aviation, covered in Section 4 of this report). In 2020 there were none.

#### Figure 6: Fatal Injuries Offshore

Year	Number of Fatalities	Year	Number of Fatalities	Year	Number of Fatalities
1996-97	2	2004-05	0	2012-13	0
1997-98	3	2005-06	2	2013-14	2
1998-99	1	2006-07	2	2015	0
1999-00	2	2007-08	0	2016	1
2000-01	3	2008-09	0	2017	0
2001-02	3	2009-10	0	2018	0
2002-03	0	2010-11	0	2019	0
2003-04	3	2011-12	2	2020	0

The non-fatal injury rate is calculated from the number of over-seven-day and specified injuries reported to the HSE<sup>2</sup>, as well as offshore population figures calculated from Vantage POB data. The breakdown of over-sevenday and specified injuries per 100,000 workers since 2001 is given in Figure 7. The over-seven-day injury rate decreased from 252 to 217 injuries/100,000 workers in 2020, the lowest the figure has been in over 25 years.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Defined list of reportable injuries in Regulation 4 of RIDDOR 2013



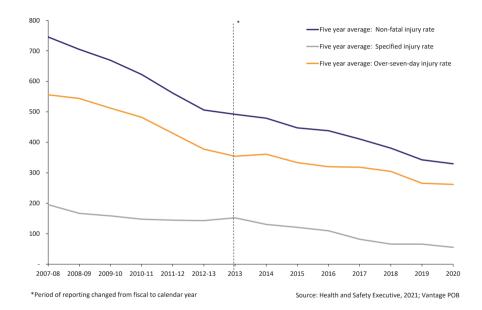
The specified injury rate also showed a decrease of 52/100,000 workers, from 86 in 2019. This continues the generally downwards trend displayed since 2015.

The total number of reportable injuries in 2020 was 57 of which 11 were specified injuries and 46 were over-seven-day injuries.

Figure 7 takes a longer-term average and so smooths annual fluctuations and provides a clearer trend.

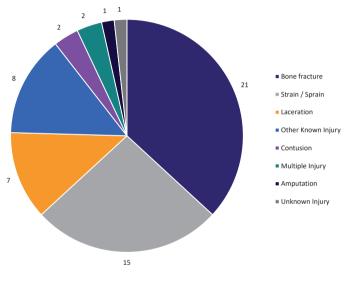
Bone fractures were the most common reportable injury in 2020 with 21 reported, followed by strains and sprains (15) and lacerations (7). The full breakdown of injury types is given in Figure 8.

#### Figure 7: Five-year average injury rate per 100,000 workers



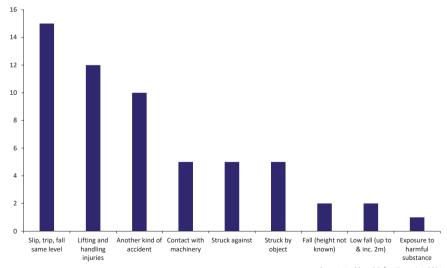
### 3. Performance continued

#### Figure 8: Reportable Injuries by Type



Source: Health and Safety Executive, 2021

The most common cause of injury was slips, trips and falls on the same level (15), followed by lifting and handling injuries (12). A full breakdown of the type of accident involved in the injury is shown in Figure 9 below.

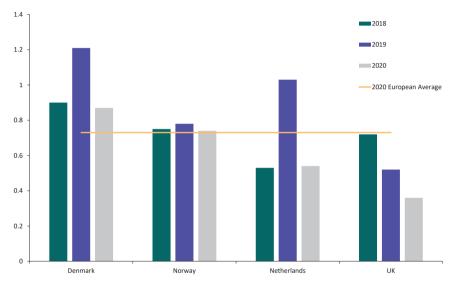


#### Figure 9: Reportable Injuries by Direct Cause

Source: Health and Safety Executive, 2021

### 3. Performance continued

Figure 10 compares the UK offshore oil and gas industry's performance with other European offshore sectors, based on the lost-time injury (LTI) frequency data from the International Association of Oil & Gas Producers (IOGP). This geographical comparison demonstrates that the UK is lower than the European average of 0.72/million manhours. The UK had an LTI frequency that was lower than its directly comparable peers in the North Sea, with 0.36 LTIs/million man-hours, compared with 0.74 in the Norwegian sector.



#### Figure 10: Lost Time Injury Frequency for Oil and Gas Sectors Surrounding the UK

Source: International Association of Oil and Gas Producers

## **3. Performance** continued3.3 Operator safety performance benchmarking

Every year, OGUK conducts a benchmarking exercise so that production installation operators can compare their own safety performance against the UK industry average. Other industry associations monitor and report the safety performance of marine and drilling contractors, which are therefore not included.

Thirty installation operators were included in the benchmarking exercise this year. Participating companies receive their individual results, but for the purposes of presenting the aggregated anonymised data, each company is allocated a letter. Note that the same identifier is not assigned to the same operator for each of the categories shown.

Figure 11 lists the participating companies and Figure 12 presents the anonymised results from key elements of the benchmarking exercise. The average frequency rate for those companies is calculated to the industry standard of incidents per million man-hours based on a 12-hour working day.

Incident frequency rates, rather than absolute numbers, are used for comparison in this exercise, but even with that standardisation, the wide variation in frequency rates between best and worst performers is affected by the relative size of the company's operations. In the more detailed benchmarking report issued to companies directly, organisations are therefore separated into three bands by size to minimise this effect.

#### Figure 11: Participating Companies

Participating	g Companies
Altera Infrastructure	Ithaca
Apache North Sea Limited	Neptune Energy
Bluewater Services	ONE-Dyas
BP	Perenco
Bumi Armada	Petrofac
BW Offshore	Premier Oil
Chrysaor	Repsol Sinopec
CNOOC International	Rockrose
CNR	Serica Energy
Dana Petroleum	Shell
ENI	Spirit Energy
EnQuest	Tailwind Energy
Equinor	TAQA Bratani
Fairfield Energy	TotalEnergies
INEOS	Wintershall Noordzee



Figure 12 shows the frequency of RIDDOR-reportable injuries and incidents which has risen from 2019 (3.468/million man-hours) to 2020 (3.755/million man-hours). This is despite fewer actual incidents, with 195 in 2019 and 148 in 2020, and it is due to the 30% drop in manhours last year. Because the number of incidents each year are low, the data is sensitive to small changes.

Overall, the number of reportable incidents and injuries is trending lower and is the lowest since 2007.

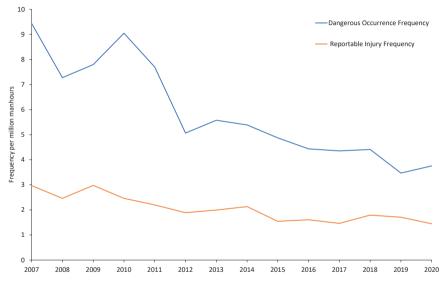


Figure 12: Reportable Incidents and Reportable Injury Frequencies

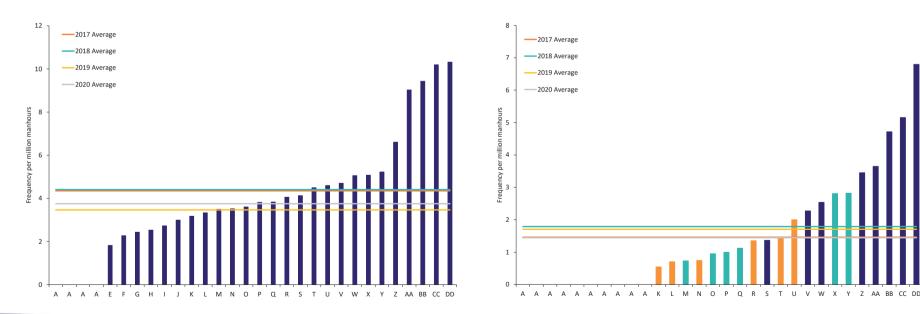
Source: Health and Safety Executive, Vantage POB and OGUK

### 3. Performance continued

Figures 13 and 14 show the frequency of reportable incidents and injuries for each company compared with the group average over the past two years. Half of the operators (15) recorded dangerous occurrences that were at or below the 2020 average. And most operators (20) recorded reportable injuries that were at or below the 2020 average. Four operators completed the year with no reportable dangerous occurrences, while ten operators had no reportable injuries.

#### Figure 13: Production Installation Operators' Safety Performance Benchmarking Results – Reportable Incidents

#### Figure 14: Production Installation Operators' Safety Performance Benchmarking Results – Reportable Injuries





The table below summarises operator safety performance benchmarking for production installations in absolute numbers since 2011.

Year	Fatalities	Major / Specified Injuries	Over-Seven Day Injuries	Reportable Incidents	Man-Hours
2011	2	25	72	347	45,081,195
2012	0	27	70	260	51,339,945
2013	0	32	81	316	56,695,543
2014	2	16	103	306	56,793,896
2015	0	15	68	262	53,778,551
2016	1	18	65	232	52,332,393
2017	0	2	81	247	56,759,996
2018	0	19	81	251	56,936,436
2019	0	24	72	195	56,217,456
2020	0	11	46	148	39,418,728
10-Year Average	1	19	74	256	52,535,413

#### Figure 15: Benchmarking Performance Summary

### 3.4 Asset integrity Performance Indicators

The UK offshore oil and gas industry has a voluntary asset integrity key performance indicator (KPI) scheme in place to monitor leading indicators using maintenance backlog and verification data that has been collected since 2008. The scheme is administered by OGUK, whereby data are

collected at the end of every quarter. Participation is voluntary, and the number of reporting installations varies, but in general, at least half of UKCS installations are included. Safety critical maintenance backlog is a leading performance indicator for process safety.

### 3. Performance continued

KPI-1 is a lagging indicator and is monitored by HSE through RIDDOR incident reporting mechanisms, as covered in Section 3.1. KPI-2 and KPI-3 serve as leading indicators of safety-critical performance.

#### Figure 16: UK Asset Integrity Key Performance Indicators

Level	
KPI-1	Hydrocarbon Releases
KPI-2	Verification Non-Compliance
KPI-3	Safety-Critical Maintenance Backlog

#### 3.4.1. KPI-2 Verification Non-Compliance

The Offshore Safety Case regime requires duty-holders to identify and maintain safety and environmentally critical elements (SECE). SECE, which are specific to an installation, aim to prevent, control or mitigate the risk to individuals and/or the natural environment from potential major accident hazards (MAH). Each SECE must comply with a defined performance standard which has been developed based on the parameters of the MAH present on the installation.

Every installation will have many SECE, including fire and gas detection systems, emergency shutdown systems and temporary refuge. To ensure that these are fit for purpose, remain in good condition and repair, and comply with the relevant performance standard, they are subject to a verification process. Verification is undertaken by an independent competent person (ICP) who must report any deficiencies inherent in the performance standards and in the verification scheme itself.

Deficiencies reported by the ICP are ranked according to three levels of severity using common definitions as outlined below. KPI-2 monitors and measures the more serious level 2 and 3 findings.

#### Figure 17: Current Definitions — Verification Findings

Level	
1	Performance standard satisfied, but ICP may suggest an improvement to the system or request additional information to demonstrate compliance with a performance standard.
2	Single performance standard failure with no significant threat to the installation.
3	Fundamental weakness of the SECE assurance system involving multiple failures of a performance standard(s) or presents a significant threat to the integrity of the installation.

At the end of 2020, the average number of open (unresolved) level 2 findings per installation was six, which is an increase on the three reported in 2019. On a quarterly basis, the average number of level 2 findings has remained consistent since 2011, at around two or three per quarter. That remained the case in in 2020.

### 3. Performance continued

The industry KPI reporting further categorises open findings into 'openoverdue' and 'related to process containment', as the latter are the most serious type of SECE. The average number of open-overdue findings per installation increased by a third, from just under two (1.79) to over two (2.43) in 2020. The proportion of the more serious Level 3 findings, as per the table above, remained consistently below 1 (0.02).

Level 3 findings relate to more serious matters raised by the ICP. This makes them relatively rare and the number per installation is small. The total number across all participating installations is monitored and reported to ensure they are being closed out in a timely manner.

#### 3.4.2. KPI-3 Safety-Critical Maintenance Backlog

OGUK collates a record of safety-critical (SC) maintenance backlog in three distinct categories:

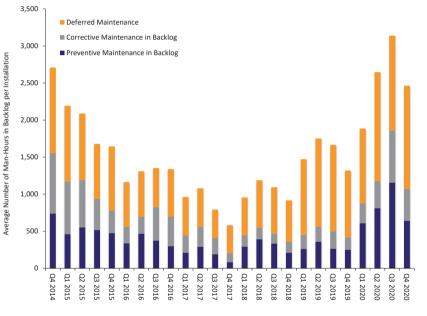
- Planned preventative SC maintenance that has passed its scheduled completion date and is now overdue
- Corrective SC maintenance where equipment undergoing SC maintenance has been found to need some form of repair or recertification
- Deferred SC maintenance that has not been carried out at its planned completion date but has been rescheduled following a robust deferral assessment of the risk associated with deferring maintenance

Figure 18 is a high-level snapshot of industry performance since the end of 2014. As shown, the backlog man-hours decreased consistently until the end of 2017. The overall safety critical maintenance backlog began to rise in 2018. However, until 2020, the backlog had remained below the peak seen in earlier years. The disruption to normal operations and the associated downmanning necessitated by the pandemic clearly affected total maintenance backlog levels in 2020, which reached an average of 3,139 hours per installation in Q3 before dropping to 2,462 by the end of the year. This was just below the total seen in 2014.

Maintenance is a key safety activity and the reversal during the pandemic of what had been a sustained downward trend in safety-critical maintenance backlog hours since the peak in 2015 is an area of focus for industry and regulator. Balancing the need to complete maintenance work with the pressure on accommodation caused by COVID restrictions has been an ongoing challenge for operators throughout 2020, along with the postponement of the Forties Pipeline shutdown for affected installations. Information about industry action to address the maintenance backlog can be found in Section 5 of this report.



Figure 18: Average Preventative, Corrective and Deferred Safety-Critical Maintenance Man-Hours in Backlog per Installation



Source: OGUK, 2021

### 3.5 Health

#### 3.5.1. Examining Doctors' Assessments and Training

The OGUK standard for medical fitness to work offshore is recognised as a global standard in the industry. The list of examining doctors on the OGUK register who can carry out such assessments includes practitioners from 75 countries across Europe, Asia-Pacific, the Americas and Africa<sup>3</sup>.

To register, medical professionals must complete the OGUK's "Introduction for OGUK Registered Doctors" training. The training course is designed to acquaint delegates with the nature of life and work offshore so that they better understand the standard of medical fitness required. Despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, over 100 new doctors were trained and registered in 2020. OGUK had to adjust the training provision to a digital and online format, which was successful and well received.

Despite the success of the remote, virtual doctor training, it was felt that the OGUK Annual Doctor's Conference would not translate well to a digital forum and so the event was cancelled in 2020.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Find out more about the OGUK Register for Examining Doctors at www.oguk.org.uk/doctors



Each year, registered doctors assess offshore oil and gas employees around the globe using the OGUK Medical Aspects of Fitness for Offshore Work: Guidance for Examining Physicians<sup>4</sup>. In 2020, this document was supported by the OGUK Socially Distanced Medical Assessments Technical Note<sup>5</sup>, enabling registered doctors to conduct OGUK medicals safely and in line with COVID-19 restrictions. The use of the OGUK guidelines as a global standard for working offshore means that not all those medicals were conducted for individuals working in the UKCS.

OGUK registered doctors submit a statistical return indicating the total number of medicals they have performed and the numbers of cases in which individuals have failed to pass their assessments, as well as the reasons for those failures.

As a consequence of the challenges faced in 2020, the number of medicals performed decreased, by 25% in 2020. Only around 8% of the medicals conducted were recorded as being "socially distanced".

In 2020, the fail rate of examinations decreased slightly to 0.97%, the lowest

#### Figure 19: Examining Doctors Statistics

Year	Total Number of Medicals Conducted	Number of Medicals Failed	Percentage Medicals Failed
2010	56,850	784	1.38%
2011	59,900	665	1.11%
2012	93,219	1,284	1.38%
2013	113,006	1,333	1.18%
2014	118,597	1,285	1.08%
2015	111,651	1,125	1.01%
2016	99,104	1,125	1.14%
2017	110,688	1,339	1.21%
2018	127,474	1,298	1.02%
2019	146,479	1,463	1.00%
2020	111,647	1,082	0.97%

fail rate in the past ten years and lower than the average rate of 1.13% for the period shown below in Figure 19. This may be due to a "less well" proportion of the workforce having to "shield", thus unable to go to work and, as a consequence, not renewing their medical certificate.

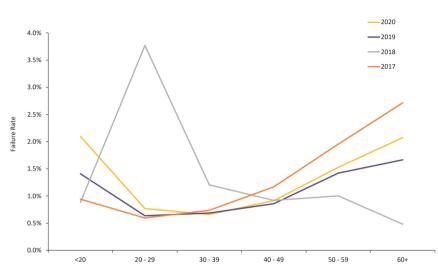
A breakdown of the medical assessment failure rate by age group, as seen in Figure 20, shows that in 2020 those aged under 20 and over 50 were around twice as likely to fail their examination than those in other age groups. The 2020 data is in line with the trends shown in 2017 and 2019, with 2018 being an anomalous year.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The Medical Aspects of Fitness for Offshore Work: Guidance for Examining Physicians is available to download at www.oguk.org.uk/product/medical-aspects-of-fitness-for-offshore-work-guidelines-for-examining-physicians/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> https://oguk.org.uk/product/socially-distanced-medical-assessments/

### 3. Performance continued





Source: OGUK, 2021

2019 was the only year in the records history where blood pressure was not the most common reason for individuals to be declared unfit for work offshore, being overtaken by diabetes. However, in 2020, the most common reason again was blood pressure (15%), especially in the 40-49 and 50-59

age groups. This is proportionate to the number of people in each age group and can be seen in Figure 21.

There has however been a steady decrease, proportionally, in the cases where blood pressure has prevented individuals from working offshore, from 31% in 2018, to 21% in 2019 and finally 15% in 2020.

Diabetes, the main cause of medical failures in 2019, has fallen back in line with previous years as the second most common cause in 2020, along with cardiac issues, with each accounting for 12% of the reason for failure.

Excessive weight/body mass index (BMI) (11%) and drug abuse (8%) are the fourth and fifth most common causes for failure respectively.

Proportionally, issues with weight or BMI were the most common reason for failure in the under-20s but this represents only 9 individuals from 954 medicals carried out in that age range.

Drug abuse was most prominent in the 20-29 age group for the third year running. This was 28% of the failures in that category in 2020, but only 0.2% of the total medicals conducted in that age group.

### 3. Performance continued

#### Figure 21: Reason for Failed Assessment by Age

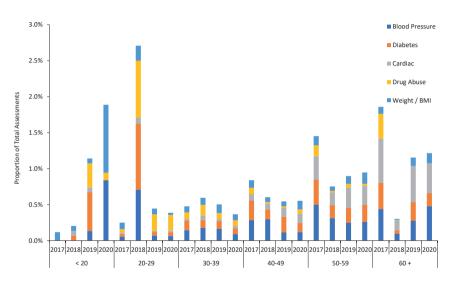
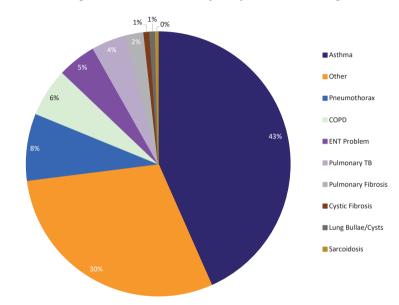


Figure 22: Medical Reasons for Dry Cat-A EBS Training



Source: OGUK, 2021

To enable the safe introduction of in-water Category-A Compressed Air Emergency Breathing System (Cat-A EBS), a 'fitness to train' assessment is conducted. Data collated for 2020 shows that of the 40,391 individual assessments completed, 574 individuals (1.4%) were advised to undertake

dry training only, as pre-existing health conditions put them at additional risk of injury if they undertook in-water training. In 43% of such cases, this was due to asthma. The full breakdown is shown in Figure 22.



#### 3.5.2 Medical Evacuations

As a remote and potentially hazardous workplace where support from the usual emergency services is not available, offshore installations are required to have medical facilities to allow the medic, supported by a topsides doctor, to provide appropriate medical treatment and care to injured or ill personnel until they can be returned to shore. For less acute conditions or minor injuries, this may mean the person is simply treated onboard and continues to work the rest of the rota on normal or restricted duties. For some personnel, the appropriate route may be to wait until the next scheduled flight, but where onshore treatment is a matter of urgency, the industry and coastguard search and rescue (SAR) helicopters are used.

In 2020, emergency medevacs were requested a total of 178 times, with peak demand during the months of January and August (30 and 22, respectively). These medevacs were completed using industry and coastguard SAR helicopters. As shown in Figure 23, the commonest reason was a suspected cardiac incident, followed by injury and acute abdominal issues. This is in line with the previous three years' data.



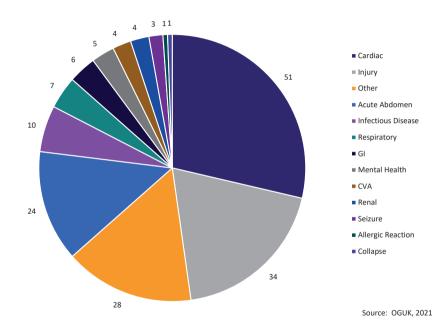




Figure 24 shows the breakdown by age for emergency medevacs and the breakdown by age for the whole offshore workforce. The 30–39 demographic is proportionately under-represented in medevacs, with only 19% of cases (despite making up 30% of the offshore workforce), while the proportion of medevacs associated with the 60 and over group accounts for 12% of all medevacs but just 9% of the total offshore population.

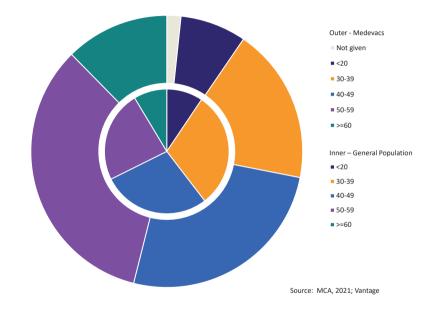
#### 3.5.3 COVID-19 Medical Evacuations

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, industry has engaged with regulators, trade unions and governments to ensure that operations still follow government advice, existing health and safety law and good practice.

One of the first issues that the OGUK Pandemic Steering Group and the Helicopter Subgroup addressed, in early March 2020, was the safe transfer of personnel. Infection prevention and control during helicopter transfer to and from an affected installation was codified and the following categorisation of personnel was developed:

Category A: Person displaying no symptoms and who has not been in contact with a symptomatic person or confirmed case.

Category B: Person with no symptoms but who has been in contact with someone who has symptoms or a confirmed case within the previous 14 days.



#### Figure 24: Proportion of Medevac and General Offshore Population by Age Group



Category C: An individual displaying symptoms whose condition is non-life threatening.

Category D: An individual displaying symptoms whose condition is life threatening.

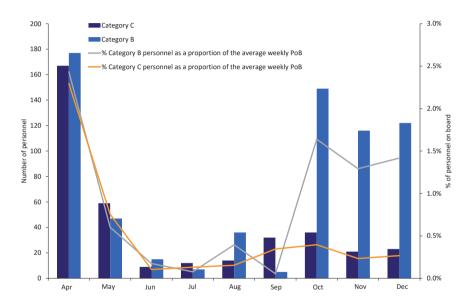
This categorisation enabled safe arrangements for the demobilisation and medevac of personnel, which included a dedicated aircraft for Category C personnel.

From April to December 2020, 674 Category B and 373 Category C personnel were demobilised. These were an average of 0.9% and 0.5% of the total personnel on board (PoB) respectively.

In 2020, there were 37 confirmed cases (Category C) of COVID-19, under RIDDOR reportable requirements. These individuals may have contracted the virus during the course of their offshore work.

These numbers can be seen on a month-by-month basis in Figure 25.

#### Figure 25: Number of personnel evacuated due to COVID-19 symptoms or exposure



### 4. Offshore helicopter operations

- Offshore helicopter operations in 2020 were free from accidents and serious incidents<sup>6</sup>.
- The COVID-19 pandemic saw flying hours and passenger numbers decrease by 41% and 43% from 2019 to 2020.
- 475 flights to remove COVID-19 identified contacts or cases were undertaken in the year.

### 4.1 Summary

Helicopters remain a fundamental requirement for industry working offshore, providing a means of transportation to and from installations and a rescue, recovery and medevac service.

While the industry can never be complacent, having suffered four fatal accidents claiming 38 lives since 1997, safety performance over the last seven years would suggest that improvements in helicopter safety are having a positive effect. No accidents or serious incidents in 2020 means that the UKCS is recording a rolling five-year fatal accident rate of zero for the third year running.

6 Helicopter accidents and serious incidents are defined in Regulation (EU) No 996/2010, Article 2

The Sikorsky S92 remains the workhorse of the North Sea industry, carrying two out of every three passengers visiting or leaving offshore installations. The H175 is second, carrying about one in five (86,484).

Flying hours decreased from 77,227 in 2019 to 42,540 in 2020 and passenger numbers decreased from 781,815 in 2019 to 447,709 in 2020. This was the direct impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which saw operators reduce activity and keep the PoB to the bare minimum without compromising safety. The offshore population across the UKCS reduced from over 12,000 to just over 7,000 in spring 2020.

### 4.2 Overview

As with all modes of transportation, helicopter travel is not without risk. In the seven years since the Sumburgh incident, there have been no fatal helicopter accidents in the UKCS sector, despite significant offshore activity. As an indicator of UKCS operations, over 374,000 sectors were flown since 2017, totalling over 261,286 flight hours and helicopters were used to transport over 2,800,000 passengers.

The COVID-19 pandemic 2020 had a devastating impact on the global aviation industry and the UKCS oil industry depends entirely on helicopters

### 4. Offshore helicopter operations continued

to move offshore workers around. To address the challenges, OGUK formed the Pandemic Steering Group, made up of representatives of offshore operators, HSE, Police Scotland, helicopter operators, trade unions and other stakeholders. The Helicopter subgroup was soon created, which included all accountable managers from helicopter operators.

Helicopter operators rarely sit together to discuss a format of common operating procedures. However, given the importance of continual safe commercial air transport during a global pandemic, this is what happened. Helicopter transport continued without interruption or incident. This spirit of co-operation should be recognised.

On top of the problems posed by the pandemic, regulations governing helicopter ground safety also made major advances with the addition of "Appendix K - Inbound Flight Preparation" to an amended CAA UK CAP437. This addresses risks related to the ground handling of helicopters, passengers, baggage and freight offshore as well as revised Chapters 7 & 8 concerning offshore helicopter refuelling.

The UK CAA mandated the installation of Helideck Monitoring Systems on all moving helidecks in the UKCS which has had a phased introduction owing to manufacturing issues. But it will be a big step forward for safety when aircraft approach moving helidecks during stormy weather. OGUK involvement in the Helioffshore Helideck Working Group fostered the Master Minimum Helideck Equipment List (MMHEL) which embodies aviation principles in helideck standards. This ensures a minimum level of serviceable equipment is maintained for aircraft operations. Roll out of the MMHEL is scheduled for Q4 2021.

### 4.3 Current helicopter types

At the end of 2020, the active UKCS helicopter fleet numbered 67 aircraft and comprised a mix of medium and heavy twin-engine airframe types. Since 2001, only heavy and medium twin-engine helicopters have been used for commercial air transport (CAT) on the UKCS. This is because two-pilot light helicopters do not meet today's commercial offshore range or payload requirements of valid.

The active fleet has decreased by 4 since 2019. Four S92 aircraft have left the fleet, along with one AS365 N3 and one AW139. One H175 and one new airframe type AW169 have been added to the fleet.

The helicopter types in active use for UKCS support (as of the end of 2020) are shown in the table overleaf.

### 4. Offshore helicopter operations continued

Туре	Weight Class	Introduced	In Fleet
Leonardo AW139	Medium	2005	17
Airbus AS365 N3 (Dauphin)	Medium	1979	1
Leonardo AW169	Medium	2020	1
Airbus H175	Medium	2016	17
Leonardo AW189	Heavy	2014	2
Sikorsky S92	Heavy	2005	29

*Figure 26: Current Helicopter Types used for UKCS Offshore Oil and Gas Support* 

## 4.4 Offshore helicopter reportable accidents and serious incidents

Helicopter accidents and serious incidents, as defined in Regulation (EU) No 996/2010, are reported to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). In addition, all flight safety occurrences, as described by the CAA's CAP 382, are reported to the CAA using the Mandatory Occurrence Reporting (MOR) scheme. There are reports submitted every month, providing near-constant oversight of safety-related occurrences.

From 1997 to 2020, four fatal accidents claimed the lives of 38 offshore workers and flight crew. Two were caused by catastrophic component failure and two were attributed to human factors. Sixteen reportable non-fatal accidents have also occurred since 1997. The causes include major component failures, pilot error, lightning strikes, major airframe damage and main and tail rotor damage. In most cases, only the helicopter was damaged but, on occasion these accidents have resulted in injury to personnel.

2020 was an accident- and serious incident-free year but owing to fewer flying hours, the UKCS' five-year average all accident and serious incident rate increased from 0.26 to 0.27/100,000 flying hours, with one serious incident occurring during the five-year period in 2016.

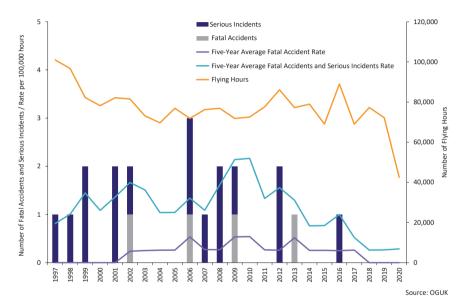
The rolling five-year average for fatal accidents has remained between 0.2 and 0.5/100,000 flying hours for the last decade and zero for the last three years (this is repeating earlier stats).

Figures 27 illustrates the distribution of UKCS fatal accidents and serious incidents from 1997 to 2020, as well as fatal accident and serious incident rates/100,000 flying hours.

### **DGUK**

### 4. Offshore helicopter operations continued

#### Figure 27: Fatal Accidents and Serious Incidents Distribution



### 5. Significant activities

The numerous and wide-ranging issues that the pandemic caused by the pandemic came on top of the usual challenge of preventing HCR and major accidents. As a result, many conversations around COVID-19 included discussions on topics such as management of preventive maintenance.

A suite of COVID-19 documents, covering operational, medical and aviation activities, was published throughout the year to guide the industry. These documents were produced in collaboration with operators, non-operator members, regulators and public bodies, such as Health Protection Scotland. These documents include:

- COVID-19: Safe Working for UKCS Offshore Installation Guidelines
- Movement of Passengers during COVID-19 Pandemic Technical Note
- Vulnerable Persons (COVID-19) Technical Note

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, OGUK has continued to co-ordinate the resolution of issues affecting UKCS operations. The regulatory concerns over venting systems were addressed by a task finish group, resulting in the publication of *Offshore Flare Systems – Identified Issues and Associated Good Practice*. The group will reconvene in 2022 to address venting systems in the same manner. Similarly, concerns over the link between HCR and management system failings were addressed by the Assurance task finish group, who developed an Assurance Toolkit, consisting of a guidance document, a suite of training presentations and a gap analysis tool.

### 5. Significant activities continued

Work also continued, in liaison with regulators, to embed the Principles of Process Safety Leadership, which were developed and signed up to in late 2019. The agreement sets out eight principles for senior industry figures to follow, including competence and involvement in safety management and putting process safety leadership first.

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in project and drilling/well work being postponed and non-essential maintenance deferred into backlog. OGUK established an industry Maintenance Reduction Task Group to develop a unified understanding of maintenance backlog, its status and improvement intentions across the sector. An agreed set of KPIs, their intent and reporting mechanism will be created to support this objective which will allow each operator to articulate its control and improvement mechanisms in common terms.

HSE developed a suite of Safety Case Topic Assessment Guides in 2020 and consulted on their content with Industry, through OGUK. These guides cover stand-alone topics and will be used by HSE topic specialists to assess safety cases. See Figure 29 in Section 5.2 for the full list of Topic Assessment Guides.

OGUK worked to maintain visibility on topics of relevance, despite the inability to host in-person events, by holding virtual forums, conferences

and webinars. These all proved very popular and perhaps because they were online they drew large audiences. OGUK hopes to revert to "live" or "hybrid" events in 2022, with the annual HSE conference, Aviation Seminar and Examining Doctor's Conference in the diary.

Challenges to health and safety remain a constant reality and continuous improvement is of paramount importance. The use of new technologies, the managed introduction of new processes, better understanding of human factors and generous data-sharing across companies will all be key. OGUK remains committed to ensuring that industry never becomes complacent and maintains its focus on improving health and safety for everyone working across the UKCS.

### 5.1 Forums, groups and networks

Representatives of OGUK member companies and other stakeholders – depending on their expertise and responsibilities – manage many of OGUK's activities, working together in forums, networks and technical and work groups. The diagram below shows the permanent health and safety groups as well as the task finish groups, established to address discrete work scopes under the direction of the relevant technical group.



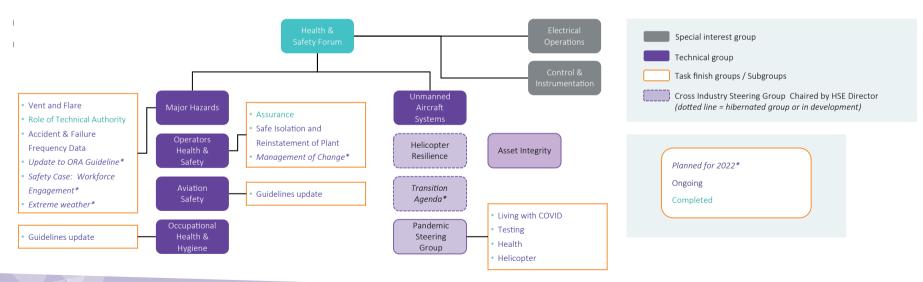
### 5. Significant activities continued

These groups typically develop industry good practice in the form of guidance and/or technical notes; or they recommend improvements to existing processes (eg developing a sustainable process for maintaining and updating population data that had previously resided in HSE's HCR database). There were six such groups in operation in the past twelve months, covering: assurance and verification; accident and failure

frequency data; venting and flaring; and defining the role of the technical authority.

Additionally, the Pandemic Steering Group formed subgroups dedicated to specific COVID-19 related topics, such as testing and reviewing the long-term impact of COVID-19 (Living with COVID).

#### Figure 28: overview of OGUK Health and Safety Groups





# **5. Significant activities** continued 5.2 Regulatory engagement

OGUK keeps its relationships with industry regulators on a productive footing. For the Health & Safety team, the primary regulator is the HSE, both in its own right and as part of the Offshore Safety Directive Regulator (OSDR) The OSDR is the Competent Authority (CA) responsible for implementing the requirements of the EU Directive on the safety of offshore oil and gas operations.

In addition to the HSE, OGUK also maintains close links with the CAA and the Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA) where aviation and maritime safety is concerned.

The development of the new Safety Case Topic Assessment Guides demonstrates a collaborative approach to maintaining and improving offshore safety standards. OGUK ran a series of workshops to ensure the guides received adequate and high-quality feedback from industry.

The full suite of Safety Case Topic Assessment Guides can be seen in Figure 29.

The MCA also regulates the offshore industry, being responsible for the prevention of death at sea. This means that emergency response, rescue

#### Figure 29: HSE Topic Assessment Guides

HSE Topic Assessment Guides			
Diving	Materials and Corrosion		
Electrical, Controls and Instrumentation	Mechanical Engineering		
Emergency Response, Marine and Aviation	Management Systems and Verification		
Fire, Explosion and Risk Assessment	Pipelines		
Human Factors	Process		
Industrial Hygiene	Structural Integrity		
Maritime Integrity	Well Engineering		

and evacuation topics often fall under its remit. The agency runs a Topside Medical Providers Search and Rescue (SAR) forum attended by the OGUK Medical Advisor and industry medical advisors, which this year produced guidance on how industry should handle the evacuation of individuals suffering acute psychiatric emergencies offshore. The MCA is also a member of the Evacuation Escape and Rescue Technical Advisory Group (EERTAG) and provides support to OGUK's Aviation Safety Technical Group.

The aviation sector of the industry is regulated by the CAA which works to ensure that safety standards are met. The CAA participates in the OGUK Aviation Safety Technical Group, devoted to topics such as the trialling of installation weather monitoring systems and the updating of CAP437 (Standards for Offshore Helicopter Landing Areas).

# **5. Significant activities** continued 5.3 Tripartite committees

OGUK represents the offshore oil and gas industry on three official tripartite groups:

#### Offshore Major Accident Hazards Advisory Committee (OMAHAC) -

This strategically focused group includes representatives of regulators, operators and owners and worker representatives, supporting the work of the OSDR in the management and control of offshore major accident hazards.

Broadly speaking, the group aims to encourage dialogue and co-operation between the stakeholders and it periodically reviews the standards and policies available to manage and control offshore major accident risks. It recommends improvements and, by extension, helps to co-ordinate research and the production of common guidance.

**Evacuation Escape and Rescue Technical Advisory Group (EERTAG)** — The scope of this group's interest encompasses emergency escape and recovery from on-platform events, or from external events such as ship collision. Alarm systems, access to the muster point or the temporary refuge, evacuation, escape direct to the sea and rescue and recovery to a place of

safety are all part of its remit. The scope also includes the suitability and performance of personal protective equipment for use in emergencies.

Over the last 12 months the group has expanded its interests to cover reviews of previous incidents and discussions on the role of the Marine Responsible Person and coxswain competence, among others.

#### Offshore Helicopter Safety Leadership Group (OHSLG) — The

primary purpose of the group is to facilitate dialogue between those involved in helicopter operations in the UKCS, monitor the progress of recommendations made to others, co-ordinate and lead the communications of the review to stakeholders and media, and assess the ongoing effectiveness of implemented safety initiatives to ensure delivery of measurable safety benefits.

There is a strong collective commitment from all involved to deliver positive safety changes for all those involved in offshore helicopter travel in the UKCS.

OGUK has supported all three groups throughout 2020.



# **5. Significant activities** continued 5.4 Other External Groups and Organisations

In order to ensure an unwavering focus on safety, OGUK continues to work with external groups and organisations on both the UKCS and Europe. Such bodies include:

**Step Change in Safety** — SCiS is a member-led organisation, bringing together operators, contractors, trade unions, regulators and the workforce to keep improving safety across the UKCS. OGUK collaborates closely with SCiS to ensure that the lead organisation is identified if any responsibilities overlap.

**International Association of Oil and Gas Producers (IOGP)** — OGUK is a member of the Safety Committee and the Aviation Sub-Committee, ensuring that international initiatives are suitable for UKCS operations and that all duty-holders are made aware of any initiatives.

**Process Safety Forum (PSF)** — This provides a platform for the discussion of initiatives, good practice, incident learning and process safety strategy, with the aim of preventing major incidents. Most onshore UK industry associations involved in managing major accident hazards have a member in the forum and attendance at it provides a link between the on- and offshore industries.

**Pipeline Users Group (PLUG)** — This industry group focuses on the safe operation of subsea pipelines and risers. OGUK is a non-operational member of the group and works with members to address issues such as the updating of the Pipeline and Riser Loss of Containment (PARLOC) 2012 Report.

**Offshore Petroleum Industry Training Organisation (OPITO)** — OGUK supports the development, review and policy change of competency and training standards through the UK Industry Forum (UKIF) and by attending specific industry work groups.

National Offshore Industry Associations (NOIA) — OGUK attends an annual Training Working Group meeting with the Norwegian Oil and Gas Association (NOROG), Netherlands Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Association (NOGEPA) and Olie Gas Danmark (OGDK) to maintain the mutual recognition of basic survival and emergency response training standards between national sectors. The group maintains two documents: *Guidelines for Mutual Recognition of Specialised Safety and Emergency Response Training for North Sea Operations, and Mutual Recognition for Basic Safety Training* — both of which can be found on the OGUK website.

**HeliOffshore** — This is the global, safety-focused association for the offshore helicopter industry, tasked with delivering industry-wide

### 5. Significant activities continued

programmes. OGUK participates as a member of its safety strategy panel. By working in collaboration it helps ensure the continuation of safety initiatives such as the North Sea ADS-B trial, which aims to assess the feasibility and potential safety benefits of enhanced broadcast and surveillance technology for offshore helicopter flights.

**RenewableUK** — OGUK involvement with this group is primarily through ad-hoc meetings relating to aviation operations.

Marine Safety Forum (MSF) — The forum promotes good practice and initiatives to enhance marine safety within the oil and gas industry. OGUK participates in the group's steering committee and thereby ensures that the represented organisations co-ordinate activities and share expertise effectively. Along with the MSF and other UKCS National Oil Industry Associations (NOIA), OGUK also sponsors the related *Guidelines for Offshore Marine Operations (GOMO)*, which provides international standards for safety in this area.

### 5.5 Consultation

In addition to regular liaison with regulatory authorities, OGUK also coordinates formal responses to public consultations to ensure that industry views are represented. 2020 consultations are noted below.

- The Safe Approach, Set-up and Departure of Jack-up to Fixed Installations
- Cyber Security Inspection Guidance

# **5. Significant activities** continued 5.6 Publications

The review of existing OGUK health and safety guidance documents and technical notes continues, having been suspended in 2020 as the OGUK Health and Safety team focussed on COVID-19 response. This activity will re-start in 2022 and this will involve the withdrawal of some documents and the formal review and update of others. The following OGUK publications were published in 2020 and 2021:

- Offshore Flare Systems Identified Issues and Associated Good Practice
- Guidance on Whether a Change Constitutes a Material Change to a Safety Case
- Provision of Competence Technical Advice
- Assurance Toolkit
- COVID Communications Pack
- Socially Distanced Medical Assessments
- COVID-19 ERT Medical Assessment Technical Note
- Vulnerable Persons (COVID-19) Technical Note
- Movement of Passengers during COVID-19 Pandemic Technical Note
- COVID-19 Testing Guidelines
- COVID-19: Safe Working for UKCS Offshore Installation Guidelines

### 6. Glossary

BOSIET	Basic Offshore Safety Induction and Emergency Training
САА	Civil Aviation Authority
Cat-A EBS	Category A Compressed Air Emergency Breathing System A compressed air breathing system that can be deployed at very short notice and/or underwater for underwater escape
Dangerous occurrences	Certain specified events as defined in RIDDOR 2013, including dropped objects, HCR, fires or explosions
Duty holder	In relation to a production installation, this means the operator, and in relation to a non-production installation, the owner
EASA	European Aviation Safety Agency
ERRV	Emergency response and rescue vessel
FOET	Further Offshore Emergency Training
HAVS	Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome
HCR	Hydrocarbon release(s)
HSE	Health & Safety Executive
ICP	Independent Competent Person
IOGP	International Association of Oil & Gas Producers
КР	Key Programme
КРІ	Key Performance Indicator



### 6. Glossary continued

Lagging indicator	Output oriented measurement of past performance
Leading indicator	Input oriented prediction of future performance
LTIF	Lost time injury frequency
МАН	Major accident hazard
МСА	Maritime and Coastguard Agency
MOR	Mandatory Occurrence Report
NUI	Normally unmanned installation
OIM	Offshore installation manager
ОМАНАС	Offshore Major Accident Hazards Advisory Committee
ΟΡΙΤΟ	The Offshore Petroleum Industry Training Organisation
Over-seven-day injuries	Accidents that cause an employee to be away from work or unable to perform their normal work activities for more than seven consecutive days
Personal safety	Protecting an individual from harm
Process safety	Managing major hazards that could lead to multiple casualties, such as fires, explosions or structural collapse
Reportable injury	A work-related injury that has resulted in an employee either being away from work, or unable to perform their normal work duties, for more than seven consecutive days owing to their injury, or which is listed as a specified injury

#### **OGUK Resources**

Resource documents are useful tools developed for specific purposes or needs, produced in partnership or at the request of OGUK Members. As part of the Suite of OGUK guidelines, our resource documents demonstrate a commitment to continually improving and enhancing the performance of all offshore operations.

OGUK Resources are part of the OGUK suite of guidelines, free for our members.



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