

## **New Guidelines for Removal of Offshore Personnel: Roll-out Notes**

### **Why have we produced the new guidelines?**

The issue of 'NRB' or offshore workers being 'Not Required Back' to an installation has been contentious and has attracted adverse publicity for the industry, as well as tension amongst the workforce.

Previous industry efforts to deal with this issue failed to get trade union endorsement, and as a result were not formally or publicly recognised.

At the Oil & Gas UK Safety Breakfast in August 2008, the joint chairmen of Step Change made a commitment revisit the guidelines and to try to resolve the issue. This commitment was supported by the Oil & Gas UK Board.

### **How did we develop them?**

In order to propose new guidelines which can be endorsed by the industry and the trade unions, a wide cross section of stakeholders have been interviewed to inform the preparation of a first draft. This has included representatives from trade unions, operators, contractors and drillers. Interviewees were asked their views on the NRB issue, the appropriateness of the previous guidelines and the key elements they believed should be in any new guidelines.

The output from these interviews was then fed into the draft guidelines, which were presented to the Oil & Gas UK Board. Further consultations took place across industry until a final version supported by Trade Unions and Industry was endorsed by the Oil & Gas UK Board on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2009.

### **The new Guidelines**

The new Guidelines (see flowchart overleaf) apply to all offshore installations – including drilling rigs. These guidelines refer to unjustified permanent removal or blocking of individual contractors from an installation, and do not apply to changes in operational requirements which result in a reduction in numbers or change in the type of workers required.

The key principles of the guidelines are:

1. All parties recognise that the OIM will retain the right to immediately remove someone if they are a risk to safety or good order. However, the right will not be exercised without a justifiable reason or without written reasons being subsequently provided.
2. Where an individual contractor is removed, normal contractual employment conditions will continue pending investigation of the circumstances. It should not be assumed that removal from the installation implies that the individual concerned will not be permitted to return or in itself constitutes disciplinary action. These decisions will only be taken with the involvement of the onshore management of both the OIM ("OIM's Management") and the contractor employing the individual concerned ("Contractor Management").
3. If the reason for contemplating removal relates to behaviour or performance, then the matter will be raised with the individual's employer who will be given the opportunity to manage the individual through their own internal procedures. If immediate

removal is considered appropriate for safety or good order, the OIM will provide the Contractor with reasons in writing.

4. No surprises – in cases of alleged NRB, it can be the case that the individual is told there is an issue which may prevent their return to the installation while they are on field break. Under the new Guidelines an individual should be told they may not be returning before they leave the installation.

**When are they effective from?**

The new guidelines will be effective from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009

**Will the new guidelines be reviewed or monitored?**

If an employer or trade union believes the guidelines are not being followed, they will report the matter in writing to the Oil & Gas UK HSSE Director, who will bring this to the attention of the Oil & Gas UK Board.

The guidelines will also be reviewed after 12 months jointly by Oil & Gas UK and the Trade Unions.

OIM raises proposed permanent removal with OIM's Management and Contractor Management  
*Please note the following is intended to apply only after employers have been given the opportunity to resolve performance related issues using their own internal processes (which have failed) OR in the event that an employee has already been removed from the installation for posing an immediate risk to safety and good order*

**Flow Chart demonstrating Processes for Permanent Removal of Contractor Personnel from an Offshore Installation**

