



Guidelines for the Permanent Removal of Offshore Personnel

Version 4

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Acknowledgments

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviations	Definitions
NRB	Not required back
OIM	Offshore Installation Manager
UKCS	UK Continental Shelf
FRANK/OCG	Finance, remuneration and nominations committee of OEUK and Offshore co-ordinating group (trades unions)
OEUK	Offshore Energies UK

1 Introduction

This document sets out the guiding principles and process to be followed in the event of permanent removal of contractor personnel from an offshore installation.

All parties recognise the need to attract and retain the skills essential for operations on the UKCS. Industry reputation is an important factor and therefore these guiding principles and process have been drawn up to address the issue of unjustified removal or blocking of individuals from an installation.

2 Application

These guiding principles and process apply to offshore installations and to the permanent removal of individual contractor personnel. They are not intended to cover changes in personnel requirements or numbers for reasons of operational flexibility. They are not intended to have legal effect or alter the contractual relationships between the various parties who may be involved any decision. However, the guidelines maybe referred to in any internal company investigation procedure.

2.1 Guiding Principles

1. All parties recognise and support the right of the Offshore Installation Manager (OIM) to remove someone from an installation if that person presents a risk to safety or good order. However, this right must not be exercised:
 - without a justifiable reason, and
 - without subsequent written justification being provided
2. Concerns regarding the behaviour and /or shortfalls in an individual's performance should be raised with the individual's employer who will be given the opportunity to manage their employee through their appropriate internal procedures. However, if an individual presents an immediate risk to safety or good order his or her prompt removal from the installation may be appropriate. In such circumstances, the OIM will subsequently provide their reasons in writing to the individual's employer. The employee will be entitled to see these reasons if they so request.
3. 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 constitutes disciplinary action or that the individual concerned will not be permitted to return. Such 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").
4. If permanent removal is deemed to be an appropriate course of action, these Guidelines will be adopted to ensure that this is done fairly and transparently, with written reasons provided.
5. No surprises – an individual should be advised if there is a possibility they will not be returning on their next rota to their usual installation before leaving the installation at the end of a trip. This applies in all circumstances, unless the OIM and contractor supervision believe this to be a safety risk.
6. It is recommended that contractors and operators include a statement in all relevant contracts between them that the parties are aware of the Guidelines and agree between themselves to abide by and apply them if and when necessary.

2.2 Process for Permanent Removal

1. If permanent removal of an individual is being considered, the OIM will inform his/her management and raise the matter with the individual's supervisor and Contractor Management prior to any action being taken.
2. If, after preliminary investigation, the Contractor Management does not believe the proposed permanent removal is justified, the matter will be referred to OIM's Management.
3. If, after having conferred with their management, the OIM confirms the intention to permanently remove the individual, then the reasons for this decision must be given in writing to the Contractor Management. The Contractor Management will be given the opportunity to undertake a full investigation and review of all the circumstances in accordance with their own appropriate procedures and access to installations and witnesses will be afforded, as appropriate, in order to obtain first-hand accounts and evidence.
4. Once all stages of the appropriate procedure have been concluded, if it is the Contractor Management's belief that their employee should be allowed to remain on the installation, they will approach the OIM's Management to discuss the matter further, providing a summary of the investigation and recommendation.
5. Following this further discussion, the OIM's Management will advise its final decision and the supporting reasons in writing to Contractor Management. This communication will be considered the final stage of the process.

The revised Guiding Principles and this Process are effective as of 31st day of March 2024

If an employer or an independent trade union believes that the above Guiding Principles or Process have not been followed in any particular case then the matter should be reported in writing to the Supply Chain and People Director, Offshore Energies UK (OEUK) who will bring this to the attention of the OEUK Board and maintain an annual listing of such reported cases.

2.3 Review

The operation and effectiveness of these guidelines will be jointly reviewed by OEUK and the trade unions on an annual basis. This will take place during the FRANC/OCG¹ meeting in the 1st quarter annually. A record of each review and any agreed changes will be held by OEUK.

¹ Finance, remuneration and nominations committee of OEUK and Offshore co-ordinating group (trades unions),

2.4 Guidelines for Removal of Offshore Personnel: Roll-out Notes

2.4.1 Why were the guidelines originally produced?

The issue of offshore workers being told they are 'Not Required Back' to, or NRB'd from an installation had been contentious for a number of years and attracted adverse publicity for the industry, as well as tension amongst the workforce. Trade union claims that workers were not raising safety concerns for fear of being removed from the platform were made frequently.

At an Oil & Gas UK (as it was then) Safety Breakfast in August 2008, the joint chairs of Step Change in Safety made a commitment to try to resolve the issue. This commitment was supported by the Oil & Gas UK Board.

2.4.2 How were the guidelines developed?

A wide cross section of stakeholders were interviewed to inform the preparation of a first draft. This included representatives from trade unions, operators, contractors and drillers. Interviewees were asked their views on the NRB issue, and the key elements they believed should be in any new guidelines.

The output from these interviews was then fed into the draft guidelines, and 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 18th February 2009.

3 The Guidelines

The 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 constitutes disciplinary action or that the individual concerned will not be permitted to return to the asset from which they have been removed. These decisions will only be taken with the involvement of the onshore management of both the OIM (“OIM 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’s management 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 Guidelines an individual should, if possible, be told they may not be returning before they leave the installation.

When are they effective from?

This revision will be effective from 31st March 2024, and replaces version 2 issued in 2010.

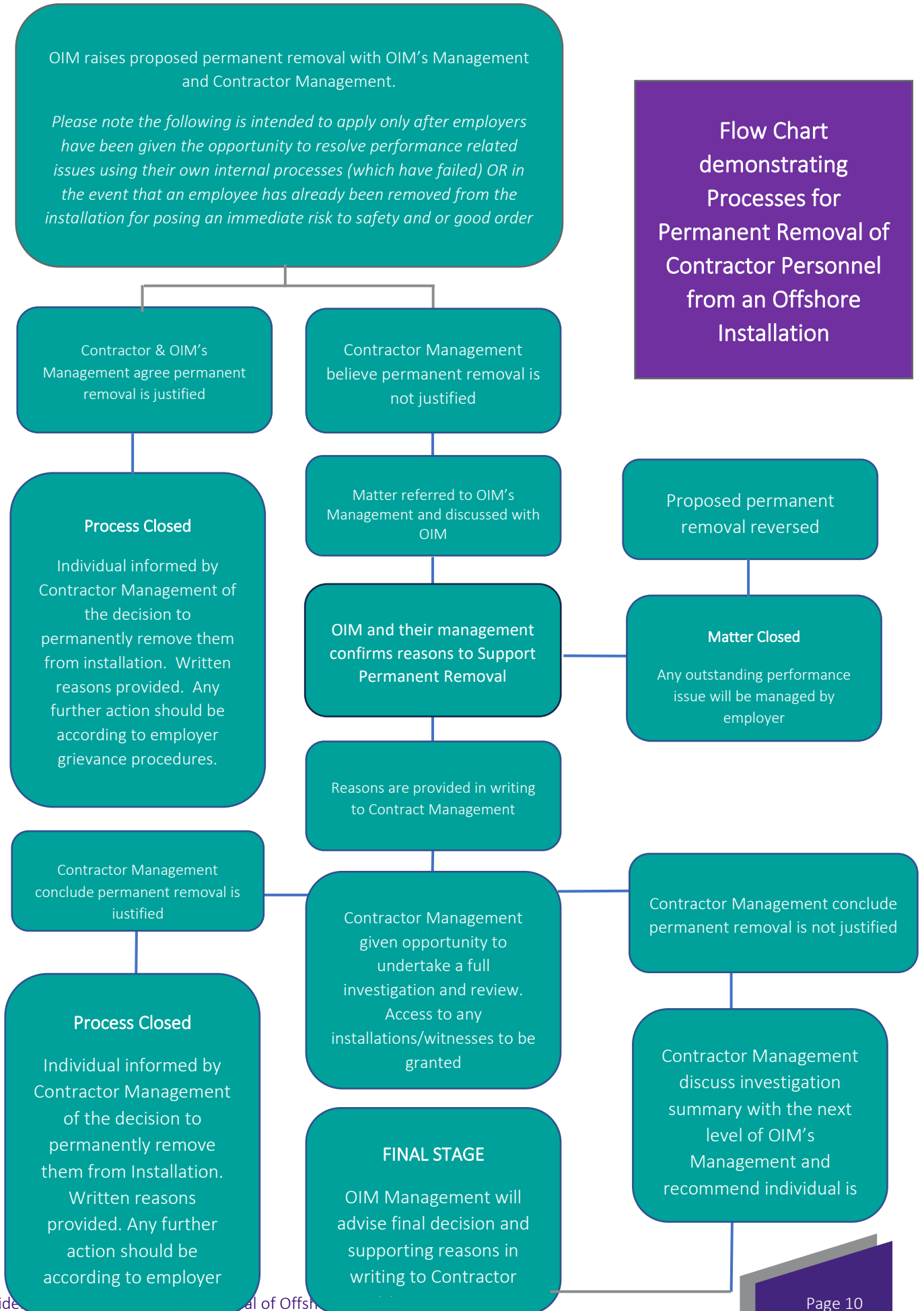
Will the new guidelines be reviewed or monitored?

If a worker, an employer or trade union believes the guidelines are not being followed, they should report the matter in writing to the OEUK Supply Chain and People Director, who will bring this to the attention of the next quarterly FRANC/OCG meeting.

The guidelines will also be reviewed annually jointly by the OEUK Board and the OCG.

3.1 Process Flow Chart

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





OEUK.org.uk/guidelines

Offshore Energies UK Guidelines


Member companies dedicate specialist resources and technical expertise in developing these guidelines with OEUK with a commitment to work together, continually reviewing and improving the performance of all offshore operations.

Guidelines are free for our members and can be purchased by non-members.

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