

# NW Europe HSE Case is a template for practices

**Bob Mankin, Maersk Contractors**

**THE IADC NORTH** Sea Chapter has completed two years of work to develop guidelines to harmonize health, safety and environment case submissions for mobile offshore drilling units across Northwest Europe.

This new Northwest European HSE Case will be formally unveiled on 20 February at the SPE/IADC Drilling Conference in Amsterdam. There will be subsequent roll outs in all North Sea Offshore Authorities Forum (NSOAF) member countries.

All jurisdictions across the North Sea Continental Shelf have enacted HSE cases embracing similar ideas—safe and environmentally sound hydrocarbon resource exploitation. However, for MODUs crossing national boundaries, jurisdictional differences can complicate operations and divert resources.

This is obviously counter-productive in a mature drilling province with thin margins. NSOAF recognized these problems and started performing multinational safety management system audits in 1996.

These audits gave them insights into each other's HSE regimes such that they could easily contemplate a more generic HSE case.

Our goal was to work toward a more cost-efficient and consistent template HSE case that would surmount these barriers. This guidance is intended as a benchmark to assist drilling contractors prepare and review HSE cases that should satisfy the relevant requirements of all Northwest European coastal states.

We hope that regulators will recognize the guidance as a sound reference on good HSE practice. Further, the guidelines are designed to comply with requirements of the International Safety Management (ISM) Code and to capture the good practices and experience from a decade of operations within HSE case regimes.

## THE PROJECT

Following discussions with the (NSOAF), the chapter in 2000 launched

an effort to update and expand its 1992 UK Safety Case Template to serve as guidance to HSE practice throughout the North Sea Continental Shelf, not just the UK.

The project began in earnest in March 2001 with North Sea Chapter safety professionals forming a task force to develop the HSE Case. The group comprised representatives from all 12 North Sea Chapter contractors owning or operating MODUs, with support from the Norwegian Rig Owners and Danish Ship Owners Associations and the IADC Holland Working Party.

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First, the task force surveyed members and found a high level of support for the project across the membership. From the positive response, the chapter budgeted the funds for the project.

The safety specialists then set out to identify examples of good practice and potential threats to project success.

NSOAF was invaluable in providing information on their legislative regimes. The group met each six months, providing constructive criticism of the task force's work. As regulators, it was important they be supportive, while also maintaining an arm's length stance. We believe they played this role successfully and well.

## FINAL HSE CASE

The final HSE case includes six parts and four appendices. The main sections are:

- HSE Case Introduction;
- Health, Safety, and Environmental Management System;
- MODU Description and Supporting Information;

- Risk and Environmental Impact;
- Emergency response;
- Justification for Continued Operation.

Appendices are:

- Reference Documents;
- Abbreviations and definitions;
- Drawings and Schematics;
- Coastal Area Legislation Index.

The 144-page document adheres to a compact standard format. Most topics feature three headings outlining issues and answers. The three headings are:

- Objective;
- How can this be achieved?
- What should be in the Case?

The heading "Objective" sets forth the goal that should be resolved in a proper HSE case. For example, one such Objective is "To demonstrate that suitable arrangements are in place to ensure all drilling and well control operations will be carried out safely and efficiently and with minimum impact on human health and the environment".

Under the "How can this be achieved" heading are several means by which that goal can be accomplished. In the aforementioned objective, two such methods are:

- Ensuring personnel involved in the operations are competent;
- Providing relevant drilling and well control procedures.

Finally, the heading "What should be in the Case" details specifics that a sound HSE case should include. In our example, the template case provides:

- Information on the key competency or training requirements for members of drill crew, including well control qualifications;
- Arrangements for reviewing and agreeing with the client the drilling and well control procedures to be used;
- Arrangements for communicating with client representatives and 3rd party service crews.

With this framework, members can use

the template to answer the questions in a crew's own words, with the company philosophy in mind.

The document has already proven itself in draft form. Regulatory authorities in The Netherlands have stipulated this HSE template as a strongly preferred format.

**Magne Ognedal**, Chairman of the NSOAF MOU Work Group, stated in a recent letter that, "The NSOAF is very pleased that the IADC North Sea Chapter willingly took on this project and we acknowledge the quality of the guidelines and the effort laid down to achieve the objective.

The main challenge now rests with the industry to make use of the guidelines in order to realize the envisaged benefits for all parties."

## APPRECIATION

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*Many were involved in this project that deserve applause. In particular,*

*the author would like to cite **Charlie Mearns, GlobalSantaFe; Gert-Jan Windhorst, Noble Drilling; Jay Richardson, Transocean; Ian McLean, Cadmus Solutions Ltd; and Dennis Krahn, Val Hood and Vicky Brown, IADC North Sea Chapter.***

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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