



WIRELINES

EU DIRECTIVE WON'T INCLUDE E&P INDUSTRY

In a welcome development, the EU Parliament's Transport Committee removed the E&P sector from the scope of its proposed directive on the investigation of maritime accidents. Industry argued that offshore oil and gas operations have always been brought under separate EU legislation and distinguished from conventional maritime activities. Additionally, national regulatory authorities have adequate mechanisms for investigating offshore E&P-related accidents. The draft directive had specifically included offshore drilling rigs and implied fixed production platforms would be covered. Thanks to a concerted lobbying effort, in combination with efforts of the UK HSE, that language was withdrawn in committee. The Transport Committee has now sent its report to Parliament, where passage is expected. ♠

INDUSTRY COMMENT TO EU URGES CAUTION

In a consolidated upstream and downstream formal response to the European Commission on its proposal for protecting EU "critical infrastructure," including oil and gas facilities, industry argued for a careful approach and consultation with industry in developing any related directives. Above all, the joint OGP & Europa comment stressed the primacy of member states in the area of security legislation. Further, the industry emphasized it has participated in and contributed to arrangements in place under existing national and international security procedures, relying significantly on individual company

risk assessments. As such, additional EU-level regulation for the oil and gas industry is questionable and might duplicate adequate existing national laws.

The comment also urged the commission to calibrate its risk assessments on the basis of a likely threat, not on the basis of a multiplicity of events. As a source for making those determinations, the comment points to the experience and knowledge base of the API. API which has gone through a similar exercise with the US government and continues to do so in a formal process via the US Department of Homeland Security's Oil and Natural Gas Sector Coordinating Council. ♠

OCS VISAS MEETING

Representatives of the offshore drilling industry, including IADC, and the US government gathered recently to discuss issues involving bringing foreign workers to the federal OCS. It was designed to identify gaps in federal regulations affecting foreign offshore personnel. Participants aimed to resolve inconsistencies in the interpretation of many such regulations, which create difficulties for offshore drilling contractors and others engaged in OCS E&P activities. In addition to the Coast Guard, the US Department of Labor, Department of State, Department of Homeland Security, Customs and Border Protection, and Minerals Management Service were represented. Although no issues were immediately resolved at the meeting, the candid discussion and comments raised the level of knowledge and awareness of all attendees. ♠