

OFFSHORE HELICOPTER SAFETY LEADERSHIP GROUP (OHSLG)**Minutes of Meeting – Thursday 2nd November 2023****Location: TEAMS – 10:00am to 12:00pm**

Present:

Matt Rhodes – Co-Chair	Bristow
Mark Wallis	CAA
Andy Thorington	CAA
Richard Naylor	CAA
Tendai Mutambirwa	CAA
Stuart Algar	CAA
Harm Bos	CHC
Mike Gislam	NHV
Paul Kelsall	OHSL
Alan Combe	BP
Grant Campbell	Shell
Colin Cheesewright	Harbour Energy
Derek Whatling	BALPA
Mark Wilson	Offshore Energies UK
Tim Rolfe	HeliOffshore
Mads Neilsen – n/a	Uni-Fly

Apologies:

Graham Skinner	Offshore Energies UK
Craig Wiggins	Step Change in Safety
Douglas Barnes	AAIB

1. Welcome and Introduction

Co-Chair Matt Rhodes opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.

2. Agreement of Previous

June 2023 meeting Minutes were circulated for review and no comments/revisions were required. Minutes of last Meeting agreed and will be published on the CAA website.

3. Actions Outstanding

Action 04-02: RN to engage with HSE on rescue craft operations.

CAA engaged with HSE. HSE will review to assess if necessary. The survival kit worn and reduced conditions within operating area in transferring individuals to and from by boats (that are always within a certain number of miles) is in line with the survival statistics for kit worn. Action Closed.

Action 05-02: MW to engage with Helimet and windfarm operators to check if weather reports are being produced and can they be incorporated into Helimet for use by helicopter companies. Update below and action closed.

MW Update: OEUK confirmed with Helimet that windfarm operators are welcome to join Helimet. Confirmed to Uni-Fly that Orsted could join. No barrier at Helimet but Wind data is more commercial for windfarm operators. No direct conversations had to date with Helimet and Orsted or other wind operators.

OFFSHORE HELICOPTER SAFETY LEADERSHIP GROUP (OHSLG)

Action 07-02: RN to get clarity on CAA intended action from CAA perspective with regard to MMHEL trials. MW to circulate meeting minutes from 20th March. See feedback below, action closed.

MWilson:

- March & June 2023 ATG & ASCG minutes passed to OHSLG
- CAA are neutral on the value of MMHEL trials as they have accepted MMHEL as an example of good practice in principle. Trial discussions and planning on going with Anasuria. Confirm with RN at next meeting and discuss whether this can be closed at next OHSLG.

RN: CAA agree this is good practice and not opposed to trials as long as the trial conforms with the rules and requirements of CAP 437. CAA will assist to write a regionalised version of the MMHEL however there is no intention to put into legislation at the moment. Going forward item to sit within the Helideck Technical Committee.

Action 09-02: OEUK will review concerns and collate data on restricted / no access to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary helideck. Engagement with relevant parties has already taken place. Findings will be fed back into OHSLG when complete. Update below and action closed.

MW Update: Meeting held with the following outcomes:

- Due to crane operations Bristow/MCA had suspended night ops into ARI on both AW189 and S92 aircraft. Day ops continue as normal.
- ISARH continue with day & night-time operations.
- Post construction works on the Baird Family Hospital Bristow will reassess night-time operations for MCA aircraft. At this time no reason is seen to not resume night ops.
- Nobody is aware of any obligation on ARI to mandatorily provide a helipad.
- Provided the helipad meets the standard of CAP1264 then there are no issues on landing at that site. Responsibility for assessing the standard is that of the helicopter operator. The helipad not meeting CAP1264 standard may result in suspension of flying into ARI.
- The provision of ambulances to transport pax from aircraft to A&E is that of the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) not ARI. Delays in the provision of ambulances has resulted in the Norwegian SAR suspending flying into ARI.
- Data on the transport of casualties to ARI by MCA shows no major impact on service.
- The O&G helicopter operators have previously stated that ARI has been pulled from their respective AOC's therefore the only aircraft likely to be used in a major incident offshore would be ISARH, MCA & Norwegian SAR.
- It has been taken from this meeting, on the opinions of the ISARH and MCA helicopter operators, that the helipad site at ARI is currently fit for purpose (with restrictions due to construction work) and will be continually reassessed. The issue of ambulance provision is under discussion with SAS/ARI through the Topside Doctor Forum.

Action 01-06: Engineering Operations Risks - SA will distribute to the wider Group SA's white paper on the supply chain health impact due to increased ADD's, increased robbery levels and increased RIE's data for review and welcome feedback/discussion within the HMLC.

- White paper was circulated, item to be taken forward into discussion within engineering HLMC. Action closed.

Action 02-06: Covid - MR will pass to Flight Ops HMLC Chair to coordinate, gather information and feedback to OEUK.

- Consensus that Covid will now be managed within Heli operators. Discussion on screens to be held within Heli operator businesses. Item closed and removed from Agenda.

OFFSHORE HELICOPTER SAFETY LEADERSHIP GROUP (OHSLG)

Action 03-06: HMLC Update - GS will review where the 90 day requirement sit from the legal aspect and will report back through the liaison committee. MW to follow up, item remains open.

4. Risk Update

Flight ops

No new risks identified. June risks covered;

- Military traffic, work completed with CADS and risk mitigated and managed.
- Distraction – changes to contracts and changes in cockpit and scale within organisations, being managed through communications in alignment with CAA.

Ground Operations

Risks still remain around peds, dangerous goods and manifesting issues and loading of aircraft. Inbound checks, more items being identified, possibly due to increased awareness.

Interest being raised around HSE and repair/maintenance schedules and backlog of maintenance occurring offshore. Additional conversation held around R&M of platforms, infrastructure structures, etc, and where is the focus on actual helideck. Usual inspections carried out through the HCA on surfaces and firefighting and fuel systems, etc, not on actual structural integrity of helideck. Heli operators raised item with OHSLG group for feedback and confirmation from IOGP/OEUK that helideck structural integrity has a regime in place.

GC confirmed the HSE has a requirement for structural integrity checks to be carried out, there is also a certification requirement on whole platform done with Veritas that covers structure.

MWilson added that the industry has agreed an industry maintenance backlog reduction strategy following the recognition that maintenance backlog is not progressing in the right direction. Part of the strategy is engaging with operators to ensure they continue to report maintenance backlog for OEUK to monitor areas of un-deferred and deferred, deferred being risk assessed and looked at from a cumulative perspective and un-deferred not being looked at. Shift from un-deferred to deferred being seen and this should now start to show a downward trend with continuing positive engagement with operators. A maintenance backlog reduction task finish group has been in place for over 2 years and a guidance on classical classification categorisation of maintenance has been developed allowing a standardised approach to measure and manage this item which is very much on industry agenda.

Action 01-11: MWilson to review and feedback to the group on the structure of the R&M process and summarise – a) is there something in place, b) is it being adhered to.

No other major significant changes on Ground Ops. Peds, etc, will be covered within the Ground Ops HLMC work group.

OFFSHORE HELICOPTER SAFETY LEADERSHIP GROUP (OHSLG)

Engineering

Engineering risks identified in June; robberies, failure to follow, parts non-conforming or fail-on-fit and distraction.

Key point of discussion in this agenda; recently issued IOGP letter around parts availability, specifically on the Sikorsky S-92 and additionally non-availability of parts from Leonardo and Airbus. Heli Operators expressed significant concern in this matter. MR opened the issue to the group for comment and discussion on where the OHSLG can potentially assist in addressing the current situation around spares unavailability and the safety impact.

Concerns were raised by members of the group around management of the issue and more widely the impact of pressure on the workforce. The Group discussed the multiple aspects faced by the industry, O&G and Heli operators in dealing with the issue of non-availability of parts, such as;

- Mitigation and management of operational stress and risk
- Welfare of operational and engineering personnel, fatigue/distraction
- Potential welfare concerns of offshore personnel
- Engineering resources/licenced engineers
- Extended robberies impact
- Safety v's Commercial Risk
- Industry/Regulatory support

MW: Will connect with Offshore Norge, trade association body in Norway for feedback from their own membership (the operators).

RN: CAA will contact Norwegian CAA to inform that conversations held around this issue being a major concern from a regional perspective and the approach being taken, request feedback on the action taken from the Norwegian perspective and what joint support angles from both regions can be taken.

Action 02 - 11 : The members agreed OHSLG will generate a draft holding statement from the group based around open, supportive, understanding communication on the challenges of parts availability that will be published subsequent to any information coming from the CAA. (N.B following the meeting the holding statement was generated and published by SCiS aligning with a similar letter sent by the CAA to all AOC Accountable Managers)

Engineering items sitting on the risk register; failure to follow parts non-conforming and engineering availability. Going forward these items will be removed from the agenda and embedded within the now established key working groups, Ground Ops, Flight Ops and Engineering.

5. Current Issues

Going forward current issues will sit within the applicable HMLC work groups.

i) Helideck certification and oversight

This item can now be split between Ground and Flight Ops elements.

- Currently no updates from regulatory perspective on oversight and certification of Helidecks, updates and review from many different perspectives will be incremental over the next 12 months at least.

OFFSHORE HELICOPTER SAFETY LEADERSHIP GROUP (OHSLG)

- The CAA confirmed that HCA are not the only company that can certify Helidecks. CAA are looking at standardisation and any new entrants are welcome as long as they meet the level of what the CAA consider acceptable. These companies have an MOU from the operators and are not certified by the CAA.

MR commented the conduit by which all the information/certification is provided and presented is through the HCA . Helicopter companies prefer no to move into the situation of using multiple agencies for doing helideck inspections and using different sources to access information. Currently there is no simple route for other providers to feed in, necessary conversations would be required between other providers and the HCA. The OHSLG members were in agreement that ultimately there needs to be one facility where all information can be sourced whether global or regional.

TR added that in other regions there is access to multiple providers offering a similar service. In those regions questions have been raised about the difficulty of knowing exactly where to go to access the relevant information. Discussions are starting in the industry around the possibility of creating a centralised database as one source for all.

ii) Brexit

No updates – removed from current issues.

HB informed the group that it is become easier to bring in pilots converting from EASA to UK licences. Visa/work permit process is now faster, around 6 weeks.

SA added; that there may be Engineers in Europe willing to come to UK, however report of this has not been fed back from the Heli Operator sector. Mechanism to move engineers over is more clunky than pilot licensing however the process is currently moving towards electronic applications for a UK UH-6 licence to be rolled out in the next few weeks. Time consuming and expensive, supporting processes such as visas/permits remains with the operators.

MG added; the other significant consequence of Brexit (out with supply chain and licensing) is the dry and wet lease situation becoming more complicated. Depending on how the supply chain issues runs course this may be a long term piece of work the group can collaborate with the CAA to simplify.

RN added; UK CAA or DoT are taking position that if there is no reciprocal agreement from country you wish to deal with this will not be allowed. Down to national governments to have reciprocal agreements. CAA are consistently trying to develop bi-lateral agreements.

iii) COVID

Item closed and removed from agenda.

iv) Windfarms

Item removed from agenda and moved into HMLC workgroup.

6. HMLC update

Flight Ops HLMC

14 Oct meeting. Minutes yet to be distributed. Items discussed:

- Increase in client audits by way of mini visits. Seen as particularly time consuming when multiple clients carry out more mini audits. It was noted that audit days are going up.

OFFSHORE HELICOPTER SAFETY LEADERSHIP GROUP (OHSLG)

RN questioned: Does IOGP690 require companies to be more coordinated on auditing?

AC confirmed it is a requirement of IOGP if all operators are signed up through HeliOffshore/OEUK. IOGP are pushing for alignment and reiterated that operators can audit themselves through 690.

- Windfarms discussion ongoing. In flight to windfarms and helidecks within windfarms, mapping within windfarms and AIP issues to be discussed further in the scheduled meeting of 2nd November. Outcomes will be updated into HOFO.
- CAP 437 amendments acceptable for structure survey and helideck crew competencies. CAP437 to global G-reg was discussed and opportunity to put into Spa HOFO 115 as an AMC.
- Egnos – safety of life update testing is ongoing, advised implementation date will be 2026.
- Flight crew licensing – issue for operators, recruitment from EASA. Currently pilot shortage and this issue is expected to be around for a while. Conversion charts are available and there is some relaxation in applicability of ATPL exams, extended to 7 years and applies both ways.
- Helidecks – recognition that Rev 9C of the HMS guidance is available, new item included, a physical check that it has been fitted to the deck properly which was lacking from previous version.
- GPlus has been reviewed – this is mostly around actually operating helicopters within the windfarm for the purposes of supporting the windfarm.
- CAA are reviewing from perspective of weather the limits and how they deal with flight path.

RN raised item related to AIP information. All companies manufacturing wind farms have agreed with authority that the CAA will be notified of planned build 10 weeks before starting the build. Information will be in the AIP before build has started. One discrepancy was highlighted – build against plan, final build may differ where the actual turbines are located inside the park against original plan, outside shape of park should not change. Work ongoing to assess which offshore structures have been removed and still annotated in the AIP. Work being carried out with suppliers of the databases that go in each EGPWS and updates can be provided at a cost.

Ground Ops HMLC

- 2 meetings held and next scheduled for 09 Nov.
- Topics discussed; Peds, dangerous goods management and manifesting and loading. It was agreed from Heli Operator perspective, these subjects will be tackled at Heli operators level initially. Work group is currently in the process of carrying out an end to end study of dangerous goods movements, peds, etc, and agreement will be from the Heli operators perspective what is required and agreed on in a traffic light system, green all agreed, amber what could be agreed on and red on differences unable reach agreement. Bowtie approach to be taken and in next OHSLG meeting a granularity summary table can be provided. MWilson extended thanks to all operators for their input. Key questions around Ped categorisation will be covered in the Ground Ops HMLC work group and reported back to the group. Minutes from these meeting are produced and can be circulated via the OHSLG.

Engineering HMLC

- 4 items currently being reviewed; Staging, task card for complex maintenance, CAMO staff competency and incomplete maintenance (unable to follow AM, no instructions in the AM for a task and engineering judgement being used leading to incomplete maintenance) and critical parts (failing before their design life). SS will liaise with TR on the critical parts item/issues.

OFFSHORE HELICOPTER SAFETY LEADERSHIP GROUP (OHSLG)

Any items that require work to be done on these issues will be done through the Engineering HMLC.

- Update will be provided at the next OHSLG meet.

AC raised recent news report on bogus parts.

MR: Seen as a significant risk from CAA perspective and from an operating perspective. SA confirmed one case from this year is still ongoing, not currently seeing any wider issues emerging, CAA following closely on their risk register.

7. HeliOffshore update

- Recent TSG meeting discussed robberies, the TSG has an information gathering system and asks members to continue providing feedback on the current rate of robberies in order to track and understand the strength of the issue for ongoing discussion.
- The HSE confirmed to TR that any helideck inspection of the support frameworks underneath helidecks are only expected on an Ad-hoc basis and it is all risk based. There is no structured routine integrity inspections from an HSE perspective.
- Last year HeliOffshore introduced an industry action plan jointly with IOGP. The team have carried out a lot of work to integrate actions into the latest version of 690. Collectively the various actions to come out of the plan will be documented and managed in the future through 690 and through HeliOffshore recommended practices.
- HeliOffshore have been collating information on line-training standards, around night deck landings, a new RP will be published towards the end of the year, it is UK practice on which this document is largely predicated, document will still have some relevance. An additional piece has been fed in around flight path management, particularly the last half mile to a helideck that is not covered in HeliOffshore RP's.
- Windfarm recommended practice Version 2 has been issued. Seen as extremely valuable document that has been received well. GoM feedback recently was extremely appreciative of the feedback currently coming back from UK region.
- Result of the Safety survey have been released. This involved contacting frontline workers for input on how they have been affected over the last two years from their work perspective. Key findings centred around supply chain related robberies particularly on the maintenance side coupled with workforce fatigue and requirements on additional overtime. A further survey was conducted on maintenance fatigue. All Heli operators in the room participated, the maintenance personnel on the frontline totally understand the impact of fatigue, physical fatigue, mental fatigue on their own performance and the attempts to manage these issues in the past. 86% of respondents asked for an industry framework that looks at managing and monitoring fatigue in maintenance as this currently does not exist in any good, structured form. HeliOffshore will act on this request in partnership with the members and the operators.
- HeliOffshore will continue to be involved in work on the safety survey around creating some leading indicators and transparency on the reasons leading to supply chain issues they may allow the industry to be more predictive on what the scale of the supply chain issue may become. This will require openness and involvement from the IOGP and Heli-Operators.
- Another large output from the safety survey is with the LOSA workplace observational programme. Industry is challenged on the sustainability of LOSA, only one current provider, proliferation of others. As it proliferates the aim is to ensure there is a collective view on the data and aim for a degree of standardisation. The aim is to create a system not only for cockpit and flight operations but also for maintenance.

OFFSHORE HELICOPTER SAFETY LEADERSHIP GROUP (OHSLG)

RN questioned; work being done of flight path management, has any consideration been given to flexibility and the difference between a rig offshore at sea and a platform within a windfarm or close to a windfarm?

Topic of approaches is going to be captured in Windfarm recommended practice and not in flight path management.

8. IOGP update

- Published 690 and 697 and about to publish and 691 on fixed wing. Working on 699, RRS (Rescue Recovery Service), this is looking at where operators contract for rescue and recovery service, what is required to be in place including items such as types of medevac and where Arcs are used or rafts. Process has 3 HeliOffshore members in it. Expected Q1 to be published.
- IOGP working towards producing an integrated path to the introduction of 690.
- Additionally there is a workgroup specifically looking at accidents to assess what has happened in an accident and how that feeds back to 690.
- OEUK guidelines, IOGP working with GS at OEUK to get reference to 690 into the OEUK guidelines.

9. AOB

Flylogix TMA Development Proposal

TR: work Flylogix have been doing in the North Sea and HeliOffshore have supported several meetings where NATS have hosted discussions around segregated operations. Those involved are keen to develop a plan, and an appropriate working group including the North Sea operators, to move towards safe integrated operations between helicopters and RPAAS. From a HeliOffshore perspective, we are very keen to support as this is the one area in the Remotely Piloted and Autonomous Aircraft Systems (RPAAS) arena where we have an active and prioritised interest. HeliOffshore believe that the North Sea is a perfect environment to develop such a system which, ultimately could be used as a template globally. HeliOffshore could support a Working Group, if all parties agree.

Members of OHSLG had no issue with this being created and suggested bringing in RPAS, SLG and the VTOL SLG to interact in this process.

RN added it would be taken into the CAA forum.

Offshore Review (CAP1145) Progress Report

RN: The latest progress report for the Offshore Review (CAP1145) is now available on the CAA website as an individual section, this will now be kept up to date as the remaining Actions and Recommendations change. [Progress reports | Civil Aviation Authority \(caa.co.uk\)](https://www.caa.co.uk/progress-reports) – as reported.

OEM Supply Chain Issues

MR: Ongoing supply chain issues – covered within the meeting.

Other

MWilson added: Aviation flu bird strike outcome reported as good.

AC: 696 RPAS will be issued shortly.

Closing comments:

MR confirmed he will continue as co-chair for one more year and no objections were raised.

MR thanked all participants for their attendance and input.