



Communiqué

International Regulators' Forum Calls on Industry to Further Enhance Offshore Safety at the Annual General Meeting in Aberdeen, Scotland, United Kingdom

8 June 2018

The International Regulators' Forum (IRF) held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 4, 7-8 June 2018 in Aberdeen, Scotland, United Kingdom. The AGM, hosted by U.K.'s Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning and the Health and Safety Executive, was attended by representatives from all ten member countries: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Mexico, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Ghana and Ireland regulators attended as observers.

The opportunity for the next step change in safety performance appears to be in a substantial increase in the sharing of data across industry. Leading practices in other industries (i.e. transportation) may be adopted in the oil and gas industry to similar effect. This builds upon the theme that was expressed during the *Safety30* conference, held in conjunction with Oil and Gas UK and reflecting the 30th anniversary of the 167 lives lost on the *Piper Alpha* catastrophe. The IRF calls upon industry to recognize the value of this data sharing in the improvement in safety performance and take this on as a priority by the board and CEOs of the respective industry companies.

Discussions during the AGM highlighted additional shared concerns amongst the countries, including: valuing safety choices, workforce engagement strategies, aging assets, quality of incident investigations and reports, assessment of risk and attention to Management of Change, uncontrolled hydrocarbon release incident investigations, and regulating normally unattended installation activities. Good regulator practices to address these issues were shared amongst the delegates.

Representatives from industry and standard development associations – American Petroleum Institute (API), International Association of Drilling Contractors (IADC), International Association of Oil and Gas Producers (IOGP), and International Organization for Standardization (ISO) – joined the regulators to provide updates on their respective activities and the discussions underlined the importance of data sharing, identifying gaps in standards, and enhancing collaboration between regulators, industry and the global stakeholder community. Alignment and improvement of industry standards is seen as a means to enhancing industry practices.

Each of the four IRF working groups provided a status report on their efforts. Of special note:

- Performance Measures – Using IOGP taxonomy, the working group has examined a sample of data related to barrier failures and associated causal factors to provide insights into system risks. The findings will be shared with IOGP in order to enhance understanding of risk and how to avoid major accident events, as well as the need for revisions to taxonomy and standards to improve quality of data reported.
- Asset Integrity – New Zealand and the North Sea regulators have piloted the use of a standardized template to evaluate maintenance of safe operations. A workshop related to the results of this effort will be conducted by the North Sea Offshore Authority Forum (NSOAF) in September. The template to enhance regulators' assessment of operations was found to be valuable, especially within a basin with multiple jurisdictions. The assigned task of the work group will be finalized and the work group will stand down.
- Standards – Having completed and published its pilot program on well integrity standards, the work group will develop a strategic vision and tactical plan for continued engagement with the Standard Development Organizations.
- Culture of Safety – The working group will develop a synopsis of the culture of safety workshop held during the *Safety30* conference and post it on the IRF website as a conclusion to the work group's assigned task. A Community of Practice will be formed to ensure the culture of safety remains an important part of IRF discussions.

During its review of industry performance indicators, the IRF noted that the areas of fatalities, loss of containment and hydrocarbon gas releases have not improved over the last five years. The IRF calls for enhanced efforts by the duty holders including improvements in the quality of industry investigations into root causes and contributing factors. IRF members agreed that in addition to the raw performance indicator data, a general comparison of previous years' performance data will be included and posted on the IRF website (<http://irfoffshoresafety.com/country/performance/>).

Members underscored the importance and value of workforce engagement – by industry as well as the regulator – as a significant determinant of safety outcomes in the workplace.

Members remain committed to outreach to the global stakeholder community and will continue to publish monthly articles on topics central to the current offshore oil and gas environment on the IRF website. The IRF also joined Twitter @IRFOffshoreSaft to enhance information sharing.

On 5-6 June, the IRF participated in *Safety30 – Piper Alpha's Legacy: Securing a Safer Future* conference. The conference attracted more than 700 participants from regulators, industry, workforce, academia, and other practitioners. The IRF conducted several sessions, including: Value of the Regulator; Knowledge Sharing and Big Data; Culture of Safety; Maintaining Safe Operations; Improve Safe Operational Transaction in Late Field Life; Digitalization and Cyber Security Risks; Risk Identification and

Mitigation to New Technology; and Improving BOP Reliability. Key takeaways included safety cases and understanding the gap between company expectations and regulators validating activities; the need for a stronger relationship between the regulator and operator; data sharing; digitalization; and passing the baton to the next generation. The recap from the conference can be found here: www.safety30.co.uk

The IRF has elected Canada, through the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board (C-NLOPB), the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board (C-NSOPB) and the National Energy Board (NEB), to serve as Chair. Norway and Australia will continue on the Management Committee.

The 2019 AGM will be held in The Netherlands.

The 2020 IRF Offshore Safety Conference and AGM are scheduled to be held in Perth, Australia.

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