



International Regulators' Forum

GLOBAL OFFSHORE SAFETY

Communiqué

International Regulators' Forum held 2026 Annual General Meeting and Conference in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil focused on offshore energy safety

September 30, 2026

The International Regulators' Forum (IRF) commenced its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 28 September 2026, hosted by The Brazilian National Agency of Petroleum, Natural Gas and Biofuels (ANP). The AGM was attended in person or virtually by offshore energy health and safety leaders from nearly all member countries, which include Australia, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Ireland, The Netherlands (Chair), New Zealand, Norway, Great Britain and the United States. It was also attended by delegates from Malaysia, Brunei and The Falklands, who have shown interest in a membership in the future.

2026 Annual General Meeting of the International Offshore Regulators

The AGM was held on 28, 29 and 30 September 2026 to consider and discuss the IRF strategic agenda, matters that had arisen since the May 2026 Mid-Year Meeting, and country updates from members. Country updates show the prioritized topic of each country. Topics about decommissioning, legislation, energy transition (carbon capture and storage, offshore wind and hydrogen), and innovation are high on the agenda in almost all countries. There is a shared opinion that safety and environmental protection must remain at the same or greater level of priority as they are now.

The Netherlands has ably chaired the IRF meetings in 2026. Norway will take over for the coming years.

Day One: Country Updates, Key Performance Indicators and progress on decommissioning by IOPER, IRF and IUF.

The country updates show that regulators are focused on traditional oil and gas issues (asset integrity, ageing infrastructure, well control, maintenance, decommissioning, incident oversight). Increasingly they are also focused on safely adapting to new offshore energy activities, with growing attention to carbon capture and storage (CCS) and the safe use of AI. Trends from previous country updates continue, such as a shortage of skilled personnel at companies and contractors and maintenance backlogs. There is also growing concern about extreme weather conditions.

The IRF also reviewed member-collected KPI data on incidents and gas releases. Many indicators have improved (declined incidents) since 2017, with some upticks from 2021/2022. In 2025, most KPIs trended improved and incidents trended slightly downward. Major injuries per million hours worked and major fires per 100 offshore installations increased, while gas releases decreased. The

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data will be published on the IRF website, and members will discuss the trends with operators in their own countries.

IOPER, IUF, and IRF are comparing governance and legislation on decommissioning (environmental, financial, and safety aspects). Early results show broadly comparable approaches across countries, with differences in details and in regulator and ministry responsibilities. The work is ongoing, and possible collaboration may be considered later.

Day Two: Well intervention in a CO₂-filled reservoir, AI, Exchange of information regarding mobile installations and rigs and Opportunity Statements.

CO₂ behaves differently than natural gas, which affects staff and resources during injection and has consequences for well intervention in a CO₂-filled reservoir. Denmark asked whether incident consequences are fully understood, companies are prepared, and standards are adapted. The industry's recently published gaps in rig suitability, equipment qualification, well control, competence, training and emergency preparedness. Some answers exist, but more work is needed to understand all risks.

As adoption of AI accelerates, regulators need a shared understanding of how AI is deployed, validated and governed. AI enables reassessing old data, more frequent inspections and faster near-accident evaluation, but raises the question of whether AI or humans should decide. Process control networks remain fully isolated. The AGM covered the impact on regulators, legislation, skills and decision-making.

Members discussed sharing information on safety non-compliance by rigs and FPSOs moving between jurisdictions, including possible legal obstacles. Work has started.

IRF members discussed the implementation of the Opportunity Statements within industry and their regulatory practices. Members shared their experiences and the lessons learned from incidents. An opportunity statement regarding this has now been finalized and will be published after the AGM. It is up to the industry associations to implement the working method with and among their members. Discussions took place regarding the regulators' next step to promote the use of data in their own countries and to make the OS known internally by the regulators.

Day Three: Progress of the subcommittee (IRFORES), Trade Association and work on Opportunity Statement, OCIMF and standardizations.

Renewable energy is increasingly on the IRF agenda, so IRFORES was set up as a subcommittee with the same goals as the IRF. IRFORES is now mature, with members from several countries. Joint work areas and objectives are set, information is being exchanged, and working groups exist. Opportunity statements have been started on regulatory influence and oversight.

The Trade associations (IOGP, IADG, EI) gave a joint update on implementing Opportunity Statements among their members, covering well control (also given expected large-scale decommissioning), digitalization (cyber safety, AI, supply chain awareness), and sharing quality investigations and learnings. OCIMF presented its organization and its work on marine assessment of FPSOs and on managing life-saving appliances on fixed and floating installations.

Standards for the benefits of the industry was presented by the International Standardization Organization (ISO). The focus was on the ISO/TC 67: 'Oil and Gas industries including lower carbon energy'. The IRF members started an internal discussion on the use of Standards within the Regulatory Framework. How can the IRF contribute to set the strategic priorities of international standardization organizations? And how can the IRF promote the industry's participation in the development of standards for effective implementation of the standards by companies to achieve the IRF's goals?

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