

OFFSHORE HELICOPTER SAFETY LEADERSHIP GROUP (OHSLG)

Minutes of Meeting – Thursday 22nd August 2024

Location: TEAMS – 10:00am to 12:00pm

Present:

Matt Rhodes – Co-Chair	Bristow
Richard Naylor	CAA
Tendai Mutambirwa	CAA
Harm Bos	CHC
Mike Gislam	NHV
Martin Stubbs	OHSL
Alan Combe	BP
Grant Campbell	Shell
Colin Cheesewright	Harbour Energy
Graham Skinner	Offshore Energies UK
Tim Rolfe	HeliOffshore
Douglas Barnes	AAIB
Joji Waites	BALPA
Craig Wiggins	Step Change in Safety
Graham Wildgoose	HCA
Tim Glasspool	Bristow – Flight Ops HMLC Chair

Apologies:

Stuart Algar	CAA
Mark Wallis	CAA
Rick Newson	CAA
Mark Wilson	Offshore Energies UK
Mads Neilsen	Uni-Fly

1. Welcome and Introduction

Co-Chair Matt Rhodes opened the meeting, welcomed attendees and reminded members that the OHSLG meeting is primarily to look at collaboration and safety across the UK Offshore helicopter industry.

2. Agreement of Previous

March 2024 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 01-03 – Turbulent Sectors. GS: Update from HTC meeting to be fed back into the OHSLG Group at next meeting. Heli Operators: to request crews to identify any issues around this item in order to capture and report into OEUK either via an ops report or ASR. MR: will share one of the Bristow ASR's with HeliOffshore for awareness and potential pass through to Infoshare in order for this item to feed up into the radar of the Energy companies as well as into the Global spectrum, this visibility may encourage global community reporting contribution.

MR: incorrect briefing provided by training provider for offshore personnel which has subsequently been corrected. No further issues experienced. Action closed. Keep on listening watch.

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Action 02-03 - OHSLG co-chair will draft a letter outlining the importance of the formation and progress of the Engineering Workgroup for circulation to the Group for approval and subsequent submission to the CAA requesting a decision on how to move forward.

The CAA have been working on several continuous improvement initiatives since the A31 working groups were running which should help improve maintenance standards but accept the CAA could assist the industry further with this action. The CAA will look to re-establish the offshore A31 Working Group with the purpose of the first meeting to review objectives and deliverables as well as next steps to reaching a tangible difference? The CAA fully support these groups as long as they are productive and drive results. SA to monitor for future updates. Action closed.

Action 03-03 - RN: to review the possibility of Helicopter Operators sharing of non-commercial best practice solutions and to engage with CAA teams to drive progress of engineering workgroup. HeliOffshore: will review what can be done with regard to global awareness and engagement with manufacturers and engage with maintenance teams within the CAA on how best practices can be captured.

RN: The HMLC Engineering workgroup structure and process is a current item being finalised and sharing of non-commercial practice solutions will be an action of the HMLC Engineering workgroup. Action ongoing. TR: Global awareness and engagement with manufacturers and maintenance teams, work ongoing. This will be an OHSLG sub workgroup chaired by industry & CAA in same way as HLMC workgroups operate. TR to inform RN once group up and running. Action closed.

Action: 04-03 – GS: to refresh the SCiS helicopter working group and engage with workforce around issues of packing, ped's, etc, and connect with the Ground Ops workgroup on feedback for framework preparation. Action closed - To be covered within Group Ops update.

Action 05-03 – CAA: HTAWS exemptions, release of Mode 6 separately from Mode 7 as requested by IOGP.

CAA is looking to resolve. Regulation start date aimed for 1st January 2025. CAA informed blanket exemptions likely to form part of the plan and that no aircraft will be grounded. CAA are aware that Sikorsky have a technical solution and plan which is likely to be first to the pass. TR offered HeliOffshore assistance to act/represent on behalf of Heli Operators to implement solution and work together with the regulator.

Action 01-08: Follow on from Action 05-03 - MR/HB/MG/MS (Heli Operators) will discuss the offer of representation from HeliOffshore and respond.

Action 06-03 – MR: will re-circulate a copy of the Decision Tree to the group for review and comment that the document content is still fit for purpose.

Decision Tree document circulated 22nd March 2024 and action closed. Feedback to be discussed at the next OHSLG meeting.

Feedback from SCiS: CW commented, Decision Tree works however communication can be tightened on speed of information sharing particularly with prompt comms being released to public. CW also suggested a short meeting session with key stakeholder to discuss, conclude and communicate. Group agreed this was possible when necessary. Action closed.

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4. Risk Update

Flight Ops

No new significant safety risks.

- AP stability and manpower risk remains.

Engineering

- Main challenge is to achieve the structure and progression of the Engineering HMLC with the objective of targeting at least one key item as a focus for resolution by end 2024. HeliOffshore wholeheartedly endorses this group and offered help around putting into place best practice on robberies, critical parts, etc, as a starting point.

Ongoing risks:

- Distraction, robberies, daisy chaining parts. Situation unlikely to improve any time soon and may worsen, specifically Sikorsky parts.
- Recruitment and shortage of manpower in Engineering. Individuals are moving between Heli Operators and into other industries. No availability of manpower to backfill. Group questioned how OHSLG can support and assist collectively or individually on how to address this risk for example encouraging individuals to move into the aviation industry, particularly rotary wing, encouraging retainment, supporting engineering apprenticeships (Heli Operators already active in this option). Apprenticeships relatively easy to accomplish, difficulty is in retention of engineering personnel within the industry. SCiS offered to support via shared contact on supporting introductions to engineering apprenticeships. RN (CAA) confirmed that they are currently unable to simplify the process of acquiring engineering from the EU, there is no reciprocal agreement in place with EASA. TM (CAA) also indicated that although the new government may be more EU friendly they still recognise potential disadvantages the UK could face with recognition of EU licences. HeliOffshore raised the question on a need for data gathering to develop a demographic data set for the UK. GS of OEUK added that a similar supply chain data gathering metric could be used to review, assess where the problems lie and to what extent.

Ground Operations

- Concealment more prevalent and industry is finding more cases and events with an increase in passengers being excluded from flights. This is occurring within all Heli Operators, ultimately causing security delays and passenger/client reaction. Raising awareness of this risk is necessary.
- PED's – more events reported of PED's not being set to correct power configuration or not being completely switched off. Procedures are robust however incidents continue and there is a requirement to address this issue. Also looking to be addressed through CAP 437.
- E-Cigarettes, identified as significant source of concern across Heli Operators.

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5. HMLC update

Flight Ops HLMC

- CAA shared that Dangerous Goods offshore is top of their risk register.
 - Spike seen in MOR's particularly offshore to onshore.
- CAP 764 awaiting publication date.
 - Wind turbines powering oil platforms an item.
 - CAA confirmed - some of CAP764 will go into AMC material.

Action 02-08 : RN will follow up on publication status.
- CAP 437 9th Edition Rev 1 is currently out for review and revision due soon with MMHEL.
- HMS Rev 9c will also address offshore Met equipment.
- HTAWS Mode 7 OEM timelines for CAA deadline discussed.
 - No OEM currently in a position to fully comply by Jan 2025 UK CAA deadline. AltMoC likely.
- HCA introduced HiX web-based system of helideck Inspections, which was approved by the Helideck Steering Committee (part of HMLC). GW confirmed the one year validity, at that point full assessment is required. Onus will be on duty holder to conduct annual self-assessment, certificate will self-cancel as part of this self-monitoring system. Explanation document has been sent to ASTG and will roll out in October 2024 to industry including Heli Operators. RN added: this is not in CAP 437, this item sits within UK only, not globally and that the onus is on deck operators rather than Heli Operators.
- Action 03-08: GW to circulate explanation document to all group members on HiX web based system of helideck inspections/oversight.
- Possibility of re-entry into EGNOS programme discussed, but no details available. Awaiting update on UK replacement.

RN: the UK Government has indicated it would be useful to rejoin or there will be an alternative at some point. TM added: There may UK replacement, this could entail a software requirement and no requirement for hardware update. All machines are still receiving EGNOS. The new Government will be required to revisit this item.
- UAS – increased use offshore including within windfarms.
 - TDA's becoming problematic with normal operations. Incidents becoming frequent and complicated (shapes, size, flying in many, sometimes dangerous, areas). Larger drones can be seen through TCAS, many can not. The CAA reported that a dedicated resource will be assigned into RPAS unit to gain full understanding of the difficulties in integration. This issue is also being looked at internationally.

Action 04-08: RN will communicate this as a priority within CAA RPAS and findings to be reported back to OHSLG.
- S92 offshore performance calculations.
 - Use of 1ft or 15ft deck edge miss in Sikorsky iFly app.
 - CAA are looking for re-evaluation to demonstrate 15ft deck clearance is being met.

Action: 05-08: CAA (RN) to engage with the FAA on certification, HeliOffshore/IOGP to approach Sikorsky to create a more robust process. Heli Operators to collate and provide overview from HDFM data on performance.

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Ground Ops HMLC

- Issue around PED's investigated extensively over the past 18 months, balancing practicality of transporting PED's and as part of everyday life the need to manage this risk safely. Study has been completed based on frequency and failure of batteries. High quality manufactured product failure rate is very low and the work group have confidence these products can continue to be carried in holds without real significant risk. At the other end of spectrum with a calculation based on amount of time they would be carried in the helicopter versus the failure rate, the number of PED's being carried was seen as an intolerable risk. Highest risk PED is e-Cigarettes. Investigation run within the USA commercial airline sector on passengers and freight have consistently seen that 35% of thermal incidents involve e-Cigarettes, significantly higher than any other type of device.
- Ground Ops HMLC concluded that the most important influence the group can provide is a Guidance to Passengers, with very consistent advice on the rules of travelling with PED's. The HMLC Ground Ops workgroup sought to resolve agreement of the Guidance to Passengers document from the OHSLG following an impasse reached by the Ground Ops representatives around the transportation of e-Cigarettes. The aim is for the same guidance being applied at every check in and the Ground Ops HMLC is seeking agreement from all six Heli Operators as well as looking to the offshore installation operators to implement changes with messaging also conveyed via the OIM networks and Safety Reps. It should also be clarified that any new guidance agreed forms part of the heli admin training and bag search training. When all stakeholders are in final agreement the new guidance will be communicated through OEUK and SCiS. The Group sought final agreement and an implementation date. Agreement in principle established on the banning of all e-cigarettes on offshore flights by all OHSLG participants proposed implementation start of Q2 2025.

Action 06-08: GS to progress through OEUK. This needs to be outlined as an industry raised action and implemented by the offshore industry, supported by the Helicopter operators and CAA. Communication of the role out will be conducted by OEUK industry wide with comms support from SCiS.

- Further discussion is required on travelling with earbuds, fitness trackers, smartwatches and items that would require complete switch off (items that continuously charge/transmit).
- SCiS asked the groups view on communications associated with the IOGP letter and prelim report published on the recent Norway incident and if there was any new comms release to be communicated to the travelling public.
 - HeliOffshore confirmed that other than the preliminary report out of Norway being considered very closely by the Norwegian organisations involved, HeliOffshore will await the final report and stand by any introduction of safety recommendations that emerge from the final report. OHSLG Heli Operator members were aligned, no more to be communicated at this moment to the travelling workforce.
 - MR confirmed there was no update following the release of the IOGP letter around supply chain issues, the situation remains the same and issues are being worked through. Specific questions can be raised to the OHSLG. SCiS confirmed that frequent requests for updates around helicopter safety received from the travelling public will be relayed to the OHSLG.

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Action 07-08:

Heli Operators: Agreement on the e-Cigarettes will be directed into Heli Operators businesses and responses will be fed back into OHSLG. Ground Ops HMLC: will revisit discussion on other PED's such as earbuds, power banks, etc and feed back into OHSLG.

Action 08-08: HB to identify/nominate a replacement representative from CHC to act as Ground Ops HMLC Chair, current Chair David Richardson has moved into a new role. GS also confirmed he will officially step into the role of the workgroup Chair, replacing Mark Wilson.

Engineering HMLC

Update to be provided at the next OHSLG meeting.

6. HeliOffshore update

- Acknowledging HeliOffshore's 10 year anniversary, the organisation is driving a campaign to credit what should be recognised in terms of past successes and what is required as future aims.
- HeliOffshore are currently going through an appraisal and update of their safety performance model that will be sent to stakeholders for review, feedback and contribution by members and other stakeholder groups.
- HTAWS discussed and covered within this meeting.
- Contracting Principles – HeliOffshore are working closely with OEUK and the IOGP group, through the ASC, on developing contracting principles that are consumable and usable within the offshore aviation community, this gained momentum at a recent conference and gained over 90% agreement on moving forward with establishing, publishing and utilising contracting principles in a similar way to UK version.
- Work around Engineering that HeliOffshore have carried out in terms of developing engineering training through the product developed with Shadow Box has been completed, this tool is utilised to accelerate learning from novice to proficient, operator to expert through the understanding of decision making. HeliOffshore extended thanks to the Heli Operators for their participation. When the Engineering toolkit is rolled out HeliOffshore will be exploring how this can be achieved in the Cockpit, Ground Ops and other safety critical facets of operations.
- HeliOffshore are going through the process of formulating an accident review group and believe there is an opportunity using partners/associations through individual experts to ascertain areas of learning through the findings of accident reports that can also be measured against performance models.

7. IOGP update

- Recommended practice 699 has been released, addendum to Rescue Recovery Services for offshore. Search and Rescue is an area of government responsibility. Addendum 699 covers O&G contracted search and rescue, medivacs, etc, and is adjunct to 690.
- 697 on helidecks has been published. Generic and tied to CAP 437.
- Available documents; 690, 691- fixed wing, 696 -RPAS, 697 - Helideck, 699 – Rescue Recovery Services. Currently being worked on is 694 – related to surveys and 695.
- Feedback appreciated and welcomed on any publications.

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- HeliOffshore Trial Tool – self assessment trial tool created for energy companies, involving the process of 690, what is the uptake of 690, consistent application of 690. Second iteration of the tool has been created and will be available to entire customer community.
Action: 09-08: At the requests of the CAA, HeliOffshore to share IOGP updates and publications direct with RN.

8. AOB

- OPITO – slight issue arising with OPITO becoming slightly splintered. Some training reviewed by IOGP is out of date. OPITO take instruction from OEUK. GC to address with GS.
- Definition and qualification of ‘compassionate’ passenger and what information is passed on to the helicopter operator.
Action 10-08: OHSLG Group to determine what is classified as a compassionate passenger transfer request and how do the Heli Operators receive assurance from the offshore workforce or offshore installation that the transfer is indeed a compassionate circumstance. MR action – circulate amongst Heli Operators to determine if there is an issue and how that can be addressed (via 699, IOGP or OEUK?).
- GPS Jamming and Spoofing – to be covered at next meeting.
- Douglas Barnes announced his departure from his current role in the AAIB and recommended colleague Niall Robertson to continue as the AAIB representative for the OHSLG. Douglas added that AAIB presence at the OHSLG meetings was invaluable to them as an organisation with the shared knowledge and experience of the industry members aiding AAIB decision making. The OHSLG members agreed that the AAIB should continue to be represented in the OHSLG by new member Niall Robertson.
- Matt Rhodes addressed the structure of the OHSLG Chair and informed the Group that his extended tenure in this role will end at the end of 2024. Harm Bos, Regional Director of CHC will take up the position as well as the arrangements for secretarial responsibilities over the next two years.

Closing comments:

The Group decided that future OHSLG meetings would extend by 30 minutes and an updated Agenda structured to allow all areas of discussion to be covered.