

OFFSHORE HELICOPTER SAFETY LEADERSHIP GROUP (OHSLG)

Document : Meeting Minutes
Date : Wednesday 24th November 2021
Location : Virtual Meeting

Present: Mark Abbey (CHC) – Chair
Matt Rhodes (Bristow)
Paul Kelsall (Babcock)
Mike Gislam (NHV)
David Malins (CAA)
Robin Taylor (CAA)
Trevor Stapleton (OGUK)
Colin Cheesewright (Chrysaor)
Grant Campbell (Shell)
Derek Whatling (BALPA)
Lorraine Smith (CHC) – Secretariat
Audrey Smith (Bristows) – Secretariat from 2022

Apologies: Rob Bishton (CAA) – Co-Chair
Rick Newson (CAA)
Steve Rae (Step Change in Safety)
Jake Molloy (RMT)
Shauna Wright (Unite the Union)
Douglas Barnes (AAIB)
Jamie Carson (Scottish Government)
Alan Combe (BP / IOGP)

Welcome and introductions – Meeting Chair

Mark Abbey (MA) thanked the Board for everyone's time and attendance. MA advised he would chair the meeting in the absence of Rob Bishton and Rick Newson.

Matt Rhodes (MR) advised Audrey Smith had joined the call with Audrey taking over as OHSLG Secretariat with Matt Rhodes tenure as co-chair at the next meeting.

Agreement of Previous Minutes

Minutes agreed as read with no outstanding comments.

Previous Agenda Items

The previous actions were reviewed and updated, as per the action log. Where there was a wider discussion, details are provided in the notes section.

Item	Detail	Responsible	Notes
19.2.3	Host a workshop looking at helideck certification audits updates.	Rick Newson / Robin Taylor	Remain on agenda.
19.3.1	Wrong Deck Landings	Rick Newson / Robin Taylor	Further update required at next meeting.
20.4.4	Communication resource availability	SR / SF	To be discussed as part of Communications Group. Close item.
20.4.7.1	Tenure of Chair	ALL	Handover complete. Close item.
21.1.1	Top Risks and Ongoing Planning	ALL	Agreed to close item.

19.2.3 Helideck Certification Audits - Rick Newson (RN)

Robin Taylor (RT) advised the Group this has not yet been achieved partly due to COVID and partly due to staff moving around. Delays getting offshore has also been a factor. RT will work with Matt Smith to get this moving in the new year.

Colin Cheesewright (CC) offered his assistance.

It was agreed that this should remain on the agenda for a full update at the next meeting.

19.3.1 Wrong Deck Landings – Rick Newson / Trevor Stapleton (TS)

RT advised that there had been a previous discussion on having a green flashing light for landing with a possible trial with CHC and Shell. Alex Knight reported that there was no appetite to trial and this action has since been closed at the HTC.

The CAA see wrong deck landings as a risk and the AAIB see this as a recordable accident.

Colin Cheesewright advised when the HCA do their audits that they have photographs from all four sides so may help as a mitigation going forward.

Matt Rhodes (MR) advised that the ICAO designators names need to go ahead. All operators should encourage their crews where possible to get updated photos and feed them back to the HCA.

Call signs and platform names can differ which is a distraction at a critical point in a flight so naming the platform correctly is a requirement.

Grant Campbell (GC) advised that he can get feedback on the strobe lights as all the IOGP decks in the Gulf of Mexico have them. DM agreed this information would help whether it is something we should continue to pursue and trial in the UK.

The HCA was confirmed as the operator of the designator plates programme. CC confirmed that following their two year inspections they raise findings against the operator to provide photographs.

MA agreed that wrong deck landings should be kept as a watching brief but agreed that RT should continue to track the ICAO designators.

Trevor Stapleton (TS) questioned if fixed platforms data can be added into the UK AIP as noted in previous minutes. Derek Whatling (DW) added that software companies will not write it into their software unless it appears in the AIP.

MA asked RT to provide further feedback at the next meeting.

20.4.4 Communication Resource Availability

MA stated due to communication resource availability this has not progressed at all.

It was agreed that this was something that needed to be debated to understand how the group is going to move on with this but will be discussed as part of the Communications Group updates.

20.4.7.1 Tenure of Chair (Matt Rhodes to take over as Co-chair)

MA noted that Matt Rhodes will take over as co-chair at the next meeting which will be scheduled by Audrey Smith.

21.1.1 Top Risks and Ongoing Planning

MA agreed that previous risk areas identified are raised as part of the agenda and will close this action.

New Actions

New items were discussed and added for action. Where there was a wider discussion, details are provided in the notes section.

Item	Action Details	Responsible	Notes
21.2.1.1	Operational Risks	ALL	DM to update if Distraction Competency is being duplicated.
21.2.1.2	Communications	ALL	MR to update at next meeting.
21.2.2	Helideck Oversight Plan	Rick Newson / Dave Malins / Robin Taylor	DM / RT to provide update and timeline at next meeting.
21.2.3	CAA / OHSLG Website	Robin Taylor	RT to action and provide update at next meeting.
21.2.4	Aviation Awareness Seminars	Mark Abbey	MA to action and provide future timeline.
21.2.5	Brexit	Dave Malins	DM to update if further engagement is possible.
21.2.7.1	Wind Farms	ALL	Invite Renewables UK to discuss. Further discussion required.
21.2.7.2	GHOST (Offshore Subgroup	Paul Kelsall	PK to update status of group at next meeting.

21.2.1 Subgroup Updates

21.2.1.1 Operational Risks

MR gave the group a recap and advised that the operations group were looking at three key areas – flight ops, ground ops and engineering.

CAP 437 appended key was in the process of being derived and published which is now complete and this is being watched from a ground ops perspective and continually monitored. There is nothing significant from a flight ops perspective at present.

The key area identified was engineering and maintenance error and how this would be addressed. It was identified that the A31 group was the most appropriate workshop to progress this action and a meeting was held recently.

This introductory meeting was well attended and had a suitable representation from all helicopter operators. It was useful to have endorsement from high levels within our organisations to identify solutions to the issues we are facing.

It was also identified at this meeting that a more in-depth look at training of individuals of engineering standards within the organisations is required.

Distraction is also a key issue and will sit within this group. Both CAMO and PART 145 are represented, and the group will meet again in the New Year to have further discussions.

David Malins added that the key focus of this meeting is around safety, culture, engineers, responsibility and competency assessment.

DM added the CAA have posters available detailing the responsibilities of licensed engineers. These can be shared if required.

Grant Campbell advised that a similar piece of work is being undertaken at Heli-offshore which is funded through IOGP to look at distraction competency.

MA asked DM to check if this work is being duplicated and to update at the next meeting.

RT asked the group if there was a competency check for engineers. DM confirmed there is. GC also confirmed it is a regulatory requirement throughout the industry.

DM confirmed this is detailed in the 145 regulation.

MA raised a concern regarding openness and transparency within the A31 group and asked if this had been achieved.

MR advised they had a very open and transparent discussion and there is an understanding in the group that needs to be done and there was commitment from everyone around the table.

DM added that by changing the people they have changed the dynamic and the team are committed to delivering.

GC asked for an update to get one of the Oil and Gas reps into the operations group as they are keen to contribute.

MR advised this is something that can be considered and will look at how it is structured going forward.

21.2.1.2 Communications

MA updated the group that Steve Rae had been unable to take this item forward and there is a gap in the communication framework.

MR advised that Stepchange should still be the conduit by which the group can communicate with the workforce and MR will discuss separately with SR to see how this can be rekindled. The terms of reference for this group says that Stepchange will provide administrative support including the Secretariat. This can be amended to state that the Secretariat will sit with the co-chair from the helicopter operators.

MR advised Audrey Smith will take over from Lorraine Smith in the Secretariat role but communications will still sit with Stepchange.

Trevor Stapleton advised that OGUK can help with communications if Stepchange unable to at present.

MR agreed we need to find a robust method to communicate so we can react quickly if necessary and also to rekindle the helicopter awareness courses.

MR to feedback at next meeting following discussion with SR.

21.2.1.3 Risk Management

David Malins apologised on behalf of the subgroup who have not met since the first meeting. At that first meeting, it was agreed that the focus should be on engineering risks, which came out of operator risks and the CAA's understanding of those risks.

DM will arrange another risk group meeting in the coming months to go through the initial exercise again to ascertain if there are any other risks that need to be considered.

MR asked if the group will be looking at risks across all parts of business, flight ops, ground ops and engineering. DM agreed and will circulate the metrics again to identify current key risks and for the four operators to go through their risk registers to ensure alignment.

Colin Cheesewright asked the group if an industry video can be provided to share with offshore to drive home the personal device risks and why it is necessary for inbound / outbound checks.

DM agreed that this could be picked up in the discussions and if this is the highest risk then we can drive forward with the mitigating actions.

MA agreed this should be discussed. CC advised that some slides for safety meetings may be enough to expose the offshore workforce to the risks.

Mike Gislam advised MOR's were still be raised due to PD's still turned on in bags and lithium batteries in phones so this is still very pertinent.

21.2.2 Helideck Oversight Plan

MA asked for an update for the Heli-deck Oversight Plan as there appeared to be little traction on this action. RT advised that the CAA are looking to get an ANO to certify them.

MR advised that this has been outstanding for a number of years and it was indicated that this would be resolved relatively quickly after Brexit. MR added that while there shouldn't be an issue with having competition in providing this service, we need to ensure that it is standardised and there should be appropriate legislation to oversee, mandate and legislate by the CAA or third party if delegated.

RT advised there is a conflict of interest between the operators, the oil companies, the HCA and who they use to certify their assets. RT also advised it was likely to be a contracted company who would be appropriate to do the survey.

RT agreed to speak to Andy Thorington and Glenn Bradley to give this priority.

DM also agreed to take this away to check on the legal perspective and to provide a more formal update and timeline at the next meeting if this is possible.

CC queried whether HCA was the only company that can do the inspections as detailed in CAP 437. MA advised that the helicopter operators are currently staying aligned under HCA but it is an unofficial agreement to get them to certify the decks. The HCA is not a regulator, but a commercial organisation.

MA added that previously there were many organisations wanting to certify the decks, which would have resulted in multiple standards causing issues to general operation, as you can only fly to certified decks that the operator had certified. It was clear we needed the regulator to decide how that should be organised under regulation and set the standard then look to commercialise the market.

MA also added that we need to be careful not to make this a commercial decision. We need to understand what the intent of the regulator is with CAP 1145. Will they take over the certification of the decks and if not, then we need to know so it gives us a platform to plan on.

RT to update the group at the next meeting if this is possible and what the potential timeline will look like.

21.2.3 CAA / OHSLG Website Update

MA asked if the area specific to the OHSLG on the CAA website is current and gives an accurate view of what we stand for as a Group. The website should also include the Terms of Reference.

MR questioned what is being done for the Onshore Group and eVSLG as all groups are co-chaired by the CAA and operators. There needs to be alignment for all working groups for posting minutes, notifications, standardisation etc

If everyone is in agreement with the minutes then this can be posted. Commercially sensitive information will not be posted.

RT to action and update progress at next meeting.

21.2.4 Aviation Awareness Seminars Way Forward

MA advised that the aviation awareness seminars have stalled due to COVID and asked for a view on whether these should now be restarted and how best to action.

GC and CC agreed these added really good value and agreed it would be good to get these back in operation.

MA to action and look to see when these can be restarted – COVID dependent.

21.2.5 Brexit Update

MA asked for a brief update on Brexit.

DM advised that the progress with EASA, particularly the bilaterals that this will not move forward. There has been no significant changes since the last meeting.

DM advised he had a call with the Commission in regards to the Aviation Safety Agreement and it was agreed to continue to work together but there is no appetite to move things forward.

DM confirmed there is no desire to extend the bilateral agreement.

In light of this the CAA are launching the 'Get Ready' campaign – for the end of savings provisions at the end of December 2022 and ultimately nothing is going to change.

From an airworthiness perspective that will cover; validity of the EASA Form 1's, G registered aircraft support, pilot licensing and TCO leasing.

This will be on the CAA website and Skywise to give a steer on how to prepare for the end of 2022.

This will have a big impact from an airworthiness point of view for the validity of Form 1. By 31st March each organisation should make an application to the UK CAA for PART 145 approval, if this is not made the validity of that Form 1 will not be valid. This will be communicated.

Maintenance organisations will need to have a UK approval also by December 2022.

MA stated he would welcome a group or forum to find solutions to remedy the position that the industry is in with a lack of bilaterals as there is a safety impact with the inflexibility of the regulations.

With the agreement of the other accountable managers, DM will action to see if there is a possibility of further engagement.

21.2.6 COVID Update

Trevor Stapleton updated the group that the average POB is currently around 10,000, pre-covid was approx. 12,500, therefore not back to pre-covid levels.

Suspected cases offshore is approx. 20. Close contacts has been variable between 2-15 approx.

Cases are being restricted to rigs so no real cause for concern. Operators are not taking chances with winter illness and anyone showing symptoms are taken off the installation quickly.

Vaccination is being strongly encouraged. There may be a possible change from the UK government for overseas travellers. There is a full exemption regardless of whether you've been vaccinated or not at present, but this exemption may be removed for unvaccinated individuals. If travellers come from overseas to go offshore, they may have to isolate for 10 days beforehand.

CC advised that he believed the OGUK data is driven by passengers flown whereas he is managing people offshore with suspected COVID, so you are not seeing it in that trend data.

CC also asked the operators on thoughts for removal of the Covid screens going forward. MA advised that as operators they would do the right thing in line with Covid requirements and the barriers will remain in place until Covid is in a steady state.

Paul Kelsall added that the screens are there to protect assets and people because they are mixing with people despite having gone through the testing process beforehand. PK assured CC that they are very mindful of taking anything away too quickly to then have to put it back in place again.

MR added that barrier in place are all Part 21 certified so they should be compliant and shouldn't be a safety issue. MR also agreed to review as we go forward.

TS agreed that there is no appetite at present for the barrier to be removed in the immediate term.

DM suggested that this is picked up through the Risk Working Group going forward.

MA added that the operators worked together to get a covid working standard and we just need to be careful how we start to remove these. MA would be concerned if change is rapid and would prefer to go slow rather than going back to where it was at the beginning.

MR agreed and agreed not to take any unnecessary risks.

PK added that the processes and procedures will be in place for quite some time.

21.2.7 Closing Remarks / AOB

21.2.7.1 Wind Farms

MR stated that the Group needs to pull together a working group to look at the notification for wind farm construction and adjacent operations. There has been a considerable amount of work done by third parties to identify ways of mitigating the impact of wind farms on platforms, but they are now encroaching on the areas for approach in both Southern and Central North Sea areas.

MR suggests this should be discussed at the next meeting.

MR added that there is a current disconnect as we are not engaged with the wind farm companies and they are not engaged with oil companies or the CAA. This is causing some significant concerns and risks to our business, especially operations in deteriorating visibility or night operations.

MR noted that they will be looking at potential mitigations as a short term measure, but there needs to be a much higher level engagement with the wind farm company so they communicate with us what they are doing when they are doing it so that risk can be managed appropriately.

CC advised that a review has just been completed and he was about to reach out to the operators for a single turbine next to the Judy platform.

MR confirmed this was CAP 764.

MR added that there needs to be a more coordinated approach with the CAA to make sure the wind farms are properly managed. At present we are not aware when these turbines are being installed, therefore there needs to be more engagement from the regulator and a more coordinated approach from the helicopter companies, windfarm companies and the CAA. MR suggests to set a working group in place to get communication flowing which is not happening at present.

RT advised that he was recently had a meeting with Dave Howson and the author of CAP 764 and was brought to his attention through general oversight of AOC's that this is a risk. He added that as the authority they can log this in the SMS as a risk and for the operators to raise MOR's.

RT asked the group if anyone had contacted the wind farms directly.

Mike Gislam advised that there was an aviation working group within Renewables UK, and there was a member of CAA on this group. MG also suggested that the AM's work together so they are all aligned as operators.

RT confirmed that the regulator was unable to engage with the offshore wind companies as they do not regulate them, however he does believe CAP 764 may need to be updated.

TS added that OGUK has a relationship with Renewables UK and they are invited to the ASTG. TS will reach out to them.

DM reiterated to the group that if this is considered as a risk to operations then it should be picked up when the updated risk register is distributed. He added that they control the MOR's to see how many events they are having so this should be discussed in the Risk Management group and then the group can then see what the mitigation strategies need to be.

Derek Whatling asked if 1500 feet is still the minimum safe altitude offshore. MR confirmed that this is not the case in all areas, where some farms are 16 – 1700 feet.

Paul Kelsall advised that Renewables UK have recently recruited for this role and believes they should be invited to discuss within the group via an invitation from OGUK.

21.2.7.2 GHOST (Offshore Subgroup)

TS asked the group if they had confirmation if the offshore Ghost group is going to disband, having delivered the operations guidance.

MR advised he had not heard if this was the case but suggested this needs to stay in place as it is a valuable working group.

PK advised he did believe they had disbanded. PK agreed to take action to see if he can get the group restarted and will update at the next meeting.

21.2.7.3 Infectious Diseases

TS raised the subject of Infectious Diseases and the definition of an escort which has been raised at the PSG and needs to reach out to helicopter operators.

MR advised the correct group for this discussion would be the ASTG.

No action to be taken.

21.2.7.4 Trevor Stapleton Retirement

TS advised that this is his last OHSLG meeting due to retirement, and a replacement will be sent from OGUK going forward.

MA thanked Trevor on behalf of the Group for the many years service to OHSLG and wished him well for his retirement.

21.2.7.5 Visiting Vessels – HCA

Colin Cheesewright explained Harbour Energy are experiencing difficulties in approving one off heli-decks for operations. Recently they were unable to fly through their contract and the visiting vessel went direct to the helicopter operator and they flew to it as they have an HCA certificate.

However, HE are finding they don't have ANO approval for the radio stations, the training is not there, the MET equipment, the offcom radio licence, IATA DG etc and HE can't approve them for helicopter operations. CC asked the helicopter operators what checks were in place for a one off flight?

MR asked why they have the HCA certificate if they are not meeting the requirements?

CC advised a recent vessel was issued for CAP 437 but operating in Norwegian waters. The HLO was approved in Norway with no memorandum and it wasn't listed in the document to allow us to accept it.

They have TELENOR radio licences and they think this is equivalent to an ANO approval. IATA DG have no understanding of what they need to have in place ie awareness training, DG manuals or an accepted alternative means of compliance.

Just because it has an HCA approval does not necessarily mean it is approval for operating in the UK.

CC advised that they plan to produce slides for discussion at the next ASTG but wanted to raise to the Group for awareness.

Mike Gislam noted that this should be raised with the HCA as they understood the certificate signs off against the CAP to say it is certified for the CAP and the UK and if this is not the case then there needs to be a further

discussion.

CC advised the HCA inspect the vessel once every two years with no further requirement to revisit it. Therefore when the HCA leave there is no oversight until we fly to it.

MR noted that this loops back into the earlier conversation where the HCA is not a regulator and is a commercial organisation that needs regulating.

CC clarified that there needs to be a prerequisite from helicopter companies to check before they fly.

MR added that there needs to be a format for visiting vessels from outwith the UK. The UKCS needs to complete a form to confirm that they are complying with everything in CAP 437. This is something that can be discussed perhaps by bringing in the HCA, however MR clarified that as a leadership group our role is to delegate the actions into appropriate working groups and this should fall into ASTG.

CC asked if the helicopter operators can be represented at the next ASTG on the 9th December.

Meeting Close

MA thanked everyone for attendance and input.

DM thanked Mark for his reign as co-chair. MR also thanked Mark from everyone on the Group and confirmed that the Group has come a long way over the last 18 months with significant changes taking place and looks forward to making the Group more efficient as he takes it forward. MR also advised he would get the next meeting dates out as soon as possible.