

# **OFFSHORE HELICOPTER SAFETY LEADERSHIP GROUP (OHSLG)**

**Minutes of Meeting – Wednesday 18th of June 2025 (10:00am to 12:30pm)**

**Location: TEAMS/CHC IOC Braemar room**

Present:

|                           |                       |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Harm Bos - Co-Chair       | CHC                   |
| Richard Naylor - Co-Chair | CAA                   |
| Stuart Algar              | CAA                   |
| Mark Wallis               | CAA                   |
| Theo Adams                | Bristow               |
| Mike Gislam               | NHV                   |
| Gareth Bithell            | NHV                   |
| Martin Stubbs             | OffshoreHeli          |
| Colin Cheesewright        | Harbour Energy        |
| Grant Campbell            | Offshore Energies UK  |
| Graham Skinner            | Offshore Energies UK  |
| Gillian Simpson           | Step Change in Safety |
| Nicola Taylor             | Step Change in Safety |
| Tim Rolfe                 | HeliOffshore          |
| Graham Wildgoose          | Helidecks             |
| Ceri Shunmann             | Bond Helicopters      |
| Niall Robertson           | AAIB                  |
|                           |                       |
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# **OFFSHORE HELICOPTER SAFETY LEADERSHIP GROUP (OHSLG)**

## **1. Welcome and Introduction**

Co-Chair Harm Bos 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 2025 meeting Minutes were circulated for review. Minutes of last Meeting agreed and will be published on the CAA website.

## **3. Actions Outstanding**

No Outstanding Actions

### **New Policy Queries**

- As part of the outstanding actions from the last meeting held in March, there have been a number of questions from the customers regarding clarity of the new policy.
- Clarification will be provided by OEUK and Step Change regarding the damaged mobile phones/ cases. The wording of the policy will be reworded to provide a clearer understanding for customers and operators.
- Under the new guidance, travel will be refused if the physical structure of the mobile phone has been damaged or if the phone does not have a protective case. Devices with a damaged screen protector will still be permitted to travel; however, the damaged screen protector must be removed prior to boarding. To help eliminate confusion, Step Change will develop a slide pack for customers, clearly outlining what qualifies as an acceptable protective case. Customer feedback regarding the use of protective cases and device condition has been acknowledged and will be taken into consideration as the policy is further refined by OEUK.
- Implementation period was discussed for those who travelled prior to first of July. Those passengers will be exempt from the new policy when travelling back onshore.
- The guidance that has been issued (banners, flyers, website) however it has been noted that it includes differing information and language which requires a review by OEUK and Step Change. A revision date will be set for this.
- Currently, work equipment is not included within the 6 PEDs allowance. All work-related equipment must be transported as freight, unless the item is small and portable, such as a headtorch or a tool—in which case, it will be classified as a PED.
- Power banks may only be carried if they have been pre-notified to the energy company, and the energy company has obtained prior approval from the helicopter operator

# **OFFSHORE HELICOPTER SAFETY LEADERSHIP GROUP (OHSLG)**

## **4. Risk Update**

### **Flight Ops**

- Department of transport are not willing to pay for readmission to EGNOS, which means we are without that type of service for the foreseeable. This is currently discussed in the house of Lords and has got some political tension.
- This issue primarily affects onshore operations. Without EGNOS, it will not be possible to perform GPS-guided approaches at the same low altitudes, as EGNOS provides enhanced accuracy and fidelity for approach procedures. This will become a common challenge onshore once the ILS system is switched off. Without such systems operators will face significantly increased approach minimums and loss of flying days.
- A UK equivalent system is currently being planned for release; however, development and implementation work is still ongoing.
- There is a directive with CAA to work closer with EASA – easier pass of recognition of licences.

### **Engineering**

- Global increase of number of maintenance errors. This is currently being addressed by culture inspections etc.
- The manufacturers have noticed a large increase in human error then they have seen in the past.
- HeliOffshore and IOGP, in partnership, have been exploring the possibility of hosting a broader discussion to gain a deeper understanding of the underlying issues. Looking at getting G4 involved in this discussion too.
- A CAP was recently released by the CAA looking at the CAMO top 50 risks (monitoring of main errors etc). CAA are aware of the ongoing issues amongst all operators and are closely monitoring this.

### **Other**

- Drones are currently primarily an onshore issue, with approximately 30% of drones not being monitored. Offshore drone operators tend to be more professional and regulated.
- Some vessels operate their own drones, but there have been instances where these drones were not adequately controlled, which should be taken into consideration.
- A significant number of small drones are unregistered, and their operators are often unaware of regulatory requirements. The CAA is aware of this issue and is exploring ways to improve oversight and control.

## **OFFSHORE HELICOPTER SAFETY LEADERSHIP GROUP (OHSLG)**

- Certified drones fall under the jurisdiction of the Flight Operations Department within the CAA.
- OEUK holds quarterly meetings to address drone-related concerns. Meeting summaries will be shared to improve understanding and coordination.

### **5. Flight Operations HMLC Working Group Update**

#### **PEDS**

- Something that was discussed earlier and appeared to be a point of inconsistency and confusion. Power banks will not be allowed unless prior approval granted.

#### **Life Jackets and Survival Suits**

- There are currently two different providers whose life jackets and survival suits are not recognized as compatible with each other. This incompatibility creates challenges, particularly around medevac procedures, as jackets and suits cannot be mixed.
- Current regulations permit medevac personnel to wear mixed jackets and suits, but do not allow this for compassionate cases.
- Harm and other accountable managers will be collaborating to submit a request to the CAA to consider adding compassionate cases to the exception list.
- There is ongoing difficulty in the commercial sector because one provider is part of OEUK while the other is not.
- The CAA has indicated it will not amend the regulations to require cross-compatibility between jackets and suits.
- All operators are considering addressing this issue within their own operational manuals, stating that cross compatibility is required across all safety equipment.
- As new safety equipment enters the market, the safety equipment providers will be expected to clearly indicate which items have undergone cross-compatibility testing.
- Harm will draft a letter on behalf of OHSLG and will distribute to all members before publishing regarding cross compatibility. This will be sent to all Safety Equipment providers.

#### **CAA Airspace Briefing-**

- The number of windfarms that are being built is causing a discussion in regard to protection of airspace for the operators etc. The number of windfarms that are being built could potentially hinder the operation in the future.
- A sub meeting will be conducted to discuss what propositions will be put forward to the CAA with regards to protection of airspace, that will be required in the future and may be affected with the building of windfarms

## **OFFSHORE HELICOPTER SAFETY LEADERSHIP GROUP (OHSLG)**

- Significant workload currently for the energy providers.
- There are various mechanisms that could provide airspace protection for operators. Examples include low-level GPS IFR corridors and PinS approaches—such as those used for the Forties rigs—which establish defined protection zones.
- The UK is currently undergoing a major modernization of all airspace.
- Guidance is being developed to support the coexistence of operations with windfarms.
- The Health and Safety team is reviewing potential impacts on evacuation plans related to windfarm developments.
- There is currently no unified approach between traditional energy companies and green energy providers.
- Discussions will be initiated with Gplus to address and resolve these challenges.
- These issues are already covered in WindCap764, which is scheduled for an updated release soon.

### **6. Ground Operations Working Group / ASCG Update**

- Feedback was gathered and so far is acknowledged as a work in progress.
- There was discussion regarding which topics should be included in the meeting agenda and which could be excluded.
- The agenda has been adjusted to better accommodate timing constraints.
- Ongoing feedback is welcomed and encouraged. All feedback received has been carefully considered and incorporated where appropriate.

### **7. Engineering Working Group Update**

- There have been no changes since the last meeting.
- Timing and availability constraints are limiting the ability to hold regular meetings.
- Accountable Managers have been asked to encourage their teams to participate; however, no feedback has been received so far. Efforts will continue to encourage engagement within teams.
- Without broader support, achieving progress remains challenging, feedback is welcomed.
- Additional time and resources are required to move forward effectively.
- Three main areas of work group activity have been identified:
  1. Maintenance standards (Part 145) : Incomplete maintenance and engineering judgment issues related to AMM
  2. CAMO (Continuing Airworthiness Management Organisation) competencies

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## 3. Management of critical parts

- These three key areas have been the primary focus of recent discussions.
- Relevant information has already been supplied to the group.
- There is some overlap with HeliOffshore activities in these areas.

## 8. Heli Offshore update

- A long-standing action from OHSLG is the sharing of raw FDM data around offshore take-offs and landings with HeliOffshore. HeliOffshore still wishes to receive and analyse this data. Operators are reminded of their previous agreement to share this data and update on this commitment from all S92 operators is requested. **Request for Action:** S92 Operators to provide data to HeliOffshore.
- Enhanced Decision-making in Engineering (EDM-E) training programme and tools released to members in January (2025). All related materials are free and uptake is strongly encouraged. HeliOffshore wish to know who has reviewed and adopted (or plans to adopt) the programme so feedback can be captured. **Request for Action:** Operators to advise uptake (or intended uptake) of EDM-E programme.
- The agreed Contracting Principles for Aviation Services that have been developed in partnership with the IOGP from the original OEUK Supply Chain Principles were formally 'released' at our Conference/AGM in April. Public release will take place via the HeliOffshore website in the next 2 weeks.
- Work on developing audit protocols in conjunction with IOGP ASC continues. In addition to a single guidance document, owned by IOGP complied with input from all interested stakeholders, HeliOffshore is exploring the development of a new approach to auditing that will be published as a Recommended Practice in late 2025. It is intended that there will be a clear link between any IOGP R69x document and any RP developed.
- Work to develop a Recommended Practice relating to Independent Inspection/Duplicate Inspection processes is under discussion.
- Working group activity on an Automation RP and Cockpit Observation Programme RP is planned to conclude in Q3.
- The 2015 Wrong Deck Landing Report sponsored by CHC and developed through HeliOffshore has been shared via the IOGP ASC and BHA Offshore Committee. HeliOffshore will take the action to promote. **Request for Action:** All operators and interested stakeholders are requested to give feedback on the document prior to a public promotion in Q3. (The document is attached to this e-mail for sharing as appropriate)

## 9. IOGP update

- There are currently many ongoing changes.
- The group will be more involved moving forward and remains actively engaged with the HeliOffshore team.

## **OFFSHORE HELICOPTER SAFETY LEADERSHIP GROUP (OHSLG)**

- A concept is being developed to ensure all work groups focus on the 6/90-type document.
- The Human Factors work group has been established and efforts are underway to connect it with all other existing work groups.
- The technical work group has been reinvigorated, working closely with OEMs to address technical requirements and ensure strong collaboration across teams.
- Several documents have been published recently, including 690, 696, 697, and 699.
- Work is currently in progress on document 694, which is survey-related.
- Plans are in place to revisit and republish document 690 next year; feedback from the deployed version is being collected and considered.
- A few safety notices have been shared recently covering PEDs, HTAWS, and LOSA, including discussion of related limitations.
- The next meeting will be held in Bahrain, focusing on updating the strategy—not a full revision, but a series of tweaks, given it has been five years since the last update.
- Joint visits to operators for audits are being encouraged and appear to be going well, especially since many participants have experience with document 690, which aids in addressing questions and improving understanding.
- Positive outcomes from joint audits are already apparent, though challenges remain. A balanced approach is still being sought. The goal is not to achieve dramatic changes but to ensure continuous improvement of current practices.

### **HCA**

- The annual audit took place at the beginning of last week, with 4 out of 6 operators attending. Only observations were noted—no major issues. The CAA was also present during the audit.
- Annual interim inspections are scheduled to begin in September, with approximately 250–260 inspections conducted annually.
- A date has not yet been decided to remove certificates and helideck information from the website.
- Internal communications have been sent to pilots encouraging them to start using the new system.
- A formal notice will be issued prior to the website being switched off.
- The new system is working well and has received positive feedback, allowing users to access final inspection reports, which operators have found very useful.
- Ongoing feedback is welcomed for any changes or suggestions to improve the process.

## **OFFSHORE HELICOPTER SAFETY LEADERSHIP GROUP (OHSLG)**

### **10. AOB**

#### **Safety Alert- Flipper Device**

- The Safety Alert regarding the Flipper device is not clearly worded. Concerns that there may be other similar devices in circulation.
- This device functions as a hacking tool, posing a potential cyber security threat, particularly to helidecks and ground operations. While the aviation-specific risk is unclear, it is recognised as a general threat.
- The FAA has banned the device, citing safety concerns.
- It was identified that there is no valid reason for individuals to carry this device. This Flipper device is not permitted to travel on offshore flights.
- It was noted that currently, there are no plans to implement a ban in the UK, but this is being monitored.
- Harm will distribute an email to other operators to raise awareness about the device.

#### **Passenger Weight Limitations**

- Discussions are ongoing regarding weight limitations for passengers traveling offshore, particularly in relation to MCA winching weight limits in non-emergency and life-threatening situations. This concern is more pressing on FPSOs than fixed platforms.
- This raises sensitive questions about how to approach passengers whose weight may pose operational challenges.
- The Coastguard has already declined to transport individuals deemed too heavy, even in medical situations.
- The primary control measure is proposed to be the offshore medical; individuals over a certain weight would not pass the medical.
- It is being proposed by OEUK that energy companies take responsibility for informing affected individuals.
- There is no finalized plan yet—the issue remains under discussion. However, a soft launch of the policy is targeted for October, with full implementation expected by March.
- It was recommended to raise concerns with OEUK, particularly regarding the impact on front-line staff.
- Discussions are also underway with the Marine sector on this issue.

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