



Report signals challenges and opportunities for improved safety performance

NOPSEMA's Annual Offshore Performance Report identifies inadequate design specification and procedures not being followed as prevalent causes of offshore petroleum incidents.

Australia's independent regulator of offshore safety, well integrity and environmental management has released its yearly stocktake of risk management by the Australian offshore petroleum industry.

Recalling the deaths of two offshore workers during drilling operations on the *Stena Clyde* mobile offshore drilling unit facility in August 2012, NOPSEMA CEO Jane Cutler reinforced the constant need for vigilance in all stages of operations offshore.

"NOPSEMA shares the information in this report in the expectation that, with continued effort by all, the impact of high risk activities on the lives of offshore workers and the environment will be negligible," Ms Cutler said.

The authoritative report includes data and information collected by NOPSEMA on injuries and fatalities, incidents, inspections, assessments, investigations and enforcements from offshore petroleum operations in the authority's jurisdiction to 31 December 2012. For the first time, the report covers environmental management, reflecting NOPSEMA's expanded functions from January 2012.

In acknowledging that 2012 proved a costly year in terms of lives lost, Ms Cutler noted progress in some areas of the industry's safety performance, including:

- The rate of accidents reached the lowest level recorded since 2005
- The rate of uncontrolled hydrocarbon releases reached a seven year low, reflecting a 41% drop in the number of unplanned petroleum liquid and gas releases in 2012

"Lower injury rates should be commended as they represent *actual harm avoided* and demonstrate continuing endeavours by organisations to prevent further fatalities and harm to offshore workers," Ms Cutler said.

The *Annual Offshore Performance Report* includes a 'spotlight' on hydrocarbon releases, which are a particular concern due to their potential for ignition. The rate of uncontrolled hydrocarbon releases per million hours decreased in 2012 to 1.08, the lowest level since 2005. The number of uncontrolled hydrocarbon releases reported last year decreased from 29 to 17.

The release of the report coincides with the passage of legislation providing NOPSEMA with strengthened enforcement tools to secure compliance by the offshore industry with their responsibilities to manage the risks they create through their petroleum activities. In welcoming the development, Ms Cutler emphasised that amendments to allow NOPSEMA to publish some enforcement notices would not influence the authority's decision-making processes.

"In implementing the changes, NOPSEMA's focus will remain on administering the legislation independently, professionally and by following due process," she said.

The *Annual Offshore Performance Report* can be accessed at nopsema.gov.au

Contact: Alison Carter

Communications and Stakeholder Relations Manager

Tel: (08) 6188 8752 Mob: 0407 076 041

