

Course Descriptor - Refresher HSR training for the offshore petroleum industry

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Introduction

Health and Safety Representatives (HSR) play an important role in the improvement of occupational health and safety (OHS) in the offshore petroleum industry. To ensure HSRs can make the best possible contribution to improving OHS performance, HSRs should undertake periodic refresher training related to OHS that is accredited by the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA).

Health and safety representatives

HSRs are employees within the offshore petroleum industry and have been selected to represent a designated work group (DWG). The Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006 (OPGGs Act) defines the functions and powers of the HSR. Once selected, the OPGGS Act requires that the HSR undertake a course of training relating to occupational health and safety that is accredited by NOPSEMA. The term of service for a HSR is typically 24 months, after which time the HSR may choose to renominate for another term. There is no requirement for a HSR to repeat the course of training upon commencement of a subsequent term of service.

The refresher training

In recognition of the importance of HSRs in supporting the health and safety of their DWG members, a tripartite working group was established to coordinate a HSR Forum. The inaugural Forum was held in 2019 and included a pilot of a proposed refresher training curriculum. This curriculum has been revised in response to HSR feedback from the pilot.

Participants in the refresher training must have completed the full course of HSR training. Many HSRs serve successive terms, so it may have been a number of years since some participants completed their initial training. The full course of initial HSR training must include the following content¹:

- The legislation
- Hazard identification and risk management
- Safety Management Systems (SMS) and Safety Case
- Incident investigation
- Communications.

¹ Detailed course requirements are contained in GL1581 - Health and Safety Representative Training for the Offshore Oil and Gas Industry

The purpose of the refresher training is not to repeat in summary form the content of the full training. Rather, the refresher training is intended to provide opportunities for HSRs to further develop their competence and build skills to support their efficacy in the HSR function.

Objectives for HSR refresher training

The training should be one (1) day in duration and should meet the following objectives:

- Peer learning through collaboration:
 - Use of case studies and group work as the primary learning mechanism provides opportunities to learn about different approaches across the industry.
- Skills development:
 - Attendees will be experienced and knowledgeable HSRs, learning activities should seek to enhance existing skills.

Content requirements

The following list is a summary of the minimum requirements that a refresher training course must contain.

1. Legislation and resources
2. Risk Management and the Safety Case
 - a. Major Accident Events
 - b. Formal safety assessment
 - c. Layered defences
3. Focus topic

For a HSR training course to be accredited by NOPSEMA it shall, as a minimum, be aligned with the course descriptors outlined in this document. To maintain a level of quality assurance the accredited course should be presented by a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) that is also accredited to deliver the full course of initial HSR training.

Module 1 – Legislation and resources

Module descriptor

The HSR will have an understanding of Schedule 3 to the *Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006* and the *Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage (Safety) Regulations 2009*. This module should provide the HSR with an update of changes to the legislation, where relevant, and the implications of the changes to their role and function. The module should include a group discussion on resources used and relied upon for the HSR function – who they approach for advice, what resources they access, how they go about obtaining information and advice.

Module 2 – Risk Management and the Safety Case

Module descriptor

The HSR will be familiar with hazard identification and hierarchy of control concepts, and with the use of hazard identification process and tools such as Job Hazard Analysis, Take 5 (or equivalent), etc. The HSR will understand the role of the safety management system (SMS) in the provision of a safe and healthy workplace. This module should provide the HSR with the practical experience of participating in a Formal Safety Assessment for a Major Accident Event and developing an associated Bowtie diagram or other visual representation of layered prevention and mitigation controls. Learning outcomes would be enhanced through the inclusion of facility-specific pre-work assigned to each HSR for completion prior to the course commencement.

Module 3 – Focus Topic

Module descriptor

Case studies should be prepared for a variety of focus topics to reduce repetitiveness of annual training content and facilitate continued professional development for HSRs. Case studies should be structured to facilitate group collaboration and peer learning.

NOPSEMA will provide regular updates of current and emerging focus topics relevant to the industry.

Current topics include:

- a. Psychosocial risk management
- b. Process safety (isolation, breaking containment, etc.)
- c. Management of change
- d. Communicating with clarity – identifying and addressing misconceptions arising from poor communication on the facility.

HSRs will need to understand how they can use their position to represent the health and safety interests of their DWG members in relation to the focus topic in question.