

IMCA is the international trade association representing offshore, marine and underwater engineering companies

It seeks to:

- strive for the highest possible standards with a balance of risk and cost in: health and safety; technology; quality and efficiency; environmental awareness and protection;
- achieve and sustain self-regulation in the industry;
- ease the free movement of equipment and personnel globally;
- achieve equitable contracting regimes;
- provide the framework for training, certification, competence and recruitment to support and sustain the industry globally;
- resolve industry issues; and
- promote co-operation across the industry.

Members include pipelay, heavy lift, diving, remotely operated vehicle, survey and offshore construction contractors, plus various contractors operating specialist marine equipment.

IMCA has two core activities in which all members participate:

- Competence & Training includes a comprehensive framework devoted to promoting safety by defining and encouraging training and competence in key safety-related positions.
- Safety, Environment & Legislation (SEL) includes monitoring national and international regulatory bodies, circulation of relevant information to members and advancement of industry positions where necessary

Members join in one or more technical divisions relevant to their own activities:

- Diving
- Marine
- Offshore Survey
- Remote Systems & ROV

IMCA works with a global focus, but also has regional sections covering the key offshore areas: Asia-Pacific, Central & South America, Europe & Africa, Middle East & India and North America.

IMCA has published substantial and comprehensive good practice guidance on marine operations based on its members' experience in a range of related areas. More details on specific activities are set out on these factsheets.

International Marine Contractors Association

www.imca-int.com

One of IMCA's key objectives is "to strive for the highest possible standards of health, safety and environment with a balance of risk and cost", thus providing the safest possible working environment for our members' workforces and ensuring their efficient, uninterrupted operations.

IMCA's Safety, Environment & Legislation (SEL) Core Committee promotes the sharing of experience and helps to avoid duplication of effort in issues concerned with legislation. It monitors the output of international and national legislative bodies and circulates relevant information to members. The committee also develops industry positions on specific issues and, where necessary, advances the industry's viewpoint.

Sharing of Safety-Related Information

IMCA operates a 'safety flash' system for disseminating information on lessons learnt from incidents to members. In addition, all committee and regional section meetings include time on the agenda for a period of un-minuted discussion on recent safety-related incidents.

Through such sharing of safety-related information, not only can 'repeat' incidents be avoided on other worksites around the world, but IMCA can identify key areas to be addressed by the future work programme.

Statistics and Benchmarking

IMCA undertakes an annual safety statistics exercise, using both leading and lagging indicators, providing a benchmark against which contractors can measure their own performance and recording how continuous effort is leading to a continuous drop in incident rates towards the zero injury goal.

Safety Training Guidelines

IMCA helps its members ensure offshore personnel are sufficiently trained in safety awareness, hazard identification and the particular demands and situations that working offshore can bring, building on STCW and other requirements to set out useful guidance for both marine and non-marine personnel working in the offshore sector.

A Common Theme

These issues are at the heart of IMCA's work, with the SEL committee overseeing world-wide activities in this area, the four technical divisions handling aspects specific to their own operations and regional sections and sub-groups addressing local issues.

Of course, IMCA is not alone in working to improve offshore safety. A key aspect is working together with other organisations, bringing together expertise where there are common interests and avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort. IMCA is involved with, amongst others, the following governmental, trade association and cross-industry bodies: IMO, OGP, IADC, IACS, DMAC, EDTC, HSE, NPD, NOPS, NOSAC, Oil & Gas UK, OLF, OMHEC, PSA, Step Change.

Safety flash system

A key tool of IMCA is its safety flash system, which enables prompt distribution of safety flashes across the industry on topics that would otherwise pose a latent hazard to other members.

The purpose of an IMCA safety flash is to notify IMCA member companies of a significant hazard that could be present at their worksites and to provide solutions for controlling the hazards. Such a hazard may already have led to a fatality, injury or illness at a member's site or it may be a recognised problem that could lead to an unwanted incident. In either case, the publication of such hazards through the IMCA safety flash system informs and helps prevent similar occurrences.

Any incident or undesired event, including near-misses, observed safety performance problems or even information on problems occurring outside the member company can be sent to IMCA for inclusion in a safety flash.

In general, the hazard should be evaluated for probability and severity and would be considered to be significant if it was any incident that could potentially harm or adversely affect employees and others at the worksite, leading to severe illness or injury. This includes any event that could adversely affect the environment requiring specific expertise and resources for correction.

Safety flash submissions should usually contain the following:

- ◆ Description of the incident
- ◆ Apparent cause(s)
- ◆ Action to be taken to prevent recurrence

An outline of the system is as follows:

- ◆ IMCA member reports incident/dangerous occurrence to the secretariat
- ◆ IMCA secretariat anonymises/sanitises report, as appropriate, to remove company name, location, date, etc. and produces draft safety flash
- ◆ IMCA sends draft flash to IMCA contact reporting the information for approval
- ◆ Once approval given to draft text, IMCA issues safety flash to all relevant contacts in member organisations

Further information, including downloadable safety flashes for the past twelve months can be found at www.imca-int.com/safetyflashes

IMCA also maintains other incident reporting and analysis systems to help the industry ensure the ongoing improvement in its safety performance, particularly in relation to dynamic positioning (DP) systems and lifting operations.

Find out more and download reporting forms at www.imca-int.com/incidentreports



Environmental Issues

IMCA's work on environmental issues is twofold – both in helping assist members in achieving their aim of minimising any negative environmental impact associated with their operations and through monitoring and involving itself in regulatory and other work in this area which could have an impact on members' activities and interests, including:

◆ Events

IMCA organises seminars including expert presentations and constructive discussions, the proceedings of which are disseminated throughout the membership;

◆ Briefing and guidance

A major issue affecting some members has been the phase-out of halon, previously used in offshore fire suppression systems, but being phased out after being banned under the Montreal Protocol. IMCA has issued several guidance and briefing notes on the topic. Most recently, the topic has been further reported in "Fires in machinery spaces on DP vessels" (IMCA M 119).

Legislative Matters

IMCA monitors a variety of national and international legislation. Briefing is provided to members on issues which are likely to affect their businesses, with early warning given during the development stages of what might be on the way. This gives members the opportunity to provide input into consultation processes, with IMCA taking full advantage of the experience and expertise found within its members to develop submissions and lobbying on behalf of the wider industry, adding weight to the industry's arguments.

A few recent issues where IMCA has been active on members' behalf include:

- ◆ Participation by IMCA secretariat representatives and with member input in plenary debate at and working groups of the International Maritime Organization, covering issues such as guidelines for vessels DP systems and training of key DP personnel, revision of the OSV code and guidelines, implementation of the International Ship & Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code, application of the Special Purpose Ships (SPS) Code and more;
- ◆ Implementation of ILO Convention 180 and the EU Working Time Directive, including work with other trade associations on guidance for employers;
- ◆ Australia – Dialogue with the National Offshore Petroleum Safety Authority (NOPSA) on safety case requirements and other issues;
- ◆ Brazil – IMCA was invited to participate in the offshore regulatory review following the sinking of the P-36, putting forward the experience of members, offering examples of successful self-regulation initiatives where appropriate, discussing the relative merits of differing regulatory regimes and seeking to minimise variation from other successful regulatory regimes;
- ◆ Netherlands – Briefing on changes to offshore diving regulations, including liaison on recognition of qualifications to help ensure the easy movement of competent personnel within the industry between different areas;
- ◆ USA – Providing members with briefing on development of the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) and how it would affect members; and input into the revision of US diving regulations through involvement in the US National Offshore Safety Advisory Committee (NOSAC).

More details on IMCA's work in this area can be found at www.imca-int.com/sel

SEL events

The SEL committee organises a variety of events at which members come together for presentations, workshops and to share good practice, details on successful safety initiatives and lessons learnt from incidents.

Safety seminars – held annually

- ◆ *Covering the global HSE bases*
– 2009, Houston, USA
- ◆ *Safety in a global environment*
– 2008, Abu Dhabi, UAE
- ◆ *Keeping safety personal*
– 2007, Liverpool, UK
- ◆ *Safety where it counts*
– 2006, Edinburgh, UK
- ◆ *Elements for safety*
– 2005, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- ◆ *Deepwater: Marine Operations & Safety* – 2003, Houston, USA
- ◆ *No Harm: What's the Problem?*
– 2003, Newcastle, UK
- ◆ *Working Safer Offshore*
– 2002, Manchester, UK

Plus other events including:

- ◆ Security Seminar, September 2003
- ◆ Key Environmental Concerns for Marine Contractors, 1999
- ◆ ISO 14000 Certification for Marine Contractors - What's Involved? 1998
- ◆ Setting Performance Indicators, 2002