Introduction

IMCA is the international trade association for offshore, marine and underwater engineering companies. With a membership in excess of 1000 companies in over 60 countries we have a significant voice around the world in the offshore scene, especially regarding safety and efficiency – in other words, good practice. This is achieved through good communication and sharing ideas, ambitions and practice amongst our members.

IMCA’s guidance on competence assurance and assessment has been developed to provide offshore contractors with a framework on which to build their own competence schemes. This gives the offshore industry, in general, confidence that all personnel appointed to safety-critical and other relevant positions can carry out their jobs in an effective manner. Each company’s scheme will have its own specific elements, but can be based upon the IMCA framework.

Competence assurance and assessment materials for freelance personnel are now available for all four IMCA technical divisions: Marine, Diving, Remote Systems & ROV and Offshore Survey.

The requirement for demonstration of competence is becoming more common every day. Some clients demand it, QA systems and various regulations require it, legal considerations are increasingly making it necessary and we are aware that people want to know that colleagues, who work alongside them, are competent too. In due course it may become impossible to work offshore without demonstrating competence, e.g. by holding a record of competence/logbook, in the same way as medicals, offshore safety and survival certificates are prerequisites today.

These materials are intended for use by either individual personnel working for companies or companies who wish to develop a competence management scheme (CMS) themselves but who perhaps do not have the documentation in place to implement from the outset.

Origins of the IMCA Competence Portfolio

These documents were first developed for freelance personnel but increased application by companies prompted a review of their focus and title. The content and structure remains unchanged, only the title of the materials has been revised. It is now intended that a company could implement a CMS based on these documents or a freelance worker can adopt them as per the original application.
Roles Included in this Revision:

R03 – Worked example

Marine Positions
- A01 – Master
- A02 – Chief Mate
- A03 – Bridge Watchkeeper
- A04 – Dynamic Positioning (DP) Operator
- A05 – Ballast Control Operator
- A06 – Chief Engineer
- A07 – Engineer In Charge of a Watch
- A08 – Radio Operator
- A09 – Able Seafarer – Deck
- A10 – Able Seafarer – Engine
- A11 – Electrotechnical Officer (ETO)
- A12 – Electrician
- A13 – Rigger Foreman
- A14 – Rigger
- A15 – Crane Operator
- A16 – Heavy Lift Crane Operator

Offshore Survey Positions
- S01 – Party Chief
- S11 – Senior Surveyor
- S12 – Senior Survey Engineer
- S13 – Senior Geophysicist
- S14 – Senior Data Processor
- S15 – Senior Pipeline Inspection Engineer
- S21 – Surveyor Grade I
- S22 – Survey Engineer Grade I
- S23 – Geophysicist Grade I
- S24 – Data Processor Grade I
- S25 – Pipeline Inspection Engineer Grade I
- S31 – Surveyor Grade II
- S32 – Survey Engineer Grade II
- S33 – Geophysicist Grade II
- S34 – Data Processor Grade II
- S35 – Pipeline Inspection Engineer Grade II

Diving Positions
- D01 – Diving Superintendent
- D02 – Bell Diving Supervisor
- D03 – Air (Surface Supplied) Diving Supervisor
- D04 – Bell (Saturation) Diver
- D05 – Air (Surface Supplied) Diver
- D06 – Life Support Supervisor
- D07 – Life Support Technician
- D08 – Assistant Life Support Technician
- D09 – Tender
- D10 – Senior Dive Technician
- D11 – Senior Dive Technician (Surface Supplied Only)
- D12 – Dive Technician

Remote Systems & ROV Positions
- R01 – ROV Supervisor
- R11 – ROV Tooling Supervisor
- R02 – Senior ROV Pilot Technician
- R12 – Senior Tooling Technician
- R03 – ROV Pilot Technician Grade I
- R13 – ROV Tooling Technician Grade I
- R04 – ROV Pilot Technician Grade II
- R14 – ROV Tooling Technician Grade II
- R20 – ROV Superintendent

Assessment

Assessors may be any supervisor or manager, engaged by the company, with the necessary knowledge and training to apply the criteria in a fair, consistent and objective manner. As part of their scheme, every IMCA contractor should identify its own assessors and train them where required. It should also put in place an adequate grievance procedure. Guidance on assessor training is available (IMCA C 007). If these materials are being adopted by a freelance individual it is intended that they will be able to access the assessment and verification resources that a company has in place for its staff in full-time employment.

1 Competence assessments can be carried out in any order the individual wishes or is required to undertake, they do not have to be undertaken sequentially in the order presented.
As illustrated in each individual set of competence tables, freelance personnel should gather supporting documentary evidence of their competence, which could be a mixture of:

- end of trip reports – could be handover and other reports prepared at the end of trip or end of project (EOT);
- work records and examples of work completed by the individual (WR);
- witness testimonies – signed observations of work carried out by the individual (WT);
- completed logbooks and CVs/resumes (LOG);
- copies of performance appraisals (APP);
- drill reports (DRILLS).

Each of these items of evidence should be provided to support the role-specific material detailed in the competence tables. Once the individual has gathered the supporting evidence required, they should present it to the employer who can identify an assessor. The assessor may be a supervisor or manager with the necessary knowledge or experience to review the evidence presented.

The assessor can then assess the individual’s competence for the role in question. The assessment results can be recorded in this document, identifying, where appropriate or acceptable, missing or inadequate evidence.

If the evidence submitted is not appropriate or acceptable the individual may be asked by the assessor to perform an on-the-job assessment (DEMO), or further familiarisation with the task may be required.

Where personnel move employment from one contractor to another, it may be appropriate for competences to be reviewed and reassessed by the new employer.

### Verification

Assessment needs to be followed by verification of the assessment of the individual’s competence. The role of the verifier is to check or verify assessments that have been completed offshore, and a verifier may be used as part of a company’s in-house audit arrangements. Verifiers may be on board the vessel or ashore in the company offices. The verification should be carried out by a verifier before the employee has left the worksite or company.

It is important that the verifier must be a different person from the assessor on each occasion. Quality control is undertaken by checking the assessment and ensuring compliance with the required criteria. Quality assurance is undertaken by checking that the way the final assessment was conducted was itself authentic and correct.

A verifier should:
- ensure that there is a uniform and consistent approach to the assessment process;
- be confident that all assessors are assessing and applying competence guidelines to the same standard;
- provide support, advice and guidance to assessors;
- ensure that all assessments and records are accurate and complete;
- possess a sound knowledge of the content of the competence tables and the assessment process.

Guidance on the role of verifier and verifier training can be found in IMCA C 016 – Guidance on verifier training.

### Important Guidance for Everyone Using the Frameworks

Marine and Diving roles now include a ‘self-assessment checklist’ which is based on the agreed entry level requirements for any given role. This is not designed to be used as formal proof of achievement of qualifications. It is intended to act as an informal tool for personnel to benchmark themselves against, or could act as a reminder to revalidate qualifications that could be in need of renewal.

It may occur that not all abilities contained in an area of competence can be covered in one assessment. Assessor and verifier notes have been designed to allow for individuals to record ‘as they go’ which abilities have been assessed and how many are outstanding on areas of competence. Assessors and verifiers are asked to indicate whether just part or the whole of a particular area has been completed by ticking the appropriate box.

It is essential that all assessor and verifier notes are signed and dated so these can be cross-referenced with the completed competence assessment tables (illustrations of this can be found in the worked example). Assessor and verifier contact details should also be completed, signed and stamped by all assessors and verifiers completing these competence tables.
A worked example has been provided on the IMCA website – [www.imca-int.com/media/158774/imca-competenceassessmentportfolio-workedexample.pdf](http://www.imca-int.com/media/158774/imca-competenceassessmentportfolio-workedexample.pdf). It should be noted that assessments against competences can take place in any order and not necessarily sequential in the order presented. Once completed these documents may well be stand-alone for the individual and role in question. However, should it be necessary for the individual to evidence their competence in a lower grade, this should be taken into account and supplied as evidence where appropriate.

**Evidence**

A portfolio of evidence of experience and assessments for/by the individual will need to be created. This section defines some of the documents referred to in the competence tables and explains how to obtain them.

*All evidence produced should be only that which the site supervisor would allow to be used without breach of confidentiality of the company or project. This is particularly important, for example, in respect of confidential survey reports.*

**Competence Appraisal Forms**

This form is an appraisal of the individual’s competence and may be completed by one appraiser, or several different appraisers may be used to comment on each section.

The appraiser must print his or her name, and sign and date the relevant box on the form.

For the task “Adhere to offshore safety standards and maintain a safe working environment for self and others”, the following paragraph is a typically good appraisal comment:

“Bill consistently demonstrates good working practices by ensuring that offshore safety standards are maintained at all times. He always ensures the area is safe for him and others.”

The following is too short and does not specifically address the task concerned:

“Safety is paramount as far as Bill is concerned.”

**Work Records**

Work records are copies of forms, documents, logs or other paperwork generated during the course of the individual’s work.

The copying of any work records for inclusion in an individual’s portfolio must be approved by the relevant company site supervisor or onshore project manager.

All work records should clearly show the involvement of the individual, for example, the individual’s name must appear in the team member’s list on a dive log that is being presented.

All work records presented as evidence should be dated, signed by the individual and countersigned by a responsible witness to authenticate the record as being the work of the individual. The witness should state his name, job title and company. All work records presented should have been created within the past three years.

**Witness Testimonies**

Witness testimonies are used to record a specific event(s) which have been observed by a work colleague and relate to the individual’s competence. Witnesses may be any supervisor or manager with the necessary knowledge and experience to comment on the task being performed. The witness statement should address:

WHO (names) was involved;

WHAT (equipment, processes) were being used;

WHERE (location) the task was being conducted;

WHEN (date) the task was conducted.
Example of a typical witness testimony for adaption:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate's Name:</th>
<th>Joe Bloggs</th>
<th>Witness's Name:</th>
<th>John Smith</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Witness's Company:</td>
<td>Other Offshore</td>
<td>Witness's Job:</td>
<td>Supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date(s) of Observation:</td>
<td>1/1/2000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Give a full description of the observations made and state your Company and position:

**Description:** ROV Pilot Grade 1: maintaining a safe working environment for self and others.

A good example, which describes the event and the specific action of the candidate:

- During a re-termination of Hercules 5 main lift umbilical, Joe demonstrated his general safety awareness by ensuring that a barrier was erected around the work area during lifting and grinding operations.
- Joe wore the correct PPE during the work, as described in the TRA.
- Joe maintained effective communication with his colleagues during the work and followed his supervisor’s instructions.

A poor example which does not relate to a specific action of the candidate

Joe always maintains a safe working environment.

| Witness's Signature: | John Smith          | Date:    | 1/1/2000 |