

COMMITTEE OF COMPANY SIGNATORIES TO THE OFFSHORE DIVING INDUSTRY AGREEMENT (ODIA)

WORKFORCE UPDATE – JUNE 2010

Ongoing Industrial Relations

One of our promises to you from the negotiations last year was to set up a mechanism to support *ongoing* industrial relations with the diving workforce and our labour suppliers – rather than only talking every three years. So...the first meeting of the new joint ODIA Forum (including worksite / vessel reps, contractor managers, company reps and labour supply company managers) is scheduled to take place on Monday 12 July.

The Forum intends to meet twice yearly (in addition to informal meetings between RMT and ODIA) for managers and workforce representatives

1. To receive reports from the ODIA Management Committee on relevant matters, plans and work in progress
2. To review and discuss relevant matters of shared or collective concern in (4) and (5) below
3. To report views or make appropriate recommendations on such matters to the Management Committee
4. To address relevant matters of the UK diving industry or profession; health, safety or welfare; training, skills or competence; relevant legislation or good practice
5. To consider matters relating to the application, contravention, implementation, interpretation, or promotion of the 3-yearly ODIA

Specifically excluded are matters relating to pay, contract terms, discipline or individual grievances, and the substance of the ODIA itself. The Forum will have an elected Chair and Vice-Chair who shall represent different membership categories (eg: one from the contractors' 'side' and one from the union 'side').

The aim of the Forum is to promote constructive industrial relations within the diving industry in the UK sector, the pursuit of improved workforce engagement to enhance understanding of mutual issues, and the establishment of an inclusive forum for discussion of relevant matters and collaboration on shared projects.

We hope that diving personnel will use this forum to pursue issues of importance to you. Please contact us if you would like more information or to participate in the discussions.

The possible 2 new Compensation Schemes

Colleagues will recall that the 2009-2012 ODIA settlement included an undertaking of:

“Target date of 31 March 2011 to achieve some form of compensation schemes for

- generally delayed mobilisations, and
- unscheduled extensions to tours (weather excluded)

The establishment of these benefits and their payment are contingent on the Signatories' ability to recoup the amounts from clients”

The signatory companies simulated a 'trial run' of the possible schemes during April and May, to test out whether the systems work, and also to cost both the levels of payments (which would be made) and the management and administration costs of running the schemes. Unfortunately, the exercise was confounded by the ash cloud, and by the untypical schedules for that time of year. Consequently, the results have been less than helpful, and we have decided to re-run the exercise over August and September when we hope to have a more typical operational schedule (and no ash cloud!). We hope

to have formed a view on options by the end of 2010 so we can update you and the RMT on the results and our thoughts, and listen to your ideas on what to do.

Competence – an ODIA ‘transfer scheme’?

The RMT asked the ODIA to look at how we could ‘transfer’ assessed competence between contractors, given that all our company competence schemes are based on IMCA Guidance and competence criteria. This would cut out duplication of effort, reduce costs and promote faster, earlier completion of competence standards. Feedback from workers indicates that this would also produce greater buy-in from you because of the reduced bureaucracy, and the attainment of a competence certificate which would be portable from company to company.

The ODIA conducted research into this over the winter, and was invited to address IMCA’s seminar on Competence on 24 March, to present our results. These found goodwill and real potential for a ‘transfer arrangement’ between ODIA competence schemes, and the possible mechanics of this have subsequently been developed in detail by Signatory companies’ competence managers. These initial conclusions were fed back to the ODIA Committee and to the RMT in April.

We were keen for IMCA to lead this project as the output would have greater authority and consistency, and therefore more value for participating companies and for diving personnel. We met IMCA again and, as a result, IMCA now intend to publish an international ‘Information Note’ which will describe the principles of ‘transferability’ and how these may be applied by contractor members. This will be supported by ‘Transferable Competence Portfolio’ (TCP) packs for all diving division job functions. These can be used, by workers who are not already enrolled in a company competence scheme, as the ‘common’ competence documentation across all participating diving contractors. A TCP Record Sheet will summarise completed units, regardless of which contractor signed these off. Workers who are already enrolled in a company scheme can also maintain a TCP Record Sheet, alongside the company-specific records of achievement.

IMCA will publish these documents on their website but it will, of course, be for contractors to develop arrangements to implement the transfer principles in practice, using the IMCA documentation as the common base.

We also have a particular interest in how we can support very-transient workers enrol and progress through competence programmes (whether company or TCP scheme) and we believe this will require some further research and investment.

We hope to have detailed proposals on all this to discuss with you by autumn next year, but we will keep RMT officials, and you, updated on progress along the way.

Joint Meetings between RMT and Company Signatories

Discussions with Derek Moore and Jake Molloy have continued over recent months, covering a variety of topics. In addition to the above, the issues discussed have included

- The work done by the RMT to support application of ODIA within non-ODIA contractors
- Possible impact of the Pensions Act
- HSE review of interface between offshore and mainstream H&S legislation
- Maritime Labour Convention
- Supporting agencies to gain access to the ODIA insurance provisions with Houlders (for personnel placed with an ODIA contractor)

Further information, comments, complaints or questions on this Update?

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