



# Skills for Oil and Gas

## Annual Review 2014



## 2014 Fast Facts

**93%** MA scheme achievement rate

**17** Safety Standards reviewed

**110** Work experience pupils

**79,678** People registered in Vantage for CA-EBS

**15** Training audits approved

**89%** Petroleum Open Learning satisfaction rate

## Compressed Air Emergency Breathing System (CA-EBS) Initial Deployment Training



OPITO's Compressed Air Emergency Breathing System (CA-EBS) Initial Deployment training programme was designed for personnel travelling to or from offshore installations and vessels via helicopter where a Compressed Air Emergency Breathing System is provided for use in the case of an emergency ditching. The standard provides the offshore workforce with the knowledge and understanding of the hazards and properties of the system and appropriate emergency response actions to take.

The CA-EBS training programme was developed

and approved at the end of June 2014 with training commencing the following month. From the 1st of September 2014, all offshore workers in the UK travelling by helicopters supplied with a Compressed Air Emergency Breathing System were required to have completed this training. To date, almost 80,000 individuals have been registered in Vantage for the new standard which was introduced as a result of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Report (CAP1145) which contained a series of actions and recommendations to improve offshore helicopter safety.

## An Expansion of the Skills Screening Tool

2014 has seen an expansion of the OPITO Skills Screening tool from the previous 16 question banks to include a further 17 disciplines. The tool is a powerful web based recruitment aid that can measure the skills of individuals, giving a guarantee of underpinning knowledge in specific disciplines.

Supporting human resources, recruitment and training, the Skills Screening tool provides a cost-effective, easy accessible knowledge based test that measures skills and competence and recognises gaps in the skill sets of employees. Available globally, users can be trained to deliver online assessments, run reports on the results and analyse the overall performance of the individual.

The screening tool currently covers a number of disciplines including:

- Banksman/Slinger
- Deck Crew
- Electrical Technician
- Mechanical Technician
- Painter
- Pipefitter
- Welder

The new additional roles will cover on-shore remits including project management, all disciplines in engineering and support roles such as administration, supply chain and contracts.

## Competence Management System

OPITO has worked with Step Change in Safety and other industry stakeholders during 2014 to develop Competence Management System (CMS) Industry Guidelines which are due for publication imminently. These guidelines signpost the OPITO CMS Approval Criteria as industry best practice. Ongoing activities during the OPITO CMS Forums have focused on best practice and industry alignment on common principles and will continue to do so in 2015.

The themes set at the CMS Forums throughout 2014 invited a response from industry on what they require from a Competence Management Process. These responses have been collated and will form the basis of the scheduled review in 2015. The CMS Forum participants are also interested in developing an

industry wide competence framework for safety critical tasks during 2015 and would like OPITO to facilitate the development of this framework in conjunction with key industry stakeholders. Discussions on the criteria for approval, best practice guidelines and recognition for stakeholders who have gone beyond the minimum standards have taken place at the Forum meetings and will continue in 2015.

CMS promotional content was developed as an integral part of the new OPITO website launched in 2014. An effective Competence Management System can realise significant benefits to an oil and gas organisation and contributes to a skilled and competent workforce throughout the industry.

Benefits include:

- Improving staff motivation and performance
- Forming the basis for staff development
- Reducing frequency and severity of accidents and incidents
- Improving productivity due to enhanced workforce competence
- Reducing costs
- Adding value to business processes
- Additional external level of quality assurance
- Competitive advantage
- Enhanced credibility
- Exemption from detailed 'competence' questions in client tendering questionnaires.



## Celebrating 15 Years of Modern Apprenticeship Success



The OPITO Apprentice of the Year award was presented as part of National Oil & Gas Skills Week during a prestigious lunch at Aberdeen's Chester Hotel marking the 15th anniversary of the UK Upstream Oil & Gas Technician Training Scheme.

Michael Williamson, 23, beat off competition from over 100 students at three colleges to be named 2014 Apprentice of the Year. The former mussel farmer, who previously completed an apprenticeship in mechanical engineering with Shetland Island Council Ferries, was joined at the ceremony by Sinead Watson, the first female on the programme and winner of the first Apprentice of the Year title in 1999.

Originally from Whalsay, Shetland, Michael is currently an instrument technician at Edinburgh College. He was selected after demonstrating an outstanding ability and attitude during the four year national apprenticeship scheme which has so far seen more than 1,500 young people enter the industry, creating a sustainable pipeline of technicians coming in at a grassroots level.

Since the scheme was first established in 1999 with just 13 trainees and four industry sponsors, operators and major contractors have invested more than £120million in the programme and it has grown to see around 130 new apprentices taken on every year across 15 sponsoring companies. It is now recognised as one of the biggest industry led Modern Apprenticeship (MA) programmes in the UK.

Managed by OPITO in partnership with the Engineering and Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB), the MA scheme is recognised as one of the most successful apprenticeships with an annual achievement rate of 93% compared to the national average of 65%.

## 'Fuelling the next generation' - A Study for the Upstream Oil and Gas Industry

The findings from the recent LMI report 'Fuelling the next generation' were launched at the beginning of December 2014. The study, commissioned by Oil & Gas UK, OPITO and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) was undertaken by Ernst & Young. The purpose was to gather workforce data to identify the demographic and skills composition of the current oil and gas industry workforce, the key challenges faced by the industry and how demand is likely to change over the next five years. This builds on long-term collaboration to understand, track and anticipate the workforce profile across the whole industry.

Fieldwork for the current wave of LMI data commenced during the summer of 2014 with senior representatives from 288 operators, contractors and organisations throughout the upstream oil and gas sector providing information about the profile of their workforce, and their projected skills needs for the future.

Dispelling the popular 'ageing workforce' myth, the report revealed that the offshore oil and gas industry has a relatively young workforce. It notes the industry has a lower proportion of over-55s at just over 10 per cent compared to a national average of 32 per cent. In addition, the proportion of those aged 35 and below represents approximately 40 per cent of the workforce compared to a national average of 31 per cent. The oil and gas industry, which currently supports one in 80 jobs across the UK, will provide careers for some 12,000 new entrants over the next five years.

The report also shows that the sector is making successful efforts to build a sustainable pool of talent for the future with 86% of companies having programmes in place for graduates and/or apprentices and the sector supporting 6,000 graduates and 13,000 apprentices.

For full details of the report findings, a link is provided below.

<http://www.opito.com/uogitt-modern-apprenticeship>



## Continuing our Political Engagement

The first ever National Oil & Gas Skills Week provided the perfect opportunity to update politicians on oil and gas skills issues and a briefing lunch was held at the House of Commons in September 2014. Hosted by Dame Anne Begg MP, Chair of the Oil and Gas All Party Group, it enabled OPITO to talk about the benefits of our newly developed tools such as The Oil & Gas Skills Navigator, which also ensured delivery of one of the key skills targets in the BIS industrial strategy for oil and gas. Regional briefings were provided to MPs, highlighting the wide range of activities targeting young people, apprentices, women returners, ex-military staff and experienced industry staff in their regions.

OPITO were also pleased to welcome the Norwich MP, Chloe Smith, as the guest speaker at a very successful networking lunch for women in oil and gas in the East of England. Work has also continued in influencing skills policy through the work of the Associate Parliamentary Group for Skills and Employment, which is very important with the general election only five months away.

Research into the policy developments on shale gas helped shape OPITO's bid for writing standards for this fledgling industry and, the OPITO team has been kept up to date with weekly bulletins from Westminster and edited highlights of the year's key political events.





## Successful First Ever National Oil & Gas Skills Week

The inaugural National Oil & Gas Skills Week took place across a four day period from the 11th – 14th November. A diverse audience of over 3,500 people attended more than 45 events at venues across the country including Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Fort William, North Shields, Norwich, Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft and London. The week has established a national platform through which to promote skills development, career diversity and knowledge transfer within the oil and gas industry. Stakeholder engagement has been a significant outcome from the event with more than 75 different organisations delivering direct involvement, either by running or participating in an individual activity, or through sponsorship opportunities.

National Oil & Gas Skills Week saw commitment from a dozen companies in Scotland by opening their doors to members of the public through the 'Doors Open' initiative which was a key feature of the week. In Norwich, 25 organisations participated in a collaborative event held in conjunction with Great Yarmouth College to allow 500 participants an insight into the innovations and opportunities available within the oil and gas industry in the South East of England. Throughout the week, engagement was not only evident amongst industry bodies but also with academic institutions including

Robert Gordon University, University of Strathclyde Engineering Academy and Oil & Gas Institute, Glasgow Caledonian University, the University of Edinburgh, the University of Aberdeen, North East Scotland College, Lowestoft College, Great Yarmouth College and in excess of 40 schools. This has further enhanced relationships and has provided opportunities to build strategic partnerships and thus effective educational and skills development interventions.

A key objective of National Oil & Gas Skills Week was to showcase career opportunities and highlight the prospects the industry has to offer to a broad variety of audiences. While it created a channel to raise awareness of the industry to prospective employees, it also engaged with current working professionals who are driving the industry today and helping shape its future. Hundreds of school pupils joined military transitioners, graduates, apprentices, women returners, industry employees amongst others, to explore the diverse, stimulating and rewarding career opportunities the sector offers. A series of science, engineering and maths events, specialist workshops, careers sessions, debates and interactive challenges was able to demonstrate the scope of opportunities available within oil and gas careers.



**NATIONAL OIL & GAS SKILLS WEEK**  
11th - 14th November 2014

## National Oil & Gas Skills Week Facts

Number of events	47
Participating industry bodies	75
Educational institutions involved	54
National locations covered	9
Doors Open sessions	12
Audience	3,500

## OPITO Introduces Skills Connect Tool

The new OPITO Skills Connect tool assists with the mapping of jobs in the oil & gas industry to those in the military in order for employers and ex-military personnel to identify roles best suited to appropriate and existing skill sets and requirements.

Throughout 2014 OPITO has engaged with soon-to-exit service personnel providing an insight into the energy industry and the types of job roles relevant to their skills acquired within the military. A series of one-day visits to eight military bases across the UK has allowed an overview of the oil and gas industry to be delivered to around 700 servicemen and women, as well as details of related job roles matching experience and skill sets. These one-day events provided servicemen and women with information on a number of topics and addressed the industry's critical need to recruit skilled engineers, technicians and support roles including project managers and logistics, for both on and offshore positions. Based on the material delivered at the military workshops, OPITO have also been able to develop an e-Learning package on an 'Introduction to Oil and Gas' which is due to be launched in 2015.

Within the Skills Connect tool, the generic skill sets from job specifications for a range of roles in the oil and gas industry have been aligned to similar military positions. To date 70 military roles have



been included in the mapping exercise. Skills gaps have also been identified to enable employers to target specific training requirements. Ultimately, this will enable military personnel to be directed to the most appropriate part of the industry and where provides the best fit. This process will assist the oil and gas industry, providing clarity on where military personnel can benefit their organisation. OPITO has worked closely with the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) to raise awareness of the oil and gas industry and its attraction as a long-term career opportunity. Not only does this help organisations find and recruit highly skilled and competent employees but it also assists service leavers to recognise their transferable skills set.





## OPITO Launches Oil and Gas Work Experience Week

Aberdeen City and Shire secondary school pupils were offered a week-long taste of what a career in the oil and gas industry involves as part of the sector's first ever structured work experience programme. The initiative was aligned with recommendations from Sir Ian Wood's independent Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce.

OPITO teamed up with a series of industry and academic organisations to provide an opportunity for 100 fifth year students to gain an exclusive in-depth insight into how the industry works. Students spent each day at different industry venues focusing on how the different sectors fit into the overall industry. Time was also spent at universities and the Urquhart Partnership provided help and guidance on using social media, writing CVs and preparing for interviews culminating in practical interview sessions. A graduation ceremony was then held at the end of the week attended by parents, teachers and the businesses involved.

OPITO skills development director Morven Spalding said:

"This week-long structured programme will help students gain a proper understanding of the inner workings and relationships between the oil and gas operators, the supply chain and support services and dispel the misconception that all oil and gas jobs are all based offshore.

"They may come into this programme at the start of the week not sure what their options are or where they see themselves having a career in oil and gas. But by the time they have completed the work experience, they will understand the breadth and depth of exciting opportunities there are in this industry and will have made some important contacts."

## Broadening OPITO's Engagement

We are continuing to develop in the east of England. Highlights have included the creation and implementation of the first Industry Work Group for OPITO standards in England. Three southern North Sea forums throughout the year have provided a voice out with Aberdeen and representation on the BOSIET Review Industry Work Group in Aberdeen.

In addition, a Steering Group approach with 7 industry partners, Local Education Authorities and industry sponsor, devised a week long Work Experience Programme entitled Platform of Opportunity; for which GCSE and A Level STEM students across the east of England were selected to participate in a menu of 16

'one-off' industry opportunities. This was delivered in partnership with East Norfolk 6th Form to over 250 students.

A successful culmination to 2014 saw partnerships fostered with industry and education join together to develop a programme for National Skills Week in England. 10 events in Norwich, Lowestoft, Great Yarmouth and London featured over 700 delegates, 50 companies with press and full BBC Radio coverage. By example, a Teachers CPD Conference was delivered to an enthusiastic audience, full to capacity, featuring 14 industry speakers and 50 stakeholders. The event was hosted by Hethel Engineering Centre in Norwich.



## TRAIN-R App Puts Training Records Back in the Hands of the Offshore Workforce

OFFSHORE workers can for the first time access their training records at the touch of a button wherever they are in the world thanks to our new mobile application. The free TRAIN-R mobile app allows workers in any international location to plan and track their OPITO training to ensure their safety and competency certification is always up to date.

The global industry can verify training records through OPITO's Central Register and the Vantage system to track personnel working offshore. Previously, individual workers have not been able to access the secure database, relying instead on keeping their own records or receiving notification from their employers. The OPITO TRAIN-R app allows them to access a personalised

calendar of their OPITO training and assessment programmes from anywhere around the world at any time, ensuring they are able to remain up to date and compliant with whatever training is needed for their specific role onshore or offshore.

The TRAIN-R app also provides information on the network of OPITO-approved training providers in 40 countries around the world so they can quickly find their nearest approved centre. With as much as 80% of the estimated 1.5 million oil and gas workers worldwide employed on a contracting basis, the app will deliver tangible benefits to both industry employees and employers.

## The Oil & Gas Skills Navigator

The recently launched Oil & Gas Skills Navigator provides an online central repository connecting and consolidating all current skills information and activities, and is the starting point for school pupils, graduates, military career changers, employers, teachers or higher education groups and those looking for training information about the oil and gas industry. It provides an extensive library of helpful tools, useful links and information to guide those looking to join the industry on careers, companies, education, training and the dynamic industry itself.

The Oil & Gas Skills Navigator responds to the highlighted need within HM Government's Industrial

Strategy for one centralised online portal to provide a more proactive and co-ordinated approach to the supply of relevant information on oil and gas skills. It follows 12 months of research and development and has been created by OPITO, in collaboration with industry partners and under the stewardship of the Oil and Gas Industry Council. The Navigator is also supported by Oil & Gas UK, Subsea UK, Decom North Sea, NOF Energy, Energy North, the Offshore Contractors Association, Scottish Council for Development and Industry, the Engineering Construction Industry Training Board, Skills for Energy, the International Association of Drilling Contractors North Sea Chapter; and Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce.



Whatever your vocation, find your future.