

UKOPA Members Meeting

8 - 9 October 2024
Bristol

How digitisation within pipeline operations aim to improve safety

We were delighted with the attendance at the recent Member's meeting in Bristol that saw record numbers attend from across UKOPA's 29 member companies. Members gathered for the two day conference that examined 'How digitisation within pipeline operations aim to improve safety' and were rewarded with more than 24 presentations from experts in their respective fields.

As always, the event was an unparalleled opportunity to meet peers from across the sector, share good practices and build relationships with colleagues across the pipeline industry. The event also included an update from each of the 6 UKOPA working groups, the Governance Group and the Board. Copies of the presentations are available in the Member's section of the UKOPA website.



Digitisation in the Energy Industry



Clive Zanker opened the conference with an insightful presentation looking at how the sector is looking to use digitisation to reduce costs and emissions, while improving resilience and efficiency. Highlighting how digitisation is the 4th industrial revolution and how best it can be utilised to meet energy demand, provide resilience to critical infrastructure, but also meet climate change obligations and growing use of future fuels.

Better data sharing between members

The importance of collecting data from across the membership was outlined by Graham Goodfellow. By developing effective and robust data collection and retention systems, UKOPA and its members can meet their strategic aims, determine where action is needed, as well as identify trends and investigate good practice. The data is also imperative in better determining land use planning zones, reducing damage, as well as assessing risks to staff.



The presentation led to an interactive Round Table event where members split into small working groups to discuss and share how this can best be achieved. The findings will be collated and fed into the relevant Working Groups for actioning where appropriate.

Andy's Man Club

Prior to the three course Member's dinner, delegates were reminded of the importance of prioritising mental health in the workplace. Bart and Gary from Andy's Man Club gave an overview of the excellent work the charity undertakes to eliminate the stigma surrounding mental health by creating a judgment-free, confidential space where men can be open about the storms in their lives. UKOPA was delighted to make a £1,000 donation to support the positive work undertaken by this excellent charity.



Learning Briefs

John Ferrari, technical support to the Process Safety Working Group has now received information from members to prepare 15 Learning Briefs and was able to share eight recent examples at the conference. They're an excellent way to share experiences and improve safety on the pipeline network. All existing Learning Briefs are shared in the Members' centre. If you have one to contribute, please email secretary@ukopa.co.uk.

Crack detection software

Tim Rudd of Valero and Brian Kerrigan from Frontline Integrity came together to share work recently undertaken on providing a digitised end to end solution that safely and effectively delivers a process for assessing and determining pipeline crossings. This is amongst the first digitised end to end solutions in the pipeline industry and one that provides a glimpse of future possibilities.



Popular PERO Courses

The nine Pipeline Emergency Response Officer courses have been fully subscribed over the last year. More than 1,100 UKOPA Members have been trained since 2010, each benefitting from excellent practical experiences, insights and advice from the HSE, Police and Fire Service.



Andy Fuller is stepping in to succeed the irreplaceable Donal Cullen who have now retired after 30+ years' service to the pipeline industry and will be running the course with Tony Taylor. Donal and Tony were recognised with an award for their services to the industry at the Member's dinner in the evening.

Swansea University

Delegates were delighted to welcome speaker Dr Elizabeth Sackett from Swansea University who shared Carrie Prescott's UKOPA sponsored MSc research into 'Mechanical properties and weld quality of vintage seam-welded pipe'. The research and insights gained will be useful for UKOPA Members to better understand longevity of seam welds and their impacts on pipeline integrity. A copy of this, and all presentations, are available on UKOPA's website.



Volunteers needed!

If you would like to get more involved with UKOPA and help shape good practice within the UK's pipeline sector, we are looking for new Chairs to oversee the Fault & Risk and Pipeline Integrity Working Groups.

UKOPA is also looking for members to join the newly formed Communications Working Group that's been established to further improve communications within UKOPA and to external stakeholders. If you are interested in being involved in these or other Working Groups, please contact secretary@ukopa.co.uk.

UKOPA

United Kingdom Onshore Pipeline Operators' Association

Dates for the diary - We have a busy schedule of forthcoming events including

- 19 Nov 2024 - Board Liaison meeting with HSE
- 26 -27 Feb 2025 - "Inspection Techniques & Innovation" (North West)
- 15 May 2025 - "Aging Assets & Repurposing". DNV Spadeadam, Cumbria
- 8 - 9 Oct 2025 - Board meeting and Members' meeting (Midlands)