

Hazardous Installations
Directorate

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Head of Gas and Pipelines Unit
Mr Tony Hetherington

TO

«DUTYHOLDER_»
«AddressBlock»

Date 10 June 2010

Reference

Attn: «CONTACT»

Dear Sirs

NEW GUIDELINES FOR PIPELINE OPERATORS - PIPELINE ANCHOR HAZARDS

I'm writing to advise you that both HSE and the Department of Transport (DfT) have published new pipeline anchor hazard guidelines on their websites. The guidance documents, which can be accessed via the web-links shown at the end of this letter, were written and compiled under the direction of a Working Group established to address recommendation 2008/109 from the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) Report into the Young Lady Anchor incident near Teesport in June 2007. Whilst the HSE guidance is aimed principally towards Pipeline Operators and the DfT guidance to Port/Harbour Authorities, both documents collectively aim to set out good practice guidance on the design, management and protection of pipelines from anchor hazards.

I would take this opportunity to ask Pipeline Operators to review any relevant pipeline risk assessments and Major Accident Prevention Documents (MAPD) against these new guidelines and to update assessments and/or any information, where considered appropriate. There is no requirement to formally respond to this letter but HSE Pipelines Inspectors will follow-up on progress during future routine inspections and contacts.

Background

The Young Lady incident involved anchor damage to the BP Central Area Transmission System (CATS) Gas Pipeline which resulted in the pipeline being shutdown for a number of months before repairs could be completed. Following publication of the MAIB report, a working group which comprised of representatives from the Department of Transport (DfT), Department of Climate Change (DECC), Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA) and the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) was set up to conduct a review of the risk assessment process for the protection of pipelines from surface vessel interaction.

One of the key findings of the group was that there appeared to be relatively limited coverage of anchor hazards across UK Codes & Standards and other publicly available guidance. Also, recent incidents highlighted that the threat to pipeline integrity from anchor damage can be significant thus reinforcing the importance that anchor hazards be adequately addressed at design and within Major Accident Prevention Documents (MAPD).

In consideration to those findings, the development of two separate but related areas of guidance followed; with one area focused towards pipeline operators and the other to Ports/Harbour Authorities with a new section 7.9 added to the Guide to Good Practice on Port Marine Operations (prepared in conjunction with the Port Marine Safety Code). Relevant harbour authorities need to be aware of the presence of any subsea pipelines within their area of responsibility and the new guidance should help them to recognise and assess the potential for damage to those pipelines from shipping and fishing operations, and the associated potential consequences of such damage as part of its navigational Safety Management System.

Pipeline Operator:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pipelines/pipeline-anchor-hazards.pdf>

Port/Harbour Authority:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/shippingports/ports/goodpracticemarineoperations.pdf>

If you require any further information in the meantime please don't hesitate to contact me or your HSE Pipelines focal point Inspector.

Yours faithfully



Douglas Souden
HM Principal Inspector of Health & Safety
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cc Tony Hetherington, Head of HSE Gas & Pipelines Unit
 Steve Walker, Head of HSE Offshore Division
 John Lawson, Chairman of UK Pipeline Users Group (PLUG)
 Neil Jackson, Chairman of UKOPA