UKOPA

Communication Support

Introductions

- Specialist communications agency that works to raise awareness of organisations and build engagement with target audiences
- Core areas we support include PR, social & stakeholder communications
- Work to add specialist outsourced communications support / resource
- Experience of working in the sector having supported BPA for 15+ years and UKOPA on various projects
- Appointed to help improve communications following member feedback
- Team in place to support UKOPA’s communication objectives

The Brief

- Improve members' access to information produced
- Increase awareness of the work UKOPA does amongst members / their organisations, so they are more engaged
- Improve links with member communication teams so materials can be shared across member companies
- Produce a communications plan for the organisation, incorporating key elements
- Encourage members to share info within their organisations
- Not to overtly burden members with additional communication procedures
- Review UKOPA website, members area and public facing sections

Develop communication materials

- Develop brand collateral
  - Logo(s)
  - Presentation template
  - Newsletter template
  - Email template
  - Email signatures
  - Ensure website reflects organisations priorities, messages and has up to date content

UKOPA

UKOPA
United Kingdom Onshore Pipeline Operators' Association

Supporting UKOPA meetings

- Comms team presence at UKOPA member meetings to provide a summary newsletters of key agreements / developments
- To provide summary of event for cascading to those attending or unable to do so
- Develop .pdf to be sent to attendees or an email with links to the various articles hosted on the www.ukopa.co.uk website
- Develop distribution network to include other stakeholders within member organisations (members to advise on wider distribution targets)
- Post updates on the news section of the website

UKOPA
United Kingdom Onshore Pipeline Operators' Association

UKOPA 2023 Technical Seminar
Wednesday 24th May 2023
British Motor Museum,
Gaydon, CV35 0BJ

We were delighted to see 62 delegates from more than 20 member companies gather for this year's UKOPA Technical Seminar. As always, the event provided the perfect opportunity to share the latest research and good practice guides between members and other relevant stakeholders.

This year's event was held at the fabulous British Motor Museum, which provided the perfect backdrop for sharing technical developments and innovations. The day was filled with informative and essential safety information that collectively helps make the UK a global leader in the management, maintenance, and operation of business-critical pipelines.

Many thanks to all who took the time to attend the seminar. If you were unable to attend, or feel the information presented would be of relevance to colleagues, copies of all the presentations are available in the member's section of the UKOPA website.

Darren Thomas, Chair, UKOPA

The do's and don'ts with dents

The technical seminar kicked off with a report from **Tim Rudd** and **Akin Oshinowo** on behalf of the Pipeline Integrity Working Group (PIWG). The pair gave a comprehensive guide on how to implement a dent management strategy, including how to assess dents, the quality of welds associated with dents, as well as details on fatigue assessments.

Edition 2 of Good Practice Guide (GPG) 004 provides pipeline operators and management teams with an improved and easy to use document, including flowcharts and updated tables, that provides clearer guidance for operators on when to intervene and how best to do so. The presentation concluded with a relevant and engaging case study that clearly illustrated the importance of effective and timely intervention.

Covering depth of cover issues

How to manage reduced depth of cover is a topic that regularly concerns member organisations, so it was particularly interesting to hear a report from **Chris Rodgerson** updating the seminar on recommendations from the PIWG. Chris highlighted the challenges faced from water, wind and gravity on pipelines as well as the impacts of human activity and natural shrinkage.

GPG 001 Edition 2, will also contain good practice guidance on marking and managing depth of cover issues that members can use when supporting landowners working and living near to such pipelines. Chris continued by outlining the updated GPG 006 Edition 2 with further guidance on impact protection slabs and good practice in terms of design and materials that can be used as well as installation and longer term maintenance.

Tim Rudd concluded the session by providing an overview of the newly published GPG 34, temporary life of repairs.

Assessing risks from Solar Power and Powerlines

As the sun shone down on us, **Patrick Lydon** gave a timely update on the challenges and potential risks imposed by solar farms, recent updates to the good practice guide as well as sharing experiences of how DC currents (GPG 031) from solar farms can pose a significant risk to pipeline operations.

The full guidance, (GPG 014 Edition 2) soon to be published, highlights how PV installers should contact pipeline operators to highlight details of proposed electrical systems, the location of cables and associated works before works commence. This is to ensure the good practice revisions and new BS EN ISO 21857 guidelines are being followed to minimise interference.

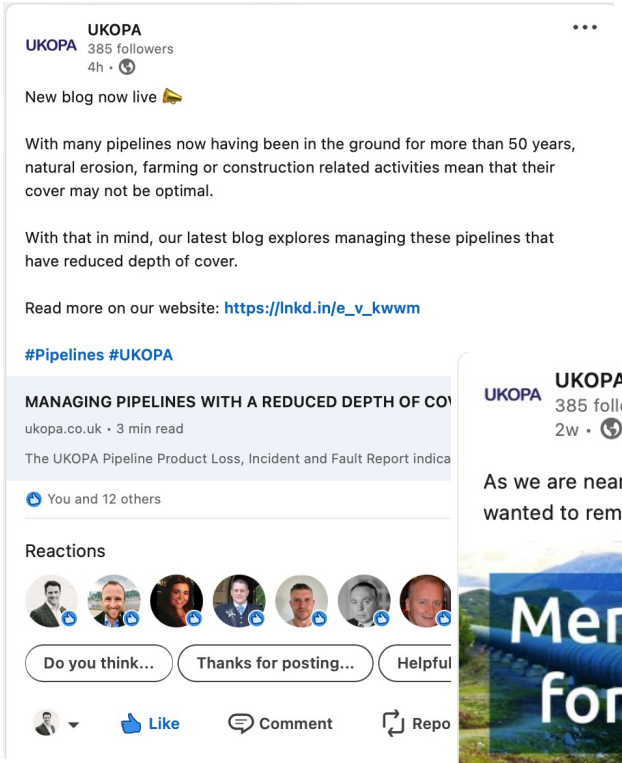
The session concluded with insights into how fires near to overhead powerlines and underground pipelines have the potential to create arc strikes from the powerlines to the buried pipelines that act as a metallic conductor. Advice reflects that farmers and landowners should be made aware of the risks.

E-mail cascade

- Develop a UKOPA branded email template the aligns with the website's look, feel and branding
- Opportunity to add stories and activity summaries to the template, along with supporting images
- Issued to all UKOPA members with the option to also forward on to colleagues
- Core information hosted on the website with information available on the most popular links clicked / articles read
- Builds the website content and helps keep it fresh

LinkedIn

- Better utilize the company's LinkedIn channel by providing regular updates including:
  - Thought leadership on pipeline management
  - Share company news and direction
  - Share people stories
  - Share member specific success stories
- Build engagement with audiences and relevant and informative content
- Share blog content via LinkedIn channel – showing authority and expertise in the sector
- Encouraging members to like or share content will help cascade the post to wider and related audiences



Website

- Add additional news / blog articles to the website. Opportunity to provide a platform for guest experts / members.
- To help with the drafting of the articles and liaise with members over bi-lined article content
- Content can help populate LinkedIn / social media posts as well as electronic newsletters
- Content also linked to member organisations for SEO purposes and to forge closer ties
- Content will also be approved by ‘press teams’ of member organisations and hopefully shared via their social platforms

Media Relations

- Use established media platforms to share UKOPA good practice and advice to stakeholders. Opportunities include:

Publication	Audience	Messages
Farmers Guardian / Farmers Weekly	Weekly farming magazines(s), targeting broad section of farming community with news and advice. C 30,000 readership	• Advice around pipelines, digging, ditch clearing, mole ploughs, fencing etc
Utility Week	Comprehensive, searchable archive, analysis and commentary, and blogs for senior managers across the water, gas and electricity industries. Tech talk approach	• Advice about contacting pipeline operators prior to commencing works
Housebuilder	Official Mag for NHBC - covers news on new build schemes, services, standards and initiatives of importance to housebuilders	• Advice about contacting pipeline operators prior to commencing works • Obligations and requirements
Land & Business Magazine	Official journal of the Country Land and Business Association (CLA). Contains advice and guidance to members	• Advice about contacting pipeline operators prior to commencing works

- Targeting quarterly messages and updates

Article example

FORESTRY & TIMBER NEWS

April 2023 Issue 116

IN THIS ISSUE:

CAREER DEVELOPMENT & WORKFORCE

CONFOR AWARDS WINNERS

APPG ON FORESTRY & TREE PLANTING

Confor
Promoting forestry and wood

PLANTING OR MANAGING TREES NEAR TO HIGH PRESSURE PIPELINES

Landowners or contractors looking to plant trees and shrubs in the vicinity of high-pressure pipelines should be aware of best practice guidelines. **Phil Taylor**, Chair of UKOPA's Infringement Working Group, outlines some good practice guidelines.

Plant and tree roots can cause damage to the coatings used to protect pipelines and ultimately the pipeline itself. To not only protect the UK's pipeline network but also to ensure operatives and the environment are safe from incidents, awareness and consideration of how planting and maintenance work may impact these pipelines is essential.

The United Kingdom Onshore Pipeline Operators' Association (UKOPA) is the authoritative industry body behind some of Britain's most essential energy infrastructure. Overseeing a network of more than 27,000km of pipelines operated by UKOPA members, the organisation helps ensure the safe and efficient distribution of gas, oil and chemicals through the pipelines to strategic points across the country.

Protecting and maintaining these pipelines is vital to the UK's economy, so UKOPA works with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure they are aware of the pipelines and the actions needed to be taken if working in their close vicinity (typically within 50m of the pipeline). Key activities where good practices must be followed include planting trees, clearing ditches and erecting fences.

In addition, heavy machinery can also cause issues if tracking over the pipeline. The heavy equipment can compress the earth above the pipeline or create deep ruts on softer ground, both of which can induce stresses in the pipeline. Before operating heavy machinery in the vicinity of the pipeline, contact the pipeline operator who will advise on the safest course of action.

If planting any new trees or shrubs in the pipeline's wayleave/easement, written permission should be obtained from the pipeline operator. Any approval granted by the pipeline operator is likely to include retaining the rights to remove, at any point in the future, all trees which might become a risk to the pipeline and its integrity.

The following should act as general guidance for tree planting, based from the centre line of the pipeline.

- Shallow rooting hedges and ground plants (e.g. blackthorn, broom, elder, hazel, etc) may be planted, if necessary, directly across the pipeline.
- Fruit trees, such as dwarf apple stocks, may be planted within up to 3 metres of the pipeline.
- Christmas trees may be planted within up to 3 metres of the pipeline on the strict understanding that these are clear-felled at intervals not exceeding 7 years.
- The following trees (and those of a similar size, whether deciduous or evergreen) are not permitted to be planted within 6 metres of the pipeline: ash, beech, birch, most conifers, elm, maple, lime, horse chestnut, oak, apple and pear trees.

- Within 6-10 metres they may be planted as individual specimens or as a single row.
- Dense mass planting may be carried out at distances of greater than 10 metres.
- Poplar and willow trees should not be planted within 10 metres of the pipeline.

UKOPA's members that operate the pipelines are on hand to help and support landowners, or those working on their behalf, with any questions they may have. If there is any doubt about planting trees or if you are proposing to fell trees or remove shrubs within 50m of the high-pressure pipelines, landowners should contact a member of the pipeline operator's team who will be able to provide further help.

In addition to tree planting, the UKOPA website has published guidelines and videos showing how to help keep people and the environment safe if working in the vicinity of pipelines, whether erecting fencing, clearing ditches or undertaking excavation work near to the pipelines.

The buried pipelines operate at high pressure, up to 100 Bar (which is equivalent to 50 times that of a car tyre) and may often be found at less than the nominal depth of one metre, in particular where there are natural depressions in the ground, or at drainage ditches and water courses. Due to the flammable and potentially hazardous nature of the products contained, anyone undertaking works near to a pipeline needs to be aware of the potential dangers, what to do, and who to contact before commencing works.

Contacting the pipeline operator and seeking advice will reduce the risk of a serious incident, environmental damage, or potential fines for the landowner or contractor.

To ensure the best and safest outcomes, anyone looking to undertake works close to a buried pipeline should:

- Give the pipeline operators a minimum of seven days' notice before works begin to ensure they are available to support the proposed activities.
- Never assume consent is given - works should not begin until permission is granted.
- Be aware that pipeline depths vary; they are often found only a metre below the surface and are not always protected with slabs.

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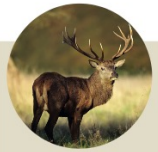
- Pipelines do not always run in straight lines between marker posts. Pipeline operators are there to help mark out the exact location.
- It's the landowner's responsibility to ensure that contractors operating on their land comply with regulations.

If there is any doubt about the location of a pipeline or what can or can't be done in its vicinity, contact the pipeline operator or visit Line Search at https://lsbud.co.uk. By working together, we can ensure there is no accidental damage to life, livelihoods or the environment.

Further information can be found at *www.ukopa.co.uk.*

TREE PLANTING NEAR HIGH PRESSURE PIPELINES

Scan the QR code above for a full Good Practice Guide for anyone who may want to plant trees and shrubs in the vicinity of high pressure (HP) pipelines.



ISLANDERS VOTE AGAINST RED DEER CULL

Deer numbers in South Uist have made headlines in recent weeks as a petition calling for a widespread cull was signed by close to 200 residents of the community-owned estate.

A key motivator behind the debate was the prevalence of Lyme disease on the island, which is amongst the worst affected in the Western Isles. There were also complaints about woodland damage and grazing on croft land.

Stòras Uibhist, the company which handles the day-to-day responsibilities of the South Uist Estate, acknowledged that red deer numbers – believed to be 1,200 across the 93,000 acre site – were too high but pushed for targeted culls in place of total eradication.

During the recent winter months, 166 hinds, 53 calves and 97 stags were shot in an effort to control the population, and plans are in place to repeat those numbers each year.

A referendum on 20 March resulted in a vote of 379-140 to save the animals.

Reacting to the vote, Scottish Gamekeepers Association (SGA) Chairman Alex Hogg said: "As the body representing SGA members and their families, who would have paid the price of deer eradication with their jobs, we are relieved for them at the outcome.

"The gamekeeping team have carried out a record reduction cull this winter, in difficult and uncertain circumstances. They deserve credit for that. It was pleasing to hear Storas Uibhist also allude to the other work professional gamekeepers carry out; work which is of benefit to the wider community but is not always reflected solely in balance sheets."

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2024 - Website / On-line

- Audit the www.ukopa.co.uk website to ensure it meets the required functionality, imagery, performance, messaging and language as well as facts and figures
- Ensure sections are populated with most up to date information, look to remove obsolete or outdated information
- Populate news sections with updates on behalf of the organisation
- Install analytics to gauge visitors and popular pages
- Consider social media requirements – are they necessary / updated

2024 - Website

- Consider enhancing functionality of website to include a private chat forum. Gives members the opportunity to:
  - Discuss issues or challenges they face with industry peers
  - Post questions / share answers
  - Share good practice and guidance
- Will aim to encourage greater use of the website
- Develop more of an online community amongst members

Sample communications plan

	October	November	December	January	February	March
Key Dates	UKOPA Board Meeting					
Prep materials	Development of brand logos and marketing materials	Email template designed for newsletters		Review of website		Development of online discussion forum
Newsletters	Members' newsletter drafted following members meeting			Newsletter issued to all members - the year ahead		
Magazine feature articles		Feature in Farmers Guardian on perils of post knocking		Feature in Housebuilder on working with pipeline operators on schemes		Feature in Land & Business on working with Landowners
Social media	LinkedIn fortnightly content					
Website blogs / news items	Managing depth of cover	Decommissioning & abandonment	Advice for working with landowners	Being aware of impact of Solar PV farms	HSE – Management of illegal pipeline tapings	Dents and damage – what's the best method of assessment

What we need from you..?

- Follow the company’s LinkedIn page
  - Like, comment and share posts
- Share contact details for your organization’s communication team
  - Used for approvals
  - Onward cascading
- Volunteers to contribute blogs, articles and news pieces
  - (with prompt sign off!)
- Share your news with us so we can help develop and cascade

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