NOGEPA
NETHERLANDS OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION ASSOCIATION

INDUSTRY STANDARD NO. 35

Alerting SAR for drifters

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This document will be controlled in accordance with the NOGEPA Industry Standard No. 80 on Standards and Document Control.

Terms and definitions

AIS	Automatic Identification System
ETV	Emergency Towing Vessel
HMI	Hoofd Mijnbouw Installatie
KNRM	Koninklijke Nederlandse Redding Maatschappij
NHV	Noordzee Helikopters Vlaanderen
NOGEPA	Nederlandse Olie en Gas Exploratie en Productie Associatie
NUC	Not Under Command
OIM	Offshore Installation Manager
RED MINING INSTALLATION	A Mining Installation with more than 16 people on board
SAR	Search and Rescue
SARIS	Search and Rescue Information System

Important Nomenclature used in this Standard

In the context of this Standard and when so used to describe a method or practice:	
'shall'	means that such method or practice reflects a mandatory provision of law (in Dutch: *dwingend recht*). Such method or practice is mandatory for those who are the addressees of such provision (mostly the operators). A Standard can describe or quote, but not amend, mandatory provisions. When an operator in exceptional cases for technical, operational or HSE reasons cannot comply, exceptions shall be documented and reported, and risks mitigated. Please note that this does not release the operator from the obligation to comply with the law. *
'should'	means that such method or practice reflects a Good Operating Practice. An operator is generally expected to apply such method or practice, but a specific situation may require a specific alternative. In other words: the operator complies or explains, and documents the explanation. *
'could'	means that such method or practice is of an advisory nature or mentioned by way of example. An operator is not obliged to comply and is not obliged to explain if he does not comply.
* Please refer to paragraph 2.3 of Standard 80 (Standards and Document Control), for further explanation on an exception of a 'shall' provision, or on a comply-or-explain of a 'should' provision.	

1. Executive Summary

Drifting vessels are a risk for the safety of offshore Mining Installations. When a vessel is not under control it could potentially collide with an offshore Mining Installation. Such a situation is deemed to exist as soon as information becomes available that a drifting vessel may pass a Mining Installation at a distance of 2 nautical miles or less.

Normally the preferred way to evacuate an offshore installation is by (SAR) helicopter[1]. As it may take some time to evacuate all persons present on an offshore mining installation it has been agreed to declare such a situation an emergency. It may be required to e.g. mobilize one or more SAR helicopters and direct them offshore to the installation(s) threatened by the drifting vessel and start evacuating personnel to nearby offshore installations.

The OIM/HMI of the affected Mining Installation takes the decision to evacuate the personnel. The decision to fly the SAR helicopter for evacuation should be made in consultation with the Netherlands Coastguard. In case of an evacuation at daytime the Operator (OMI/HMI or operator's Emergency Response Team) should before scrambling the SAR contact helicopter operators and other NOGEPA members to identify how much helicopter capacity is available for evacuation and determine if this is a better option than using the SAR helicopter. If using the SAR helicopter is the best option, the Netherlands Coastguard will mobilize the SAR helicopter. This Standard provides guidance on when to alert the Netherlands Coastguard and in the process of decision making whether the offshore Mining Installation should be evacuated using the SAR helicopter.

[1] From 1 July 2015 the SAR helicopter is provided by Noordzee Helikopters Vlaanderen, contracted by the Dutch government for 5 years. The Netherlands Coastguard deploys the SAR helicopter. NHV delivers 24/7 services with at least 1 helicopter at heliport Den Helder and at least 1 helicopter at heliport Pistoolhaven.

2. Scope and application

2.1 Scope

The purpose of this Standard is to provide guidance on when to alert the Netherlands Coastguard in the event of a drifting vessel that could potentially collide with an offshore Mining Installation. Due to the time required to have (SAR) helicopters on location, such a situation is deemed to exist as soon as information becomes available that a drifting vessel may pass a Mining Installation at a distance of 2 nautical miles or less. Also, the Standard provides guidance and in the process of decision making whether an offshore Mining Installation should be evacuated using the SAR helicopter.

In case of a drifting vessel, not under control, the OIM/HMI of the affected Mining Installation may have to decide on evacuation of personnel. A decision to fly the SAR for evacuation will be made in consultation with the Netherlands Coastguard.

2.2 Application

This Standard is applicable to situations that a drifting vessel could potentially collide with an offshore Mining Installation.

In these situations the following assumptions are made:

1. Use of this procedure implies an "Emergency Evacuation"
2. Helicopters from both heliports at 20 minutes notice (24/7)
3. Affecter Mining Installation at an average of 90 nautical miles
4. 40 minutes helicopter airborne transit time at an average of 135 knots
5. In case of an "Emergency Evacuation" the average evacuation flight will take 15 minutes and evacuate up to 8 persons per helicopter to a nearby installation
6. "GREEN MINING INSTALLATION" is an installation with a maximum of 16 persons on board
7. "RED MINING INSTALLATION" is an installation with more than 16 persons on board
8. Minimum SAR warning time needed for a "GREEN MINING INSTALLATION" is 2 hours until possible impact
9. Minimum SAR warning time needed for a "RED MINING INSTALLATION" is 2 hours until possible impact plus 15 minutes extra for every 16 persons on board of the installation
10. Consideration needed for evacuation of vessel's personnel

Variables:

11. Accuracy of NUC vessel's drifting track.
12. Likelihood of personnel abandoning NUC vessel
13. Each Oil & Gas Operator's Emergency Response Procedure

3. Evacuation

In case of a drifting vessel, not under control, the OIM/HMI of the effected Mining Installation may have to decide on evacuation of personnel. Depending on the urgency 2 distinctive methods may be used to evacuate personnel, "Precautionary Down-Manning"or "Emergency Evacuation".

Precautionary down-manning

Precautionary down-manning may be required in a situation where there is no immediate threat to human life or health at the very moment but there is a real possibility of the situation deteriorating and requiring an emergency evacuation in due time. In order to reduce the number of people having to be transferred during an emergency evacuation a down-manning is the first step.

Emergency Evacuation

An immediate or very imminent threat to human life or health requiring quick evacuation of personnel from the place of danger.

The following factors should be considered by the OIM/HMI in consultation with NL Coastguard when down-manning or preparing for an emergency evacuation:

1. The amount of time that will pass until the possibility of an accident becomes a reality.
2. The transit time of the helicopter and/or other (SAR) units until arriving on-scene
3. The weather conditions
4. The passenger capacity of the helicopter taking personnel from the place of danger to a place of safety
5. The en-route times for the helicopter taking personnel from the place of danger to a place of safety
6. The endurance of the helicopter
7. Refueling possibilities and the time to complete precautionary down-manning will take

4. Evacuating Procedure

The procedure to follow for a drifting vessel (NUC) offshore that could endanger an offshore Mining Installation can be broken down into the following 4 phases:

1. Reporting phase
2. Communication/Awareness phase
3. Launch/Scrambling phase
4. Recovery phase

4.1 Reporting phase

The Netherlands Coastguard should be informed via;

- Incident vessel: vessel declares NUC via phone-radio etc.
- AIS: vessel changes AIS status to NUC vessel
- Third parties: offshore Mining Installation, coastguard unit, third parties

4.2 Communication/Awareness phase

The Netherlands Coastguard should gather information and take actions and decisions:

- Determine problem and estimated repair time of the NUC vessel
- Verify and communicate possibilities to anchor with the NUC vessel
- Verify and communicate possibilities to tow the NUC vessel with the ETV
- Determine drift of NUC vessel (direction/speed):
  1. By AIS track-analyzer
  2. Via information vessel
  3. Via real time . SARIS – AIS – plotting
- Determine likelihood of collision with Mining Installation
- Predicted time of impact
- Coastguard will promptly alert OIM/HMI

The following information should be shared and decisions should be taken by the NL Coastguard in consultation with Operator concerned

- Alert OIM/HMI and/or control room/company (emergency number)
- Determine situation in relation with total crew members and evacuation time
- Determine weather conditions on-scene
- Define options and actions in consultation with OIM/HMI, coastguard and Oil & Gas operator's Emergency Response Team (evacuation means, tow capacity, other installations etc.)

- In case of an evacuation at daytime the Operator (OMI/HMI or operator's Emergency Response Team) should contact helicopter operators and other NOGEPA members to identify how much helicopter capacity is available to evacuate the effected Mining Installation

Note: the OIM/HMI of the Mining Installation concerned in consultation with the NL Coastguard should decide on an "Precautionary down-manning" or "Emergency Evacuation". The OIM/HMI has the final say in this decision.

The following should be taken into account in this phase:

- In case of "Emergency Evacuation" of a flight can take up to 8 persons per NVH SAR Airbus AS365N Dauphins (total number is determined by weather conditions and commander's discretion
- SAR alerting time is 20 min. 24/7
- Maximum endurance helicopter is 3 hours
- Flight time between heliport Den Helder and on-scene or between heliport Pistoolhaven and on-scene
- Total evacuation time till last crew member will be evacuated
- How many extra air assets can be mobilised
- Mobilisation of KNRM assets

4.3 Launch/scrambling phase

The following essential information should be reported by the NL Coastguard to helicopter SAR crew via template:

1. What is the tasking (SAR crew should be formally told that it is an "Emergency Evacuation")
2. Name and call sign of the NUC vessel
3. Name, position and communication details of the Mining Installation
4. Position or bearing/distance from Den Helder
5. Total number of persons on board of the Mining Installation and/or the NUC vessel (see point 2)
6. Refuel locations
7. Cargo on board of the NUC vessel
8. Weather on-scene
9. What other SAR assets are involved
10. Evacuation of NUC vessel in consultation with the master of the vessel

Evacuation to nearest Mining Installation/vessel/land

In case a Mining Installation is endangered the preferred muster-locations after evacuation are in order of priority:

1. Manned Mining Installation with sickbay/medic
2. Normally manned Mining Installation
3. Normally unmanned Mining Installation
4. Other safe locations
   Considerations:
   - The path of the NUC vessel might cross various Mining Installations
   - On a "RED MINING INSTALLATION"all efforts have to be performed to reduce the crew before the moment of impact and it is likely the last persons will have to evacuate by the Mining Installation's own lifeboat

4.4 Recovery phase

1. NL Coastguard in liaison with OIM/HMI or company determine where the Mining Installations's personnel have been dropped off
2. Organize a commercial helicopter pick up in cooperation with the Oil & Gas operator's Emergency Response Team
3. Organize accommodation for the NUC vessel crew in cooperation with the vessel owner