

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

The Bulletin of  — The offshore energy branch of 

The Offshore Co-ordinating Group (OCG) was launched on February 8th in Aberdeen with the General Secretary of the Scottish Trades Union Council (STUC) taking the lead as STUC will provide secretarial support and resource to the group. At the launch the STUC General Secretary Grahame Smith said; “The collapse in the oil price since summer 2014 has had profound consequences for the oil and gas workforce. There have been thousands of job losses, unprecedented attacks on terms and conditions and growing fears over the safety regime.

“Recognising the scale of the challenges, the offshore unions (Unite, RMT, GMB, BALPA and Nautilus), supported by the STUC, have come together to form the Offshore Co-ordinating Group which is launched today. Through co-ordinating campaigns and policy development, the OCG will support the fightback on jobs, safety and terms and conditions and ensure that trade unions make a positive contribution to achieving the UK and Scottish Governments’ objective of maximising economic recovery.

“The OCG strongly believes there is a future worth fighting for and, in the State of the Industry report published today, a number of areas for priority action are highlighted. These include the necessity of building and maintaining excellent safety standards and processes, adhering to collective agreements and developing a coherent plan for maximising economic recovery.

“It is essential that Government, employers, regulators and agencies listen to the united voice of the offshore workforce.”

The OCG unions then set out their message to the offshore workforce with Senior Officials from each of the trade unions supporting the launch; “there is future worth fighting for, and the trade unions can and will support workers in this fight.”

The publication released on the day by the trade unions set out the collective position of the group, stating that the OCG believes the gravity of the situation facing offshore workers is not yet fully appreciated by politicians and the wider public. The OCG is especially concerned that;

- Fear of redundancy is critically undermining offshore health and safety as workers become reluctant to report actual and potential safety breaches. There are on going serious concerns

OCG

OFFSHORE COORDINATING GROUP

The offshore trade unions working together



- One voice for all offshore workers
- Maximising economic benefit
- Driving common standards
- Safeguarding health and safety

• TRADE UNIONS PROTECTING OUR FUTURE •

- over helicopter safety;
 - Imposed changes to terms and conditions (e.g. pay cuts) and working practices – especially the increasing use of ‘three on, three off’ shift rotation which leads inevitably to workers working 12 hour shifts 21 days in a row (minimum) – are having profoundly negative effects on the offshore workforce and undermining both safety and longstanding collective bargaining mechanisms;
 - Costs in the UKCS remain significantly higher than other jurisdictions such as Norway; the difference cannot be accounted for by higher wages or more stringent regulatory standards. Engaging the workforce in identifying obvious inefficiencies and the introduction of common standards – akin to the Norwegian regime – could potentially lower costs across the UKCS;
 - UK seafarers are increasingly excluded from

the North Sea due to employers using gaps in employment legislation to employ non-UK seafarers below the UK minimum wage.

The OCG is committed to dealing with these issues as a matter of priority and called for;

- *Employers must abide by collective agreements*
- *Health and Safety must remain paramount*
- *Employment of foreign nationals on exploitative sub-national minimum wage contracts must end as must the flagging out of helicopters*
- *We must have a coherent plan for maximising economic benefit to include; standardisation, simplification, diversification and maximise employment opportunities in decommissioning*
- *Workers made redundant or at risk must be supported*
- *Oil and gas companies should cease demanding cuts from contractors which have a detrimental impact on jobs and safety*

The OCG believes there is a future worth fighting for and each of the trade unions involved is committed to protecting that future for all offshore workers, from the sea bed to the sky and everything in between. However, trade union officials cannot deliver or protect that on their own; workers MUST get involved in this fight.

JOIN A TRADE UNION –
SUPPORT THE OCG TO SUPPORT YOU

OCG

A NEW BEGINNING or SAME OLD SAME OLD?

Mike McCaig: Branch Secretary

I welcome the OCG because we've got to tell all workers out there that we need to organise for the future and we've got to work together. There's no point in one union trying to protect one area.

I know this Offshore Coordinating Group has just been set up and we'll have to give it time but I'm entitled to my opinion and this is the Branch journal and I'm the Branch Secretary so I'm going to say how I see it.

I honestly do hope the OCG is a success because if it's not then its curtains for all of us! I've been shouting about the unions working together for ages because I don't think any union on its own in this sector can have the influence that's needed to make some of these rogue employers tow the line when it comes to terms and conditions. I still believe if these outfits had their way they would bin every British and EU worker and bring in workers from places like the Philippines, India and Bangladesh and pay them slave labour rates.

All this crap about – 'Safety is our number one priority' – it is total baloney! The number one priority for these oil companies is making money and lots of it, let's be honest about it. And one way of making more money is to pay less, that's less on your hourly rate, less on your pension, less for your holidays, less for your stand by and your sick pay and all the rest.

The boys we've heard from working on the supply vessels will tell you this. They were forced to take a 15% cut to rates, cuts to travel, longer trips and all extras like a bonus removed. So they took the hit and then what? REDUNDANCY! And guess what? The notice pay was at the new low rate! Then within a couple of weeks some of the boats got short contracts but did the lads get back? NO! Filipino crews all round now! Its really difficult to get the workers on the ships organised I know that but if we're not careful it will be happening on the dive ships, the ROV ships, then the mobile rigs and before you know it the platforms will go the same way.

That's how I welcome the OCG because we've got to tell all workers out there that we need to organise for the future and we've got to work together. There's no point in one union trying to protect one area, we're all in the shit here. Getting all the unions together is the start and now we've got to bring workers into the unions and get them educated and ready for the future. What's happening just now is bad,

but if we're not ready to resist it will get a lot worse. And when the oil price goes shooting back up and these big companies are rolling in the mega bucks again are they going to say – hey lads, you got us through that rough patch so here's your holidays back or here's a big rise on your rate – are they hell!

Like I say I want the OCG to be a roaring success but for that to happen the people working across the sector need to get involved and need to start recruiting and organising. When I said I didn't think any union on its own could change things I mean that and I mean RMT as well. I know RMT are strong with the divers and in some subsea areas, but you can't fight attacks when you're sitting in the house because there's no work! Every worker in every sector needs to start thinking about the big picture or they will wake up one day and realise they are on their own. Now is not the time for – I'm alright Jack – now is the time for building and standing together so that we can all say –WE'RE ALRIGHT JACK!

It's a good start with the OCG and if the unions can push on and put all their organising differences to the side and focus on this as one big industry then maybe, just maybe, the workforce will buy it and start to get organised. But you'll need workers involved to make it happen because it will not work just with a bunch of union officials meeting every month! We must have people on every installation doing the graft and taking the message out there. We need workers educating workers on the ground because they are not going to do it a home after doing 3-WEEKS!

I am personally all for the OCG and I've told our Regional Organiser that he's got my support. I really do want it to work and I'm more than willing to get involved in any way I can. Yes I've been critical of other unions and yes I've said it out loud but we all have a common enemy today and that's what we need to focus on so let's get after it. We can use the RMT publications, we can use Unite information sheets or anything else you want, the thing is though we need action and we need it quick! So I for one will give it a go as we desperately need a new beginning –

We DO NOT NEED the same old, same old.

RMT General Secretary, Mick Cash, briefs the members

Update on crisis in the offshore oil and gas industry

Further to circular no.056/16 of 10th February 2016, offshore employers continue to exploit the extremely low oil price to cut staff, employment rights and terms and conditions. The estimate of job losses has recently been revised, with over 75,000 jobs in the industry and across the supply chain believed to have been lost in the UK Continental Shelf since late 2014.

Following the raft of detrimental contractual changes imposed by employers with no consultation with workers or their unions, RMT has been active in Westminster and Holyrood to raise the impact of the offshore crisis on jobs and skills. Briefings, questions and motions have been regularly circulated to MPs and MSPs to demonstrate the effect of oil and gas companies North Sea policies on the workforce, including on offshore supply vessels.

We have repeatedly made the point to the UK and Scottish Governments that improved respect for employment rights, better industrial relations and protecting the skills base is essential if the 'maximising economic recovery' policy is to benefit the national economy and not just multi-national energy companies and their shareholders.

Through our seat on the Scottish Government's Energy Jobs Taskforce, RMT has consistently called for measures to reduce the impact on workers and their families of the savage cuts across the offshore oil and gas industry. It is essential that these key skills are not lost and that offshore workers made redundant are not thrown on the scrap heap. We welcomed the Scottish Government's announcement of a £12m programme for offshore workers to be re-employed in manufacturing and engineering but more must be done, across the UK to find decent jobs for offshore and supply chain workers who are the real victims of this crisis.

The UK Government's Energy Bill is going through Parliament and this will have a significant impact on the ability of any Government to regulate and



It is unacceptable that such a critically important industry should be left to the vagaries of the free market with declining regulatory oversight.

control the commercial activities of oil and gas companies and their contractors in the North Sea. We are working with the RMT Parliamentary Group on amendments to the Bill that will require the commercial regulator, the Oil and Gas Authority (OGA) to take action against companies that enforce policies which effect employment conditions, skills and the long term sustainability of the industry, including areas such as decommissioning and Carbon Capture and Storage.

We have also briefed cross-party committees of the UK and Scottish Parliaments on the safety as well as economic impact of the current crisis. The imposition of the 3-weeks on 3-weeks off shift pattern, unprecedented on production platforms and the growing backlog of safety critical maintenance work are serious steps backward in the safety culture offshore which had previously been guided by the post-Piper Alpha principle of 'continuous improvement' as

recommended by Lord Cullen.

The union has also given written and oral evidence to cross party committees in the UK and Scottish Parliaments. In the case of the Economy, Energy & Tourism Committee of the Scottish Parliament, RMT's evidence informed the MSPs' report (published 18th January 2016) which contained the following recommendations:

- The industry and the trade unions continue to work ever more closely together in order to ensure that the objective of maximising economic recovery of oil and gas from the UKCS is fulfilled prior to the inevitable decommissioning phase of its life.
- Improve safety reporting systems offshore and greater recognition of the key role of Elected Safety Representatives in such improvement.
- The UK regulator (Maritime & Coastguard Agency) respond to trade union concerns over health and safety and sub-National Minimum Wage pay rates on flag of convenience vessels.

RMT will follow up these and other recommendations, as well as continuing to campaign politically and industrially against the sort of outrageous attacks we have seen, particularly over the last fifteen months. It is unacceptable that such a critically important industry should be left to the vagaries of the free market with declining regulatory oversight. With over 20 billion barrels of oil still under the North Sea, the offshore oil and gas industry still has much to offer UK offshore workers of today and tomorrow and it would be a scandal if we did not become world leaders in decommissioning and other emerging offshore technologies.

I would appreciate it if you could bring this circular to the attention of all Branch members and you will be kept updated with further developments.

The carnage continues

OPINION

Mass redundancies, shift patterns extended, terms and conditions torn up, the employers clearly have us on a race to the bottom. RMT is fighting back and our legal department is working flat out at combatting the flouting of UK employment law by ruthless employers. Numerous examples of “matrix system” manipulation exist, in many cases it’s little more than a licence to sack who you want!

Managers issuing points to workers they have never met; appraisals being used which are out of date, altering of scores by HR people; and so the list goes on. Overall, it is a rotten way to conduct industrial relations and has set the industry back years.

These are dangerous times, and we fear our member’s lives are being put at risk by the oil majors enforcing their slash and burn policies. Ten years ago ‘big oil’ spoke of massive spending on fabrication and maintenance projects - a new era where workers could feel confident and reassured their installations were fit for purpose, fit for the future.

Today many workers in the UK are staring down the wrong end of a double barrel shotgun; 20% of the workforce being wiped out, increased working hours, huge maintenance backlogs, platforms having major incidents and one reported recently as; “the module looked like a bomb had gone off”. The operator, Marathon Oil, say it was just a “gas leak”. Echoes of the past!

A group of workers tried to stage a protest about all this in Aberdeen during early February, the “James Furie team” from the “3and3itsnotforme” Facebook page. Our pals at Step Change in Safety acknowledged the ‘guys’ as the Step Change team leader Les Linklater commented on the Energy Voice website saying; ‘Mr Anonymous should take off their Guy Fawkes masks and get involved.’ We agree, but if only it was that easy. The fear that exists out on the UKCS at this present time is very real, NRB still haunts the offshore worker.

Our Branch has a lot of respect for

Mr Linklater and the work he has done with Step Change in Safety, but considering the carnage we are seeing you have to ask, how can they be effective? In fact, the RMT Offshore Energy Branch would suggest ‘big oil’ is hell bent on rebranding **Step Change in Safety**, as a more appropriate title right now would be - **Step Back in Safety**.

The picture is bleak, we must therefore keep exposing and reporting any of your safety concerns. We want bad operators held to account, to do that we need you to report on maintenance backlogs, incidents, accidents, near misses, everything, and we will protect your identity. The RMT Offshore Energy Branch is on a war footing and we will publicise any infringements. This will be a long battle but this branch has the resilience and determination to take these organisations on. We have done it before and with your help we will do it again. To kick things off, here’s a few examples of the carnage.

Sparrows blame game

Sparrows Offshore have told their workforce they should accept yet another cut to pay and conditions, this time an average of 7% for anyone earning more than £25k a year. In an email sent to all staff the company’s Chief Executive Officer, Stewart Mitchell, tells workers the ‘pain’ is being shared stating; “*our leadership team and I have accepted a 7% reduction in salary, which we see as a prudent step to ensure we protect the long term health of our global operations.*” No argument on this from the Sparrows members who have contacted us, they reckon most of the leadership team should have had a far bigger cut years ago and we might not be in the mess we are now!

Then the knife is plunged into the ribs as Mr Mitchell the CEO goes on to say; “*In turn, we will be seeking the*

support of the entire organisation to accept the same 7% reduction in salary.” Really! Well we haven’t heard many of the offshore troops indicate their support for the move! But who is to blame for this attack on salaries? Well Mr Mitchell spells it out when he says; “*our customers continue to demand further cost reductions.*” So there you go, you are taking the hit to save the oil companies a few quid!

If there were any doubts about who was to blame for the cuts the company’s Regional Operations Director for Europe, Mr Mark Beveridge, clears things up when he tells the workforce; “*our customers have been relentless in their demands for further cost reduction measures.*” It’s “relentless” is it Mr Beveridge? Well why don’t you and all the other contractors tell your customers where to go!

Never mind, there are comforting words from Mr Beveridge when he explains the cuts are of course up for “consultation”. He states in his email to the workforce; “*In line with our collective consultation obligations, the company will now enter a period of consultation..*” Well that’s a relief, so there’s a chance the cuts might not be applied then? Don’t be daft! Mr Beveridge finishes saying the company; “*..would ask for your support in implementing the changes to meet a target date of 01 May 2016.*” So what’s the “consultation” for, this is a done deal!

Cut to the bone at Prosafe

Anyone who hasn’t felt the blade hacking away at their hard earned conditions can count themselves lucky. In fact when you consider what’s happening to offshore workers with Prosafe, you could argue that the Sparrows people are lucky with a 7% cut! We say that because, and this is no joke, the lowest earners with this mob Prosafe are facing a **25% cut!** Yes, we’ll say it again, that is a **25% cut** to their pay! And if that’s not bad enough, get this; the company conjured up a sick proposal to have the workforce vote on options to achieve their cost reduction

efforts, a process which could only be likened to ‘turkeys voting for Christmas!’.

They put two options together, option A being the 25% cut mentioned above; or option B which would see the higher earners take a slightly higher cut to their packages (from 5% to 7.5%) which in turn would reduce the cut for low earners from 25% to a paltry 20%! So what do think the troops voted for? Yes, you got it, the majority voted for Option A (according to the company) so the poor deck hands and able seamen will have their rates slashed, or at least the ones in the UK sector will!

As if to rub salt into the wounds, the company has confirmed that workers across the invisible line dividing the UK and Norway will not have their rates cut. In a “Frequently asked Questions” document produced by the company as part of their “consultation” process the question is posed; *“Why aren’t individuals working on vessels working in Norway affected by these proposals?”* The company’s response should be noted by every worker here in the UK;

“The Company is bound to adhere to the terms of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) for vessels operating on the Norwegian Continental Shelf (NCS).”

APACHE squeeze on everyone

We’ve always been critical of this outfit because we have always known they were ruthless b*****s and their actions over the last year have only confirmed this. They have squeezed every aspect of contracts going back to when they took the Forties field on from BP and today they are driving an all out assault of contractors and their own staff across their operations. They started hacking away at the OCA holiday entitlement years ago and they were the first operator to announce they would not comply. They started to bring back the “limited company” people and they have recently expanded on that by binning Petrofac construction teams and bringing in Caledonian Petroleum Services (CPS) who have turned the construction lads into so-called ‘limited company’ workers. There was no redundancy from Petrofac, as far as they were concerned the workers were transferring to CPS and “TUPE” should apply. No way say CPS, if you

The Texan outfit have undoubtedly brought their ‘kick-ass’ mentality to our sector

want a job you can apply, but you will be providing services only, and you’ll need £5 million quids worth of Employers Liability Insurance cover! These arrangements are in fact a model of zero-hours contracts.

They have squeezed the catering side, bringing in Entier for what was their first big contract in the North Sea, in fact rumours still circulate about how that company was set up and what involvement Apache had in it, if any? The catering teams were trimmed to the bone and now, with the news the drilling contractors are being dumped, the catering teams look likely to suffer again. And then there was the move to 3:3. First up to suffer the imposed change were the poor catering teams, and that was when most contractors and Apache staff still worked 2:3. Now they have forced all workers over to the widely hated 3:3 cycle, something they have been trying to do since they first dipped their toe into the North Sea.

The Texan outfit have undoubtedly brought their ‘kick-ass’ mentality to our sector and their attitude towards workers, trade unions and any collective bargaining agreements reflect the way they run things across the pond. The concept of ‘human resource’ is epitomised by Apache, as they see workers as a resource which they will exploit to the full and any resistance to their ways will be crushed. RMT is dealing with an example of their ruthless ways today, and while we can’t go into the detail of the case right now because it is still developing, we can say the company’s actions leading up to the sacking of a worker were beyond belief! Our Regional Organiser has reported details of the case which, if it happened in any other sector of industry, would see a full blown strike by workers appalled at how their work mate has been treated.

We have heard that Apache are one of the UK sector’s main promoters of a vision described as “an ultra low cost production jurisdiction”. It appears to us that Apache will stop at nothing to get their way and they are gaining support from others. Our question is; how much ‘ass kicking’ are the troops prepared to take? What will it take to get workers willing to resist the

constant threats of outfits like Apache? Do we have to wait for a ‘Big Bang’ with injured or worse still dead workmates?

Bacon buttie blues!

Cuts, cuts and more cuts, what else is there to cut? Bacon butties apparently!

Talisman have wielded the trimming knife once more and an estimated £200,000 a year is likely to be saved by stopping the morning favourite, the bacon buttie. Not only that, the cling film and tin foil are to be put under lock and key as a deterrent to any ‘buttie smugglers’ tempted to sneak a snack from the mess hall. Additionally, catering staff are being put on full scale alert to observe and where required intervene to prevent any efforts to covertly stash a late breakfast snack into a locker or better still, the welder’s oven! One worker claims that new ‘stop and search powers’ could be introduced in the cost reduction crack down, as not only are there costs associated with this initiative, there are (get this!) “health and safety issues” to be taken into consideration!!! Yes, safety is our priority folks and bacon butties are a serious threat to everyone’s ‘elf an safety’!

You could not make this up! We’re sacking 20% of staff; we are making you do more work; we’re cutting your pay; we’re increasing your hours of work; we’re removing your holidays; we’re cutting your pension; we’re reducing your sick pay; we are removing Sky TV; we are reducing internet access; we are reducing newspaper delivery; oh, and just when you thought there was nothing more that could be cut - by the way your bacon butties are for the chop!

Never mind that you are living and working on a rusting pile of scrap half the bloody year which could easily erupt into a fuelled raging inferno without your continued vigilance. And never mind that you are now banged up in 3-man cabins for 21-days and enjoy fewer welfare benefits than some of the most sick and dangerous criminals locked up in our prisons. Just forget all that ‘Human Factor ‘ mumbo-jumbo about workforce morale and focus on the real issues. Focus on those things that really jeopardise your future employment and more importantly your health and safety – focus on the facts - **the bacon butties have to go!**

Letters

Hi,

I used to be with EnSCO and got made redundant. Since then I have only been doing agency work and find it very difficult to get a full time position. I have worked for KCA Deutag, Archer, Prospector and back on an EnSCO rig for 1 trip agency. There is a lot of bullying tactics in use, they use the term you should be grateful you've got a job, just get it done. On Prospector they were all told, take a 13% pay cut or walk, it's up to you. EnSCO now have their crew's book and pay for their own hotels and flights. I see a lot of experience going and never coming back, this has happened before, will they never learn? These guys with experience will probably not come back if the oil picks up as they are getting near retiring. So when the industry does pick up again where is the experience going to come from? We will end up with rapid promotions and no experience possibly leading to another Piper Alpha. Can these people not learn from the lessons learnt in the past? I fear for the future as the people in charge or the politicians do not have a clue or any foresight. They wish Lord Beacham never took as many railways away, yet they can't see they need to be protecting experience now and it will pay dividends in the future.

*Kind regards,
Name provided.*

Hi

I currently work for Sparrows, I will send you 2 e-mails I received in the last 2 days stating Sparrows are going to take 7% of our wages away as a pay cut. Could you give me your thoughts on this matter as I have a contract working on a Shell platform on the decommissioning side, it is a Shell contract. We had our contracts renewed due to the fact we were going onto a 3x3 rotation and during the consultation period it was agreed that the 28 days or so extra that we would be working and the holiday pay would be included in the new contract we signed with Shell, and that started on 1st Jan 2016.

Now they are ready to take 7% from our wages that Shell are surely paying Sparrows? Would it have to come from Shell to reduce the salary on the contract? How does this work? Another thing is, we are not coming

These guys with experience will probably not come back if the oil picks up as they are getting near retiring. So when the industry does pick up again where is the experience going to come from?

under the normal oil and gas side of things as it's the government who is paying the decommissioning side, or as we all know the tax payer. Anyway you were asking for letters from members so I just thought it was time for me to join in for a change, it's my first time so my apologies if it sounds more like a rant than a query. Thanks for your time.

*Kind regards.
[No need to apologise colleague, great wee letter and thanks for raising a very interesting point about the decommissioning side of things. This is something we will raise through the new trade union group OCG]*

Hi,

This is just a personal observation on the Talisman platform I am employed on where - think yourself lucky you have a job - seems to be the new buzz words!

I have never been on a platform where morale has been so low. I did think it had turned a corner in January, but boy was I wrong because if anyone knows how to boot people in the gonads Talisman do!

I guess it started in April 2015 when, after one of the Talisman managers stood in front of the troops and told them they would be getting their bonus for 2014, it didn't happen unless you were employed by Talisman (lets save pennies). Then they removed the SKY TV saving 60K a year, (they get this in Peterhead jail) again lets save pennies. Then as I think everyone is aware, we lost a load of colleagues as did all the sites (lets save pennies) and first to suffer is the workforce again. That was as a consequence of us going from 2x3 to 3x3, another great morale booster.

Then in 2016 we seen the drop in the oil price (lets save pennies) so the boys lost their bacon rolls and replaced them with something that is deemed as a savoury snack! These generally end

up in the bin and at the same time everyone was told not to ask for any cling film or tin foil so they couldn't take a roll out with them. Then the next thing on the cards is to reduce the number of newspapers (lets save pennies) another morale booster!

Just to make everyone feel that much better, two of the Talisman management flew down from Aberdeen to Teesside for the night to join the boys on an evening team building event (no cost cutting here then!). Then just to make matters that much better it was discovered that around 60% of TSEUK staff have been given another bonus!

The divide is getting wider daily, its back to the US & THEM - come back Paul Blakely.

Hope this is of some use.

Name supplied.

Hello,

Just thought you may like to hear about this in the light of what has been going on within the industry. On-board an EnSCO rig in the North sea and found out this week they have done away with the RSTC position, (Rig Safety Training Coordinator). Apparently, they were informed that they could work in other positions which they both had previous experience and/or current tickets. Just thinking this may be the start of a dangerous path.

Regards, Name supplied.

Dear EiE,

As a member of the offshore workforce I'm so pleased to hear of the formation of the OCG. However I have a bit of concern with regards to the actual remit of this group. I mean the workforce has been battered and bruised over the last year so really I'd like to know if this will mean the Unions adopting the COLLECTIVE approach? For too long the competitive trade Unionism has been to our detriment when really the UNIONS should have adopted this year's back. I only hope now UNITE, GMB, BALPA, NAUTILUS and our RMT put aside the differences and past histories and realise the only way to defeat these attacks is to adopt the "you have a pop at one you have a pop at us all" approach.

Name supplied.

What has the Union done?

We're getting asked this question a lot because of the current crisis in the oil and gas sector and rather than go into detail about our efforts on your behalf we have pulled together some 'bullet points'. We hope these will give you an insight into what goes on behind the scenes, but we also understand your frustration and accept you will have views and opinions about these points and everything else in this publication. We can therefore only repeat what we say in every publication – get your views in. Email us, write to us, text, call, visit the office, attend a meeting, get involved . . . help us make a difference.

- We have produced a total of 12 publications since August 2014 highlighting the issues members faced and suggesting ways these could be dealt with.
- We produced the “48 hour opt-in” letter which would require the employer to track hours and ensure no breach of the 48-hour maximum working week. If all workers did this it could help to save jobs and at no cost to workers.
- We produced a series of questions for workers and elected Safety Reps to submit to Safety Committees. If all workers did this it would show a united front and could slow the cuts while recording concerns.
- We assisted those workers/members involved with the “3and3itsnotforme” Facebook page. We have organised meetings, answered numerous questions and provided extensive information and support, and we continue to

- do this. (Even paid for the T-shirts!)
- We have met with countless MPs and MSPs in an effort influence opinion and to gain political support. Submitted parliamentary questions at Westminster and Holyrood around the health and safety aspects of these imposed changes, cuts to manning, attacks on conditions and social dumping.
- We have met with the HSE and the OGA to discuss concerns and raise questions. We have supported workers raising complaints related to the safety of operations and continue to do this, (but need more input from the workforce).
- We participate in the Energy Jobs Task Force meetings raising the concerns of workers, challenging the oil companies around behaviours and attitudes towards workers and contractors.
- In January 2015 we wrote to the leaders of all offshore unions, the TUC, the STUC the Norwegian, Danish and Dutch Unions and other EU trade union organisations seeking to establish a trade union summit. As reported in this journal we now have the OCG and RMT will play our part in that group.
- We are involved with European and Global trade union groups trying to develop a strategy to defend and protect jobs, terms and conditions and fight social dumping.
- We have tried to raise the profile of the problems workers face through the media, TV, Radio and Newspapers, and we continue to do so.

- We have challenged the industry to illustrate cost savings and how safety standards can be maintained.
- We continue to deal with countless phone calls, emails and letters and we have supported numerous members through grievances, redundancy consultations and appeals, and continue to do so.
- We have prepared draft grievance letters to assist members in appeals against redundancy and to claim backdated pay, notice and sick pay.
- We spent weeks preparing membership listings in readiness for ballots and sought extensive legal advice about the inevitable legal challenges any action might bring.
- We have provided details of learning opportunities for redundant workers and access to education programmes at “PACE” events.
- We have represented countless workers at forums dealing with H&S matters, challenging oil companies, contractors and regulators.
- We remain available to assist as and when required.

These are the bullet points setting out the activities of the Branch and officers. As stated we accept this may not cover the expectations of everyone and if that's the case we would welcome your feedback. While you consider these points we would like to ask you to do us one favour please; can you ask your colleagues in the tea shack next time you are in - What have you done?

RMT Offshore Energy Workers Organising BGM-2016

The Offshore Energy workers in our union will be holding their Bi-annual General Meeting on the 18th and 19th May 2016 at the Jury's Inn – Aberdeen, and we want delegates from every sector of the offshore workforce to participate in the event.

We want your views and your resolutions to conference so that we can have a full and frank debate on the issues that are affecting the UK offshore workforce. We want you to get involved and make your voices heard. It is extremely important that you do this because, as a member led organisation, it is you the members that can direct the officials and officers on our strategy for the future. RMT-OILC is led from the shop floor, this is a cornerstone of our organisation, get involved in organising for our future.

We have a number of spaces for delegates to attend and all accommodation, travel and meals will be covered. We want to hear from you, we need to hear from you, so contact the Branch Secretary to reserve your place as a delegate at the conference as soon as possible, first come first serve!

If any member wishes to submit a resolution to the conference for debate and to be voted on by conference, which could in turn become policy of the union, then these should be submitted as soon as possible. For all of the above the email address to contact is; oilc.rmt.secretary@gmail.com

Our conference takes place in Aberdeen over two days and along with the important business there will be time to relax and socialise with your colleagues. So, why not take your partner along for a two day stay in Aberdeen, they get a break and we really need your help to make this a success.

With all the turmoil going on in our industry over the past year we have many things to discuss and especially how we effectively “organise” ourselves to challenge these ruthless employers. You have a chance to be part of this organising strategy, you the members have the chance to push these issues to the National Executive Committee and on to the union's national AGM, so your decisions become policy of the union.

Please contact the Branch Secretary immediately at his email address or via telephone on 01224 210118 to secure your place at the BGM and to submit your resolutions.

Contact email - oilc.rmt.secretary@gmail.com