Report on Injuries in the Offshore Wind Industry

There has been a push across the world for more sustainable sources of energy. But as new energy sources are explored and pursued, the workers in these developing industries may be exposed to various health and safety hazards, including new hazards created by the use of new technology or processes. So it's important that companies in such industries balance creating energy in an environmentally friendly way with protecting the safety of their workforce. The G9 Offshore Wind Health and Safety Association was formed in 2010 by nine of the world's largest offshore wind developers to ensure that health and safety was at the forefront of all offshore wind activity and development. The G9 recently released its first report on worker health and safety based on data collected for 2013. Here's an overview of this report.

The 2013 Injury Report

The G9 report is based on data from 35 sites spread across Northern Europe submitted by companies that are G9 members. There were 616 incidents reported overall. Of those incidents:

- 373 occurred on operational sites, which are sites that are producing power; and
- 243 occurred on project sites, which include all stages of a project (such as development, construction and commissioning).

There were no reported fatalities, but injuries suffered by workers and contractors resulted in 66 total lost work days. Those injuries included:

- 30 injuries that required medical treatment. Such injuries involved a person being unfit to perform any work on any day after the occurrence of the occupational injury;
- 61 injuries that required first aid, that is, simple medical treatment that's self-administered or by a first aider, doctor or nurse, but doesn't result in lost time or long-term medical care; and
- Four injuries that had to be reported by regulation.

The highest number of lost work day incidents occurred during:

- Manual handling activities (27%);
- Lifting operations (14%);
- Operating plant and machinery (9%); and
- Marine operations (12%).

The report also notes that there were 345 reported 'near hits,' that is, any incident that could've resulted in a work-related accident but didn't, either by chance or timely intervention (in other words, what's often called a 'near miss').

The top three areas of highest risk were identified as:

Lifting operations. In 2013, there were 165 incidents that occurred during lifting operations. Most of these incidents took place on operational sites (120), while the remaining 45 incidents occurring on project sites. And 63% of all lifting operation incidents occurred on vessels. Excluding vessels, the majority of incidents that occurred during lifting operations happened on the harbour, quay and pontoon (12%) and the transition piece area (8%).

Marine operations. In 2013, the highest number of incidents

happened during marine operations (131), with 84 occurring on operational sites and 47 on project sites. Marine operations include maritime operations, transfer by vessel, vessel mobilization and vessel operations. Most of these incidents occurred on the vessels themselves (106).

Working at heights. Lastly, 45 recorded incidents occurred when working at heights, such as in the turbine tower, hub and blades or on met masts. These incidents were split between operational and project sites at 24 and 21 incidents respectively.

***Insider* Source**

2013 annual incident data report, G9 Offshore Wind Health and Safety Association, 2014