Guidelines for Offshore Drilling Hazard Site Surveys

The Guidelines OGP Report No 373-18-1 for the conduct of offshore drilling hazard site surveys describe oilfield good practice for conducting geophysical and hydrographic site surveys of proposed offshore drilling locations. The document also covers the use of exploration 3D seismic data to enhance, or to replace, acquisition of a site survey.

A properly-conducted drilling hazard site survey for an offshore drilling location is essential to minimise the risk of harm to personnel and equipment and helps to protect the natural environment. The Guidelines explain the requirements that different types of offshore drilling units have on a site survey. The new report also emphasises the differing site survey requirements of shelf and deep-water environments.

The Guidelines summarise the objectives of site surveys, the site survey process, and provide suggestions on all the phases of a site survey. These include initial desk studies and planning, data requirements and geohazard analysis and reporting.

Associated technical notes, to be published separately later this year as OGP Report № 373-18-2, will provide supporting technical information and background theory on the various phases of a site survey project and on the vessels and equipment used to acquire site survey data.

The new Guidelines result from an extensive review and update of previously published work by UKOOA (now Oil & Gas UK). This review has been undertaken by a workgroup comprising representatives of OGP’s Geomatics Committee, as well as representatives from the marine survey industry and has resulted in a new, completely revised document.

The Guidelines are applicable for the conduct of offshore drilling hazard site surveys. While the document does not set out to directly address planning and delivery of other types of survey projects, the techniques described may also be applied to other types of seabed surveys, such as pipeline or cable route surveys, etc.

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