



Regulating Offshore oil and gas Installations during Coronavirus (Covid-19) Outbreak – Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning’s return to offshore inspection activity.

1. The Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment & Decommissioning (OPRED) notified stakeholders on 07 January 2021 (updated Covid-19 communication) of our decision to pause offshore inspection activity and to undertake regulatory activity through remote interventions.
2. With case numbers decreasing across the UK, the ongoing roll out of the vaccination programmes and having given time for OPRED and duty holders to review their control measures, OPRED will be lifting the operational pause from 1 March 2021.
3. OPRED will conduct a phased return to offshore inspection activity. This means that from March 2021 we will be undertaking offshore inspections and investigations alongside remote interventions. These will be undertaken in line with Government and Public Health guidance. It is our intention to comply whenever possible with reasonable duty holder and installation specific requirements for mobilisation in the interests of minimising the risk of Covid-19 transmission offshore.
4. As previously, one of the requisite control measures is for the BEIS Health & Safety team to review individual duty holders’ Covid-19 specific risk assessments to ensure suitable measures and arrangements are in place, prior to inspectors travelling to offshore installations. As such, OPRED inspectors will ask duty holders to provide a copy of their Covid-19 risk assessments and any related information.
5. It is not the intention of OPRED to formally inspect those risk assessments, but rather to review in conjunction with the BEIS risk assessment and make a determination that the risk of contracting Covid-19 is as low as reasonably practicable in order for OPRED staff to mobilise to offshore installations.
6. The safety of OPRED staff and stakeholders continues to be of primary importance. As such, OPRED will continue to review the situation in regard to Covid-19 and relevant UK and Scottish Government, Public Health England and Health Protection Scotland guidance and in line with established BEIS risk assessment processes.

1 March 2021