



International Regulators' Forum
GLOBAL OFFSHORE SAFETY

Communiqué

International Regulators' Forum Holds 2022 Annual General Meeting Focused on Offshore Petroleum Safety

October 6, 2022

The International Regulators' Forum (IRF) held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 4-6 October 2022. This year's AGM was hosted by Norway's Petroleum Safety Authority in Oslo and was attended by offshore petroleum health and safety regulatory leaders from each of its 11 member countries – Australia (Chair), Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Ireland, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States. (IRF contacts: [Country Profiles and Contacts | IRF \(irffshoresafety.com\)](#)).

Although the Covid pandemic had prevented in-person meetings of the IRF in 2020 and 2021, it was noted that communications between IRF members had become more frequent and substantially more effective as a result of the application of virtual technology. Based on this experience, the 2022 AGM included in-person and virtual participation.

The AGM afforded IRF members the opportunity to collectively consider evolving regulatory best practices and knowledge in the context of the IRF's focus area of Global Offshore Safety. This was done through discussion of the challenges faced, sharing of case studies and lessons learned, and the development of initiatives through industry engagement to reduce risks to the offshore workforce.

Key discussion topics focused on the core issue of the prevention of harms in the offshore oil and gas industry across the whole asset lifecycle. As a result, IRF members call upon the industry to ensure worker physical and psychological safety, proper ongoing and long-term asset integrity through effective maintenance management, prevention of loss of containment events, and effective and timely decommissioning. Industry is expected to meet all local requirements with respect to the timely planning of well abandonment and decommissioning, safety, environmental protection, and financial responsibility.

In response to the pandemic and current global issues, the industry must anticipate and act to address challenges related to global supply chains, as well as ensuring a trained and competent workforce.

Website: <https://irffshoresafety.com/>
LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/international-regulators-forum>
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The vital role of industry leaders exercising executive oversight and accountability to ensure regulatory and stakeholder expectations were being met was a reoccurring theme.

The growing issues of energy security, offshore renewables, carbon capture and storage and energy transition were also highlighted. The IRF agreed on the expansion of its focus into the safety of offshore renewables infrastructure.

A discussion took place on the viability and implications of transitioning offshore petroleum assets into CCS or renewables projects, the capacity and competency of industry, and imminent industry challenges in meeting future personnel and equipment requirements. Members committed to timely sharing of emerging issues and associated information on these subjects at a time of rapid change.

Representatives of the International Oil and Gas Producers (IOGP) and the International Association of Drilling Contractors (IADC) joined sessions on 5 October 2022, where industry trends in safety were discussed. The IRF noted that more frequent and effective engagements with IOGP and IADC had developed in recent years as a result of the IRF strategy to address risk focus areas (see IRF website [Problem Statements \(irfoffshoresafety.com\)](https://irfoffshoresafety.com)). As a result, industry has developed targeted guidance designed to reduce the risk of well control incidents resulting from uncertainties in subsurface pressures. The focus areas of investigations and learning from incidents, and the growing area of digitalisation are noted as programs under development. Further opportunities for safety risk reduction were discussed.

IRF members received updates on the activities of related international regulator groups such that appropriate interfaces could be maintained on relevant matters. The International Upstream Forum (IUF), International Offshore Petroleum Environmental Regulators Forum (IOPER), and the Global Offshore Wind Regulators Forum (GOWRF) all provided such updates.

Australia is in the role of IRF Chair through Calendar Year 2024 and will host the next IRF Conference and AGM in Perth, Australia between 1 – 6 October 2023. The Conference will be an opportunity for the global industry and its regulators to discuss matters with a view to encouraging further safety risk reduction. Details on the event will be publicised in due course.

Further information on the IRF and its strategic agenda is available at the IRF website (<https://irfoffshoresafety.com/>) and its social media channels.

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