

HEALTH CRITERIA FOR OFFSHORE WORK – NORWEGIAN PERSPECTIVE



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The County Governor of Rogaland

- The local representative for the Norwegian Government
- Nationwide supervision of health related matters in the offshore sector

This authority covers areas including the health services, food, drinking water and living quarters.

The County Governor of Rogaland

Administration of the governmental regulations concerning the medical fitness of people working offshore in the oil and gas industry.

- Advice to professionals and the public
- Approval of petroleum doctors and diving doctors
- Give dispensations

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Examining doctors

- From 2014 the general practitioners are not allowed to issue medical certificates.
- Petroleum doctors and diving doctors are trained with special seminars and exams.
 - University training centre for maritime medicine
 - Navy training centre for diving medicine

Petroleum doctors

The County Governor has approved 1070 petroleum doctors by May 2014.

- 974 in Norway
- 94 abroad, mainly in Europe.
- 20 applicants have been refused approval due to lacking attendance on approved training course or due to restrictions in their medical licence.

Approx. 50 offshore divers and 5 saturation divers are active in Norway.

Diving doctors

- So far this year the County Governor has approved 10 new diving doctors. 7 applicants have been refused approval due to lacking attendance on approved training courses.
- There are now 113 approved diving doctors in Norway and 21 abroad.

Medical certificates for offshore diving are also accepted for topside work offshore.



Dispensations

When the petroleum doctor finds that the health requirements (fitness criteria) are not met, the County Governor has the power to grant dispensations (exemptions).

- 200 cases are processed each year.



Dispensation processing outcomes

- Health requirements are met (no restrictions) (40 each year)
- Dispensation for up to 2 years unlimited offshore travel (70 each year)

Restrictions may apply regarding work tasks, night shifts and named unit(s)



Dispensation processing outcomes

- Limited dispensation for up to 2 years limited offshore travel (40 each year)

Time restriction applies for sporadic offshore travel pattern (number of trips and number of days spent offshore)

Additional restrictions may apply regarding work tasks, night shifts and named unit(s)



Dispensation processing outcomes

- Refusal of dispensation

Refusals are given if the health situation entails an unacceptable or unclear risk either for the worker himself, for other people on the helicopters and offshore units, or for the safe operation of the units themselves. (50 refusals each year)

Participation in safety critical work or emergency preparedness tasks will normally lead to refusal

Also workers with an unclear work situation can be refused dispensation

Working offshore in Norway with foreign medical certificates

- Oil and Gas UK and NOGEPAs medical certificates are now valid for work offshore in Norway.
- Medical certificate for offshore diving from UK and the Netherlands are accepted both for offshore diving and topside work in Norway.

Restricted foreign medicals need special attention.



Norwegian offshore medical certificates

- Norwegian offshore medicals are accepted on vessels, replacing a seafarers medical certificate for the non-maritime workers, as decided by the Norwegian Maritime Authority.
- Norwegian medicals are also widely accepted in the rest of the offshore industry across Europe.



Revision of the guidelines

- The Directorate of Health is in the process of a major revision of the health requirements.
- The Directorate of Health now emphasizes that the workers only meet the criteria if they are able to perform safety critical work.
- The health requirements for offshore divers are to be incorporated as special sections under each chapter of the revised guideline.

Revision of the guidelines

Examples of planned changes :

- **Eyes:** If contact lenses are worn at all times (incl. during sleep), the requirement for uncorrected vision is met.
- **CNS:** Seizure free period will be expanded to 2 years (today: One year seizure free)
- **Medication:** New anticoagulants will be evaluated as warfarin (two months stable)



Revision of the guidelines

- **Drugs:** Use of performance enhancing drugs shall be viewed as drug abuse.
- Leyden-mutations will be mentioned in a new paragraph.

Further changes will be possible, pending a decision in the Directorate of Health in the fall.

Revision of the regulation

- The Directorate of Health has proposed to expand the approval period for petroleum doctors to 5 years (3 years today).
- Diving doctors will still be approved for 3 years.



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Thank you for your attention