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POILEAS ALBA

GUIDANCE FOR OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY – FLARE FIREARMS PROCEDURE DOCUMENT

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1 Scope

This procedure is applicable to all <<Company Name>> installations where firearms and/or ammunition are deployed and its use is mandatory to bring about compliance with:

- Firearms Act 1968 (as amended by Firearms (Amendment) Acts 1992, 1994, 1997 and 1997 (2))
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- SI 1998/No 2306 The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- SI 1999/No 3242 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

This document applies to the supply, possession and use of flare ignition firearms and ammunition on all offshore installations and onshore sites where we use these for flare ignition operations.

This document also applies to the transportation, storage and handling of ballistic pellets for flare ignition packages, although it should be noted that the Firearms Act (as amended by Firearms (Amendment) Acts 1992, 1994, 1997 and 1997 (2)) **do not apply** to these systems and pellets.

This document should also be read in conjunction with <<Company Name>> Training course material, internal policies and other documentation relating to the use of flare ignition firearms and ammunition.

2 Application

The purpose of this document is to detail the procedure to follow when transporting, storing or using a flare ignition firearm and ammunition. Its aim is to ensure that procedures which involve the access to, or use of firearms are performed safely, without risk and in accordance with UK firearms laws.

In terms of the Firearms Act 1968, the term 'Firearm' means a lethal barrelled weapon of any description from which any shot, bullet or other missile can be discharged.

A 'Shotgun' means a smooth-bore gun (not being an air gun) which has a barrel not less than 24 inches in length and does not have any barrel with a bore exceeding 2 inches in diameter.

The Police Scotland Firearms Licensing Authority has issued guidance to the oil and gas industry regarding the type of firearms used for flare ignition as well as the certification required for industry personnel to lawfully possess and use firearms and ammunition for these operations.

The Police Scotland guidance states that anyone who needs to use 12 gauge firearms with barrels that are over 24 inches in length, must hold a current shotgun Certificate (SGC) which authorises the possession and use of these guns. All <<Company Name>> firearms deployed in the North Sea Region are <<enter details>> (eg identical 12 gauge Beretta shot guns which have barrels that are 29 inches in length), so all personnel authorised by the company to use these must hold a SGC.

Police Scotland has made transitional arrangements for company personnel with Firearm Certificates (FACs) that permit the use of the above guns. These certificates will continue to be valid until they are due for renewal, or if a formal variation request is submitted to Police Scotland.

The Police Scotland guidance states that anyone who needs to use 12 gauge firearms with barrels that are less than 24 inches in length, must hold a current Firearm Certificate (FAC) which authorises the possession and use of these guns.

For flare ignition ammunition, an FAC will be required by all <<Company Name>> personnel to allow them to have access to, or use of, Section 1 flare ignition cartridges, irrespective of whether a Section 1 or 2 firearm is used to discharge them.

In view of the Police Scotland requirements, <<Company Name>> personnel must hold:

- A current SGC (or an FAC during the transitional period) to possess and use company firearms
- A current FAC to possess and use flare ignition ammunition

Where an FAC and SGC run concurrently, this is commonly referred to by Police Scotland as a 'coterminous' arrangement.

Best practice would suggest that all company shotguns irrespective of barrel length should be of an identical make and model so as to assist with familiarisation and training competencies.

3 Responsibilities

3.1 Onshore Manager (tends to be Security, ER or HSE Manager)

The Onshore Manager has overall responsibility for the administration of all firearms licensing matters involving company firearms and flare ignition ammunition.

The Onshore Manager (or <<organisation>> Firearms certificate holder senior affiliate) shall:

- Act as the single point of contact (SPOC) with the Police Firearms Licensing Authority and have overall responsibility for all certificate holder information and concerns on behalf of the company
- Make arrangements for the supply, maintenance and transportation of firearms and flare ignition ammunition for all company installations and onshore sites

- Make arrangements for the training of personnel on the legal requirements and the safe handling, maintenance and use of firearms and flare ignition ammunition when requested to do so
- Monitor company firearms user coverage and make recommendations that firearms certificate holders inform Police Scotland Firearms Licensing Authority if they leave the company or if there are changes in their circumstances

Note: It should be noted that Firearms and Shotgun certificates are granted to the individual and not the company and the legal responsibilities, are as such, the individual's.

3.2 Offshore Installation Manager/Onshore Site Manager (or the designated company firearms certificate senior affiliate)

The Offshore Installation Manager (OIM) or Onshore Site Manager (OSM) has overall responsibility for the onsite supervision and implementation of this procedure and in particular shall:

- Ensure that flare ignition firearms and flare ignition ammunition are stored in separate secure cabinets (see security section below)
- Ensure that only trained, competent and certified personnel have access to and are permitted to operate flare ignition firearms and ammunition
- Maintain an installation or site register of personnel authorised to access and use site firearms and flare ignition ammunition, details of firearms held on site and a record of movements of firearms and ammunition on and off the site. (This register will also contain contact details of onshore company personnel who can provide firearms support and assistance as well as full cleaning and maintenance instructions for the firearm held at that location). Tables 1, 2 & 3 attached as appendix detail the standard information held
- Ensure that sufficient Firearms Certificate holders are maintained across the shifts. It is suggested that best practice be that a minimum of 2 Firearm certificate holders be on site at any time

3.3 Standard Company Firearms Users

Standard Company Firearms Users must:

- Hold valid firearms certification FAC & or SGC and have undergone the appropriate training.

Company Firearms Users shall:

- Notify the OIM/OSM, Onshore Manager and/or the designated company firearms certificate senior affiliate if their firearms certification is withdrawn or is no longer valid
- Ensure that they are aware of, and comply with, their legal obligations as FAC holders as well as the requirements of the company procedure

- Notify the OIM ,OSM or Onshore Manager of any medical or other matters which may adversely affect his or her ability to safely use firearms and flare ignition ammunition
- Immediately report any firearm faults or malfunctions and any other issues with company firearms and ammunition to the OIM, OSM, Onshore Manager and/or the designated company firearms certificate senior affiliate

Note: If you can't follow the requirements in this document you should stop the work you're doing and speak with your line manager.

3.4 Safe System of Work

The task of using the flare ignition firearm to light the flare shall be controlled under the company Permit to Work System. The Performing Authority shall raise the necessary permit (Hot work Naked Flame Work Control Certificate or Hot Work Naked Flame Routine Implementation certificate) and adhere to the site requirements and the contents of this or company procedure. Consideration should be given to local conditions and simultaneous operations such as breaking containment, helicopter, crane or gas-freeing operations.

4 Firearms Management Arrangements and Procedures

4.1 Onshore Firearms Support

The Onshore Manager and his/her nominated deputy and/or the designated firearms certificate senior affiliate hold the lawful authority and shall source, supply and arrange transportation of flare ignition firearms and ammunition to and from offshore installations and onshore sites.

This manager shall arrange the regular maintenance of all company flare ignition firearms and ensure that a replacement firearm is on site before the removal of the site firearm for inspection and servicing.

The Onshore FAC senior affiliate shall maintain and update all site/s FAC & SGC Holders master register.

The Onshore FAC senior affiliate shall be advised on any required new site FAC & SGC applications.

4.2 Transportation

Flare ignition firearms and ammunition must be transported in secure cases or holders specifically designed for that purpose. The company firearms certificate senior affiliate, his/her deputy, a nominated Registered Firearms Dealer, or any competent, certificated person acting on behalf of the company, must complete the relevant documentation for the transport of dangerous goods.

The documentation must then be passed to the relevant carrier. Copies of the documentation shall be held at the installation or site where the firearm and ammunition is received and held, and also at the Onshore Manager's office at company headquarters in Aberdeen or elsewhere.

The keys for the secure case must be sent separately and securely and sent to the nominated company Firearms certificate holder. It should be noted that other types of security methods are available such as combination locks or alternative methods and these aspects will be dependent on company practices but must be documented.

Inter-field transferring flare cartridges between sites is not recommended but should an emergency arise (e.g. Site has fired all their allocated stock of cartridges) the correct dangerous goods documentation for shipment must be completed and copied to the Company 'Firearms Certificate Holder senior affiliate' and transferred in an appropriate transportation box and labelled accordingly.

4.3 Storage and Security

Flare ignition firearms must be stored separately from the ammunition and locked in a secure BS 7558 compliant cabinet/s and good practice suggests these should be close to the site manager's office. The keys for these cabinets are to be kept secure by the OIM/OSM and/or company-approved designated personnel all of whom **must** hold valid firearms certification.

The flare ignitions firearms and flare ignition ammunition cabinet keys should be secured in a Police approved key safe with the access codes only being available to valid firearms certificated persons and the combination codes amended on regular basis as defined by the company.

Police Scotland is required to closely consider the security arrangements on offshore installations as part of the FAC/SGC grant and renewal process. It will assist these processes if a full written summary of the firearm security arrangements, supported by photographs of gun and ammo cabinets etc can be supplied by company operators in respect of each installation and site where firearms are held.

4.4 Deployment of Firearms and Ammunition

Authorised company firearms certificate holders will be trained using the same type of firearm as those deployed at flare ignition sites and therefore, will be proficient in the safety features and use of this weapon.

As part of the preparations to perform a flare ignition task using a firearm, the following factors require to be considered in relation to firing site selection and the conditions required for the safe execution of a flare shot(s):

- Prevailing Wind Speed and Direction
- Identification of Target Area within the Gas Plume (6 to 12 feet downwind of the flare tip – Consider the use of an infra-red camera/scope during the hours of darkness)
- Gas Build Up at Firing Site

- Underfoot Surfaces at the Firing Site
- Range of Flare Cartridges (110m + or - 10m)
- Proximity of Vulnerable Plant or Occupied Areas
- Line of Vision and Likely Trajectory
- Landing Zone including Deflection Hazards
- Risk from Dropped Cartridges

Only after the task has been assessed and planned, should the weapon be removed from the cabinet and at this stage it should be checked to ensure it is not loaded and that the barrel and action are free from any obstructions or foreign bodies.

The authorised firearms user who is nominated to light the flare using the firearm, should, as part of the permit to work procedure, be accompanied by a second person to maintain observations from a safe position and to provide a radio communications link with the Central Control Room.

A check of the area should also be made to ensure it is clear of people and make a public address announcement to advise all personnel. If using at an offshore site, notify the standby vessel and other vessels in close proximity.

Whenever handling a firearm, users should ensure that they:

- Always treat the weapon as though it were loaded.
- Never point or aim the weapon at anyone.
- Always check that the barrel is unobstructed before use (from the breech end only).
- Never load the weapon until you are ready to use it.
- Always use eye and hearing protection when firing the flare gun.
- Never load the weapon unless the safety catch is in the on position.
- Always keep the safety catch on and finger off the trigger until you are ready to fire.
- Always keep the weapon broken unless it is in the carrying case.
- Always retain the weapon in its carrying case until ready for use.
- Never leave the weapon unattended.

Note: In the unlikely event of a misfire or hangfire, maintain a firing position with the gun always pointing in a safe direction away from people and the asset for at least **5 minutes**. Only after this time has elapsed should the gun be broken and the cartridge carefully removed ensuring that the muzzle and breech ends of the barrel are both pointing in a safe direction. The cartridge should then be immersed in water for an extended period. Finally, ensure that the barrel is not obstructed and visually check from the **breech end** only.

The disposal of the cartridge following these circumstances is to make arrangement for the cartridge to be placed in a steel type container with a secure lid, filled with $\frac{3}{4}$ sand and arrangements made for transportation to an approved incinerator for destruction. This should be detailed in company procedures.

4.5 Cleaning

The weapon must always be cleaned immediately after use with the cleaning kit provided following which the mechanism and metal surfaces require to be lightly lubricated. A snap cap should then be used to release the tension on the spring within the action following which it must be secured in the cabinet in the unloaded position. Full cleaning instructions for weapons held at each installation or site are contained in the site firearms register at that location.

Note: Snap caps may not be required for certain types of guns and you should seek guidance from your nominated Onshore Manager, RFD or any competent, certified persons acting for the company.

4.6 Disposing of Firearms and Ammunition

The Onshore Manager shall be responsible for the safe disposal of firearms and ammunition held by the company.

Cartridges from the date of manufacture, under normal storage conditions have a shelf life of 5 years, as long as the storage instructions are maintained. Storage of the articles outside of these guidelines may mean that the performance of the article is affected a lot sooner, which could mean that the pyrotechnic does not provide the required distance or heat to light the gas stack.

It is recommended that after the shelf life expired that the cartridges are removed for disposal and not to be used for training purposes. When this service is required, the site/s authorised Firearm certificate holder must liaise with the Onshore Firearms certificate holder senior affiliate who will make arrangements for the safe transportation and proper destruction of the items involved as well as the necessary legal notifications to the Police Scotland Firearms Licensing Department.

4.7 Advice and Guidance

Advice and information on company firearms matters can be obtained directly from the Onshore Manager, nominated Registered Firearms Dealer or any competent, certificated person acting for the company.

4.8 Installation Records of Authorised Company Firearms Users, Movement of Firearms and Ammunition

OIMs, OSMs or their nominated deputies, should ensure that an installation or site register containing all relevant information concerning firearms authorisations and equipment is maintained. To assist in the proper recording of this information, Tables 1, 2 and 3 should be created for each installation or site. These records can be held electronically or on paper, however, all paper documents accompanying the movement of firearms and ammunition supplies on to and off the installation or site should be retained for auditing purposes.

4.9 Training and Competency

Personnel identified to have access to and use flare ignition firearms and ammunition must be in possession of a current FAC/SGC issued by Police Scotland or a Police Force in England and Wales depending on their place of residence. In some circumstances it may be company policy that OIMs, OSMs will hold the relevant Firearms certification even if they are not routinely using the company Firearms on a regular basis. These aspects will be dependent on the management model of the respective company.

- Notes:**
- (1) The OIM or OSM is not permitted to grant a dispensation from this condition. A FAC/SCG is a legal requirement under Sections 1 and 2 of the Firearms Act 1968.
 - (2) The situation with regards to an individual, working offshore, whose place of residence is in Northern Ireland or outwith the UK is complex if they require Firearms certification. Accordingly, suitable advice should be sought from Police Firearms Licensing.

All company FAC/SCG holders are required to be trained in the use of the company standard flare ignitions firearms before they will be permitted to use these weapons for live operational purposes. The Onshore Manager will arrange the training which is provided by various training establishments. Whilst there is no legislation for this aspect or refresher training requirements, in line with company policy, all FAC/SCG holders will be required to undergo a refresher training course (**period to be identified is company specific**).

Attach company training course details (**commercial sensitivities**) and operators guide as per company policy.

4.10 Self-verification and Assurance Visits

Self-verification and assurance visits will be made to the installation/sites by the Onshore Manager or nominated individual to ensure that the contents of this policy are being followed and to ensure that the security arrangements remain fit for purpose.

4.11 Data Privacy and General Data Protection regulations

It is not intended to provide a detailed overview of this complex legislation in this document. However, a summarised overlay of the implications may be useful for consideration. The following guidance has been obtained from Police Scotland in respect of sharing information with regards to details of company Firearm certificate holders.

At the core of the new Data Protection regulations there are 6 key principles of data protection which states that personal data will be:

- processed lawfully, fairly and transparently
- collected for specified and legitimate purposes
- adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate and kept up to date
- retained no longer than is necessary

- processed in a secure manner

In regards to law enforcement purposes, Police would process and hold this data for the purposes of **preventing, investigating, detecting or prosecuting criminal offences, executing criminal penalties and safeguarding against threats to public security.**

Processing of personal data for these purposes **is not covered by the GDPR** but is instead covered by Part 3 of the Data Protection Act 2018. Individual certificate holders who have previously signed applications to have their personal data held have at this point given authority for this information to be shared for the above stated purposes and as such Police would require this to continue in order for them to maintain their certificate.

Table 1

SITE/INSTALLATION FIREARM CERTIFICATE HOLDERS				
Site/Installation:				
	Name	Position	FAC No.	Expiry Date
1	Martin Jones	OIM	1234567	12/12/2017
2	Peter Noakes	HSSE Lead	349876	21/06/2015
3	Darren Stephens	OIM	412875	23/08/2016
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				

Table 2

SITE/INSTALLATION FIREARM RECORD					
Name of Site/Installation:					
Site/Installation:					
Firearm		Make and Type		Serial No	
Flare Ignition Shot Gun		Browning 12g Single Barrelled		SJ45987	
Date Moved	From	To (Current Location)	Sent by	Received by	Reason
02/09/2014	ASCO, Aberdeen	Balmoral	J Smith RFD	M Jones	Initial Deployment
06/03/2015	Balmoral	NSHQ – via ASCO	M Jones	J Steven Onshore Asset manager	Routine Service by Gunsmith
20/03/2014	ASCO, Aberdeen	Balmoral	J Steven Onshore Asset Manager	M Jones	Redeployed following service

Table 3

FLARE IGNITION AMMUNITION RECORD								
Name of Site/Installation:								
	Ammo Supplies IN		Ammo Out/Issued For Flare Ignition			Ammo Balance		
Date	Ammo In (Quantity)	Received by	Ammo Out/Issued (Quantity)	Issued to (Include Permit No.)	Issued by:	Ammo Used	Ammo Returned	Running Total
03/09/18	200	M Jones OIM						200
04/09/18			6	J Thom Permit No. 556677	M Jones (OIM)	4	2	196
07/09/18			10	G Porter Permit No. 556678	F Law HSSE Lead	6	4	190