OEUK – Managing Weight Related Safety Risk Offshore – Context and Control Measures

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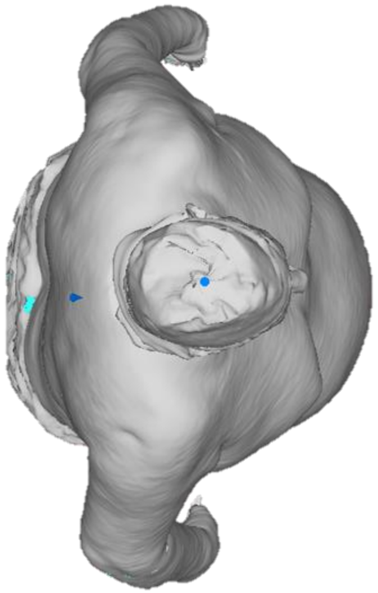
Introduction

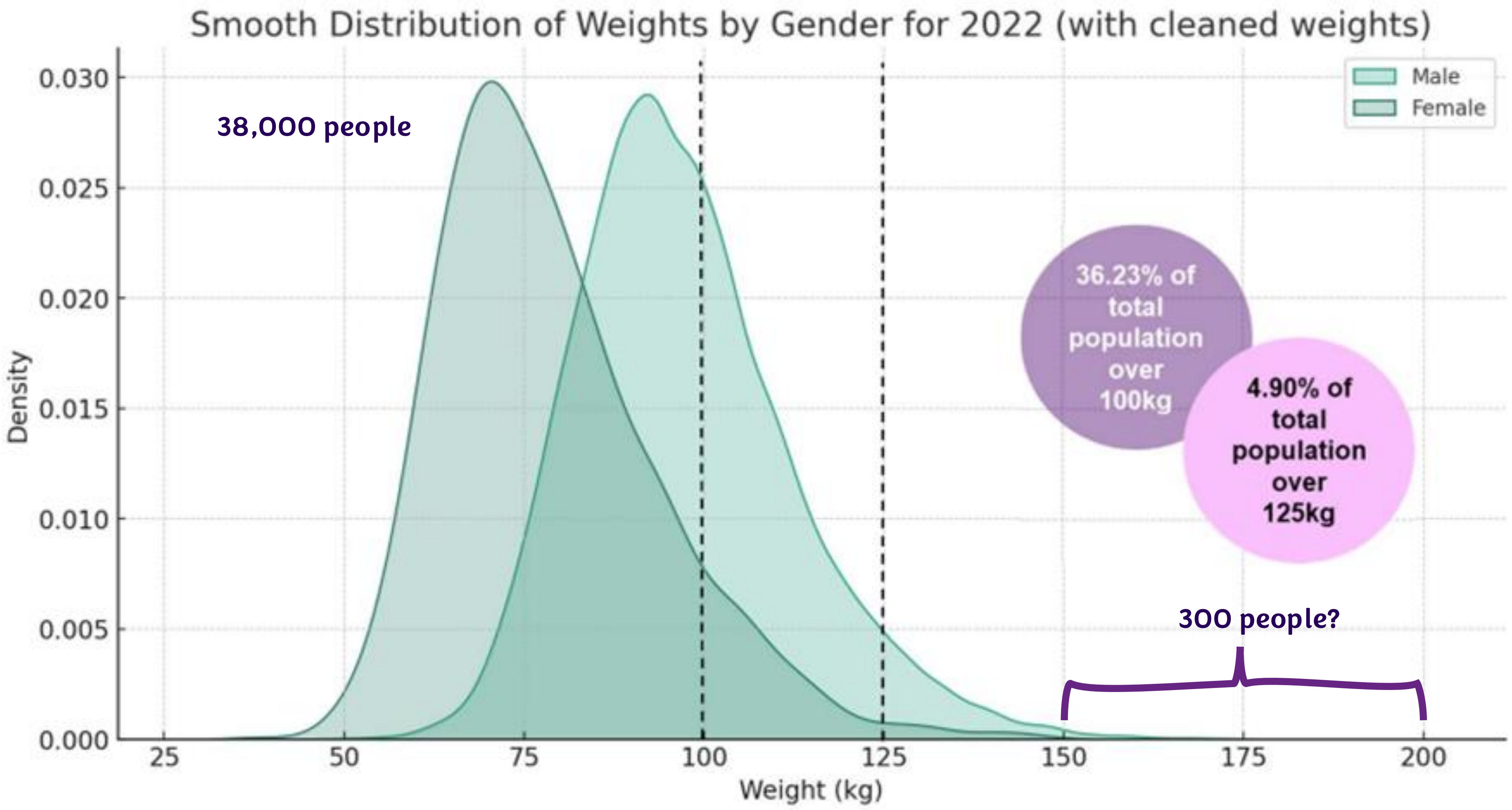
Purpose – raise awareness of the safety implications of increasing offshore worker weight (and size).

Chart 1: Average weights for offshore populations 1960 – 2022

Current Reality

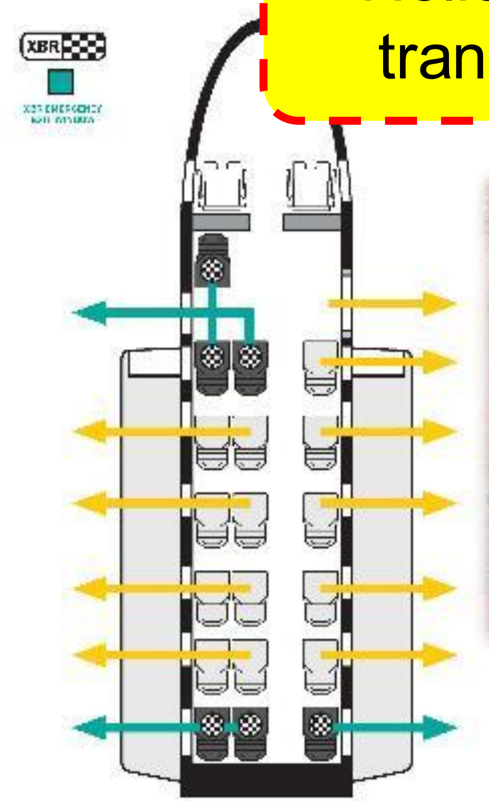
Context – the issue is not just related to average weight but those persons at the more extreme end of the weight distribution





Hazards

HAZID – industry hazard identification has highlighted multiple areas where this presents a hazard



Helicopter transport

Confined Space

Lifeboat Loading

Marine Rescue

Stretcher Rescue

Legislation

Health and Safety At Work etc. Act 1974
Section 2 & 3 General Duties

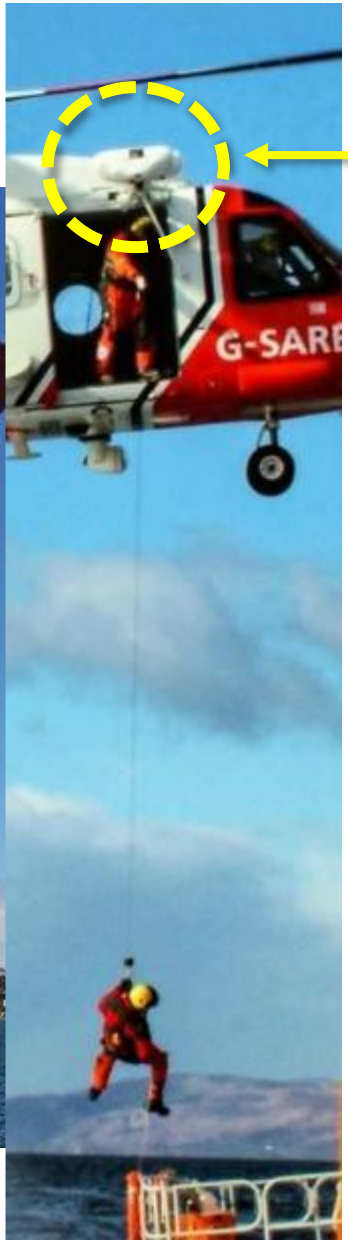
PFEER Regulations 1995
Regulation 5 risk assessment
Regulation 15 Evacuation
Regulation 19 Emergency Response

Safety Case Regulations 2015
Schedule 6 Production Installations SC
Schedule 7 Non-production Installation SC
Regulation 28 Duty to confirm with safety case

Health Care and first aid on offshore installations etc Regulations 1989
Regulation 5 assessment of need
And other relevant statutory provisions

These combined statutory provision require that duty holders manage these risks

Search and Rescue Winching



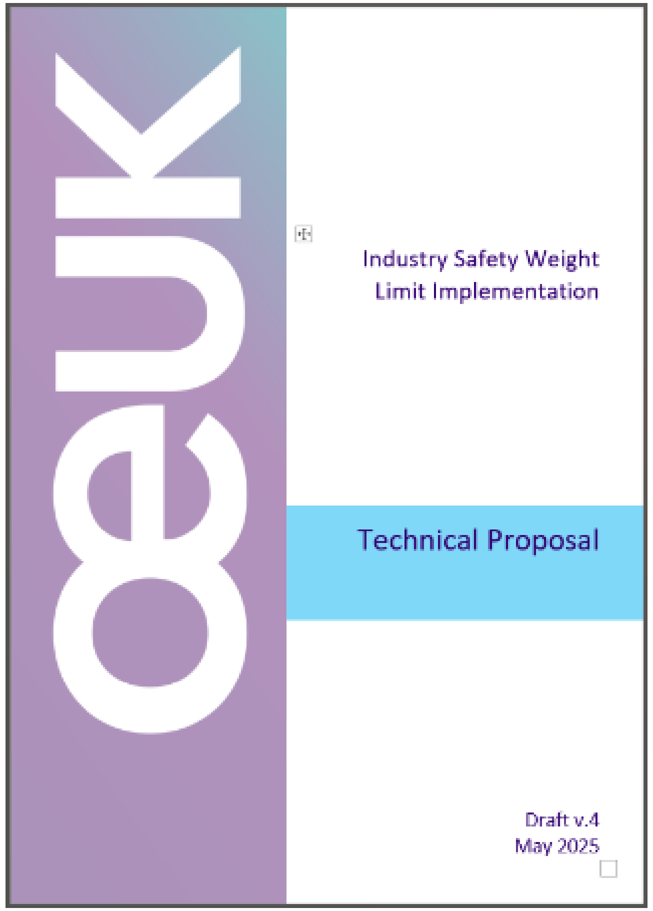
In summary

The increasing weight and size of individuals is of real concern to HM Coastguard and SAR resources. Aside from the wider implications of evacuation, escape and rescue, larger individuals may well impact on the capability of SAR helicopters to effectively respond.

I would therefore request the industry carefully considers the limitations outlined within this letter and look to address the worsening situation of an increasing average weight.

Furthermore, based on the operating weight limits outlined above and the challenges associated with SAR and emergency response, it should be considered whether it is safe for individuals more than 125kg to be working offshore, or working on installations where there may be a limit on the capabilities of SAR resources to support e.g. on a NUI. Should this be deemed acceptable, any limitations and adequate mitigations should be clearly identified.

Current Activity


Industry Safety Weight
Limit Implementation

Technical Proposal

Draft v.4
May 2025

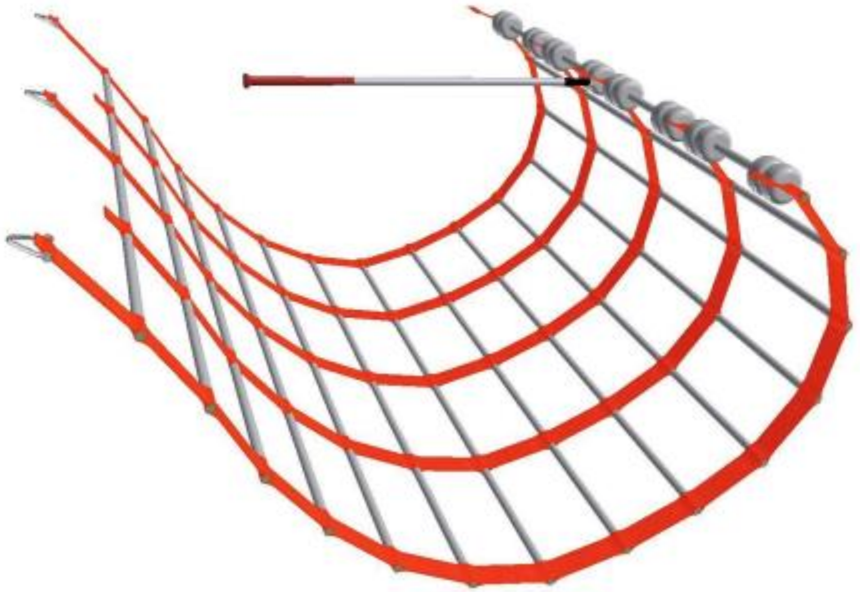
ACTION → Impact assessment

ACTION → Industry and stakeholder consultation

ACTION → Determine mechanisms for implementation

Potential advantages in the marine environment

Dacon Rescue Frame



Graphic courtesy of Ocean Safety

Jasons Rescue Cradle

Photo courtesy of Norwest Marine

Continued operations with existing equipment

QUESTIONS

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