Reducing risk across the oil and gas supply chain

Project summary

Working in partnership with OPITO, Atlas is the sole approved provider of the e-learning programme Minimum Industry Safety Training (MIST). Take-up of the training has been high – and is key to reducing the number of offshore hazards and accidents across the oil and gas industry in the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS).

About the client

In partnership with the oil and gas industry, the Offshore Petroleum Industry Training Organisation (OPITO) wanted to improve safety training for all oil and gas industry personnel in the UKCS. The move was an initiative under 'Step Change in Safety', a UK-based partnership with a remit to make the UK the safest oil and gas exploration and production province in the world.

Business need

OPITO specified Minimum Industry Safety Training (MIST) to ensure that anyone travelling offshore undergoes the right training to minimise hazards at work. On completing the training, learners receive MIST certification, which is transferable across the entire North Sea.

Traditionally this type of training would be carried out as a classroom-based course over two days at a typical cost of around £300 per learner. Instead OPITO commissioned Atlas to deliver this industry standard in a much more efficient and cost-effective way. This was on the basis of Atlas' proven:

- ability to deliver industry-leading, world-class e-learning solutions
- long track record in the oil and gas industry
- unique adaptive learning solution, which dynamically adapts the programme to suit each learner's needs
- excellent relationships throughout the oil and gas supply chain, both in the UKCS and worldwide.

Challenges

Delivering MIST to a target population of around 50,000 workers from over 100 companies presented significant challenges.

- High volumes of targeted learners were scattered across multiple locations, including many remote sites.

- There were expectations that some existing workers and employers would be reluctant to invest in training that many would claim they had already done.

- Experienced works might be resistant because of concerns about failing the course and therefore the implications for future employment. As well as concerns that they may be duplicating what they already know.

- Any solution had to be credible, robust and fail-safe.

- Consistency was needed between training for new recruits and training for experienced workers.

Atlas' approach

Atlas developed MIST as a rich and engaging e-learning experience using its award-winning adaptive learning techniques. It uses pre-assessment to diagnose each learner's knowledge gaps against set learning objectives, then dynamically builds the course specifically to close those gaps. Summative questions are also aligned to learning objectives, so the course is dynamically rebuilt each time the learner reaches the end of a training module. This iterative process reduces the time needed to complete the course. The pass mark is set at 100% to ensure the required levels of knowledge.

MIST comprises two key components: Atlas' e-learning element is targeted at teh experienced Oil and Gas worker. Refresher training is carried out every four years.

MIST is deployed on Atlas' e-learning portal, Petrolearn, which is branded for MIST. Workers in between contracts can self-register and employers can purchase blocks of licences.

Learners' details, assessments and results are stored and tracked on Atlas' industry-leading UNIFY learning management system.

Atlas' solution overcame every delivery challenge.

- The training can be deployed via the internet or on corporate intranets. To cater for low-bandwidth locations it can be delivered on CD-ROM, with results stored in a central or localised database.

- Learners are free to take the course at anytime, anywhere (home, office or learning centre).

- 14 hours of classroom-based content reduced to three hours of media-rich interactive e-learning. By personalising the course for each learner, the average training time is further reduced to below two hours (80% of experienced workers complete the course within two hours).

- The innovative adaptive approach, coupled with the 100% pass mark, engages and incentives learners to maximise learning and complete the course as time-efficiently as possible. Learners are positively motivated because they don't have to focus on content they know.

- Atlas created MIST e-learning in accordance with OPITO standards. It has been assessed and accredited by OPITO to ensure consistency and adherence to existing MIST guidelines.

E-learning structure and content

MIST comprises nine training modules:

- Introduction to the Hazardous Offshore Environment
- Working Safely
- Understanding the Risk Assessment Process
- Tasks that Require a Permit to Work
- Personal Responsibility in Maintaining Asset Integrity

- Using Manual Handling Techniques Every Day
- Controlling the Use of Hazardous Substances Offshore
- Knowledge and Processes of Working at Height
- Being Aware of Mechanical Lifting Activities.

Benefits

Atlas is helping the UK offshore industry to meet its regulatory compliance obligations and to produce a safer workforce and, ultimately, a safer workplace.

MIST has wide support across the UKCS oil and gas industry with steady growth in uptake since it was introduced – over 48,500 oil and gas workers having undertaken the programme by July 2011.

The commercial benefits to the industry are substantial. Around £27 million savings have already been realised as follows.

- The compressed time has significantly reduced downtime needed to complete the course.

- The administrative burden has been dramatically reduced (for example scheduling classroom training and marking and collating results)

- Travel and subsistence costs have been significantly reduced or eliminated

Learners have given very positive feedback about the content and style of delivery. The 100% pass mark ensures complete understanding of the content.

Training is more consistent and effective, with a single central quality-assured verification system.

On the basis of the success of MIST, Atlas was commissioned to design and deliver International Minimum Safety Training (IMIST). This ground-breaking worldwide initiative will set a new common standard to ensure that workers across the global oil and gas industry have the same basic safety understanding, regardless of role or discipline. Launched on 1st July 2011 in the Middle East, IMIST will be rolled out across 30 countries worldwide throughout Asia, Africa and the United States.

"Firstly and most importantly, the biggest benefit is a safer workforce and ultimately a safer workplace, also supplementary to this is the reduced costs, more consistent and effective training and a single central, quality assured, verification that personnel that have been trained to the MIST requirements. Atlas has been a major contributor to the success of this initiative on a number of fronts: development of the e-learning content; delivery of the innovative adaptive learning technology; deployment and management of the portal and LMS."
David Doig, CEO, OPITO

"The Industry sees MIST as a welcome reduction in the duplication in training as workers travel to different locations and employers around the North Sea. Centralising the records for employing companies to have common access to makes a lot of sense."
David Sherrit, Chevron ((can we include this given what David said via email?))

Dev Hazarika, the global quality manager for Weatherford, an oilfield services provider, attended the launch of IMIST in Abu Dhabi and says training for the nine global standards will be valuable. "This is

a major step for the industry to set a minimum training standard in safety, which is becoming a huge challenge with the exposure of various risks nowadays," he says.