Letters from our readers

31 August 2013

On "Shetland helicopter crash exposes North Sea safety crisis"

I read your article with great interest as I work offshore and have flown in super pumas more times than I can count. Your article had several points that I have not seen elsewhere.

A couple of points that I feel should be raised.

After the last helicopter crash a lot of workers have been let go or had work reduced as it has not been possible for them to get offshore due to a reduced number of flights. As most workers work for subcontractors these job losses tend to be hidden.

Another result of reduced flights has been a lot of rigs being run with minimum crew with only essential work being undertaken. This can only lead to increased safety risks on the rigs themselves. Most rigs were well behind on maintenance schedules before this.

Lastly it has been repeatedly stated that the crashes have all resulted from different causes as though this is a defence. Surely this just points to a general lack of effective safety culture in the industry? I can't help but feel that if a major airline had lost five passenger aircraft in four years it would have been shut down.

Keep up the good work. I hope you write more on this topic.

David C

29 August 2013

On "Obama at the Lincoln Memorial"

Editors;

You write: "King, were he alive and holding the same positions he did 45 years ago, would doubtless be targeted by Obama alongside Snowden and Manning."

Carson McCullers, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*: "Jesus would be framed and in jail if he was living today."

Written in 1940, when McCullers was 23.

CW

29 August 2013

On "US-NATO campaign to justify Syria war disintegrates as attack looms"

Miley Cyrus "twerking" and Barack Obama deciding to bomb Syria without Congressional approval or UN sanction. Hmm. Does this remind anyone of Weimar? "Life is a cabaret old chum, life is a cabaret."

Peter L

Connecticut, USA

29 August 2013