

Team Decision Making

A drillship had just began cementing a section of casing on a well. The crew decided to place itself in a DP blue advisory condition during the operation. This was due to the high risk involved if a loss of position were to occur. This near miss incident is a clear example that a well crafted plan and good communication can prevent catastrophic events from occurring.

Incident

The drillship had finished setting casing earlier in the day and prepared to pump cement in the hole. The cementing operation was to start in the afternoon and lead into the night.

The Well Specific Operating Guide (WSOG) on board required the vessel crew to put themselves in a “Blue” advisory condition because of the risk associated with the operation. A meeting was held on the bridge with the captain, drilling superintendent, subsea supervisor and the company man to ensure all parties were aware of the setting of “blue” in accordance with the WSOG. Later in the evening, the weather began to deteriorate and wind started to build to 40kt sustain winds with 50kt gusts. The wind continued to build up to 55kt sustain and 65kt gusts some a few minutes later. The decision was then made to have another meeting on the bridge and vessel leadership decided to place the vessel in a DP yellow status and bring all generators online. The cementing operations were halted in order to prepare for a possible disconnect. The sustain wind speed continued to build with gusts approaching 100kts. The vessel stayed in yellow status until the wind subsided several hours later.

Well Specific Operating Guidelines (WSOG)	
Condition	Action
Green	Continue Normal Operations
Advisory	Inform/Consult/Risk Assess
Yellow	Cease operations and Initiate Contingency Procedures to Prepare for EDS
Red	Halt Operations and Intiate Procedures for EDS

Lessons Learned

- The WSOG was crafted in a way that identified the risk involved with certain critical operations in addition to environmental factors.
- The WSOG was used as a planning tool to make informed decisions.
- The crew maintained an astute awareness of the weather conditions on location.
- The crew maintained effective communications to make informed decisions.
- The crew was empowered to make a decision to shut down operations without any repercussions.