

Just Transition Commission Oil and Gas Trade Union meeting

13 November 2019 17:00 – 19:00

Commission attendees

Colette Cohen
Professor Mike Danson
Dave Moxham, representing STUC
Tom Shields

Meeting summary

Members of the Commission met with representatives of UNITE, GMB and RMT unions to discuss the future of the Oil and Gas sector from a workforce perspective. This helped build on the September meeting of the Commission.

The discussion covered the following themes:

Importance of training and education

- Greater use of technology and the associated training required was said to often be restricted to newer installations. There is a need for this to change and for retraining opportunities to be offered across the industry.
- There was said to be little engagement between the workforce and industry strategies such as Vision 2035. There needed to be greater effort to change this, including engaging directly with workers offshore.
- The current workforce was said to be unsure of the future. Good examples of what job opportunities might be available and how they could benefit were needed to engage them in any discussions of the future.

The need for greater standardisation across industry

- The need for greater consistency between oil and gas and renewables was noted in relation to skills, industry qualifications, and terms and conditions.
- Barriers were often in place that prevented workers moving between sectors. The example of differing health and safety qualifications required for divers working in oil and gas and offshore wind was noted.
- Standardisation that extended to terms and conditions, as well as training qualifications, could act as an enabler for any workforce transition. So long as oil and gas workers stood to lose out if they moved to a similar job in renewables then movement between sectors would be limited.

Importance of regulation to protect workers and drive economic benefit

- There was a clear message from participants regarding the need for strong regulation to protect against degradation of terms and conditions and drive local content in projects.
- With sub-contractors under ever increasing pressure to deliver on tighter margins, there were doubts expressed as to whether the supply chain would be in a place to deliver on the ambition in Vision 2035.

- While there was recognition that this was largely reserved competencies, there was a clear message that Scottish Government could play a role by advocating stronger regulation from UK Government and through engagement with companies in the sector.