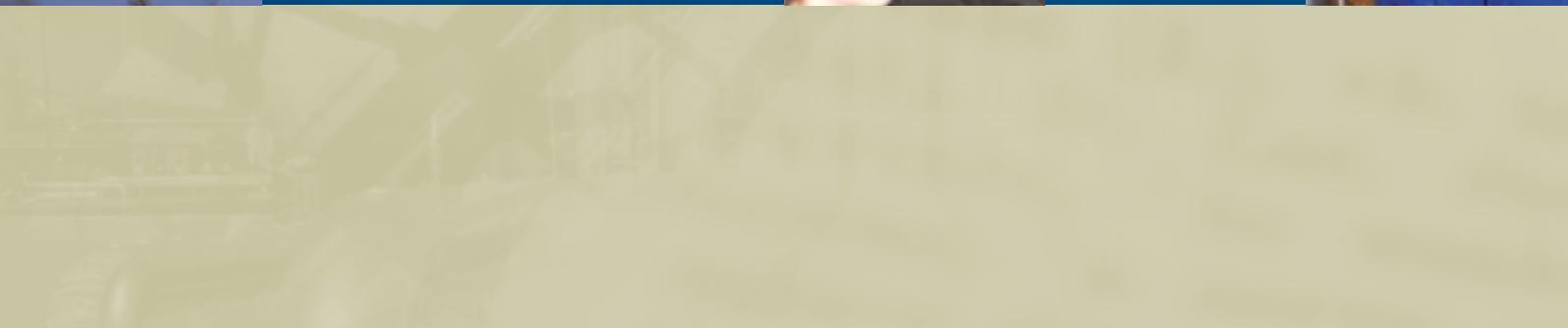
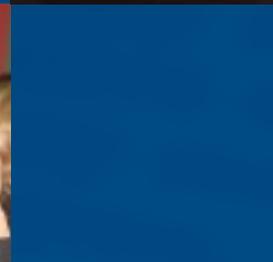


EAST OF ENGLAND SKILLS FOR ENERGY RESEARCH REPORT

PREPARED FOR:

DTI, LSC NORFOLK, COGENT, ECITB, ENERGY & UTILITY SKILLS, SEMTA AND EEGR



SUMMARY

The East of England has many natural assets including offshore gas production in the Southern North Sea, nuclear energy production at Sizewell, the Bacton Gas Terminal, existing on-shore and off-shore wind energy production and further planned developments in grown fuel. It will therefore continue to play a vital role in the supply of energy to the whole of the UK.

BUT we must act now to develop the human resources needed to sustain and grow this activity over the next 10 years.

Young people must be encouraged to study subjects enabling them to enter the industry. Career paths need to be established demonstrating how people can enter the industry and progress within it. More must be done to make the industry as attractive as possible to people who already live and work in the region. These efforts need to be valid both for traditional power generation and for the newer renewable forms of power generation.

Specific attention must be paid to supporting employers who wish to develop the skills and competence of their workforce to meet the needs of their business and the challenge of new technologies.

Action is needed at all levels in the sector to:

- Identify what is meant by the Energy Sector and ensure that its relative value to the region and future potential is better understood by regional decision-makers.
- Identify long term solutions to the problems engendered in this sector by an ageing workforce and how these solutions align or differ from those deployed in other sectors.
- Increase the attractiveness of employment and career development opportunities within the sector as a whole.
- Clarify pathways to employment from age 11 to adulthood.
- Increase the availability and take up of opportunities for adults through adult apprenticeships, foundation degrees and conversion courses.
- Increase the number of people with craft and technical skills in the industry to meet specific skills shortages.
- Publicise current skills gaps and shortages and work with the public and private sector to fill them.

This report is the product of a unique and successful partnership between four Sector Skills Councils, key stakeholders and industry working together to identify both the industry's strengths and areas for development.

It provides the baseline data on which we must build to enhance the profile of the sector and to ensure that we retain and grow a thriving energy sector in the East of England.

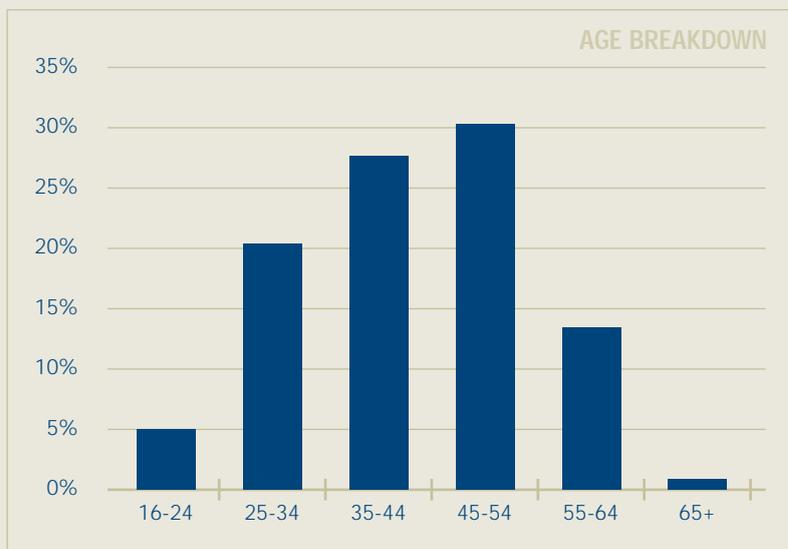
The report strengthens the view that **long-term** solutions are needed to build and sustain the energy sector within the East of England.

Failure to take these actions will make the region vulnerable in a global marketplace.

CONCLUSIONS

The energy sector is diverse in activity and scale and covers both multinational (global) and local, single site operations. The report recommends that a single definition of the industry be agreed in order to understand the scope and range of actions needed to ensure that the region remains critical to the energy industry at all levels.

The sector is characterised by an ageing workforce coupled with recruitment difficulties resulting in both skills gaps and shortages. In the short term these can be resolved through a range of commercial approaches. However, to persuade employers to remain in the region a longer term approach to the development of the skills base is needed.



A public – private sector partnership is required to promote and enhance the image of the sector in order to attract and encourage individuals to train in specific skills. Action must be taken to facilitate entry to the sector at a range of levels with opportunities to acquire a variety of transferable skills and qualifications and to pursue clear career paths into and around the sector.

The region has an opportunity to tackle one of the key changes in the industry which has seen major multi-nationals in the oil and gas industry scale down their presence in the region and as a result the loss of company support for apprenticeships.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Cogent, ECITB, EU Skills and SEMTA supported by IFF Research Ltd researched the current make up and skills issues of the energy industry in the East of England, via both a paper review and through interviews and analysis of employer needs involving 42 employers in the region.

The 8 main recommendations of the report are that:

- The SSCs, Government and regional partners need to give clear and consistent messages to energy companies in the region that the longer term sustainability of the industry is dependent on collective action now to address the issues raised in the Report.
- A reference group of employers that can affect change and act as champions needs to be established to carry forward the action plan arising out of this work.
- The energy sector in the East of England needs to be defined and may go beyond the primary energy production definition used for this report to include for example generation and transmission
- The SSCs and employers supported by public sector partners in the region need to give clear messages about the breadth of opportunities offered by the Energy Sector in terms of rewarding careers in order to address the sector's age and diversity profile.
- The SSCs and ECITB in consultation with employers should map and review the skills and competences needed to meet the sector's future technical and managerial needs taking account of growth in the renewables sector, decommissioning in the oil and gas and nuclear sectors and the impact of the workforce profile and new technologies.
- SSCs supported by regional partners should promote the competence based approach to all companies in the Energy Sector focussing in particular on SMEs as a means not only of meeting the requirements of regulation and health and safety but of increasing productivity and competitiveness. This will also assist the transferability of employees in the sector and help providers to structure and deliver accredited programmes to meet employer need.
- A review of the training provision currently available to companies in the Energy Sector needs to be carried out with a view to achieving coherence and focus matched to employer need and ensuring viability of provision for the suppliers.
- The interface between the education sector (higher education, further education and schools) and employers needs further investigation in two areas:
 - The three way relationship between providers, employees/students and employers in respect of apprenticeships, work experience and placements and work-based learning.
 - The mismatch between the knowledge, skills, attitudes and expectations of graduates from the education sector on entry to employment and the expectations of employers.





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