

Global Underwater Hub

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AquaTerra

Splash Zone Conference 2026

Thursday, 23 April 2026

The Chester Hotel, Aberdeen



Global Underwater Hub
is the leading trade and
industry development
body for the UK's
underwater sectors.

Owned and governed by industry, Global Underwater Hub represents, promotes and supports all sectors of the underwater industry. As the UK's underwater industry organisation, we support our member companies by enabling access to market opportunities, expertise, contacts and specialist support to accelerate market growth and build value.

Splash Zone Conference

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About the Conference

The splash zone, or air/sea interface as it is more technically termed, poses many challenges for offshore infrastructure.

For asset owners, critical items of equipment such as vessel hulls, jacket members, drilling conductors, production risers and caissons have varying integrity risk profiles and are managed by different functions which may mean some aspects are overlooked. Assets are often unique, increasing complexity for owners to maintain integrity through inspection and maintenance campaigns or in the worst case to rectify damage.

Sponsored by [AquaTerra](#), the **Splash Zone Conference** will bring together key industry stakeholders in a format designed to share experiences on the challenges encountered, new methods / technologies being deployed and identify future needs.

Conference sessions will cover:

Session 1: Owner / Operator Challenges

Session 2: Inspection & Maintenance

Session 3: Interventions & Repair

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AquaTerra

Founded in 2003, AquaTerra has grown from a rope access specialist into a trusted multi-discipline partner, delivering construction, maintenance, and inspection services in some of the world's most challenging environments.

Headquartered in Kintore, Aberdeen, with a base in Guyana and operational reach across the UK and internationally, the company supports the global energy sector with reliable expertise wherever it is needed.

AquaTerra operates across sectors including brownfield support, decommissioning, marine, drilling and renewables. Its services cover project management and engineering, multi-discipline construction, integrity and NDT, access solutions, rigging and lifting, as well as hazardous area entry and rescue.

Alongside its services, AquaTerra has developed a distinctive suite of integrity-driven products including AquaShim®, AquaCLAM®, QuikDeck®, Veritas, and C-Cure® designed to extend asset life, enhance safety, and improve efficiency.

By combining technical expertise, innovative products, and adaptable multi-skilled teams, AquaTerra consistently delivers proven results on complex, high-profile projects worldwide.

www.aquaterra.co.uk

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Conference Programme*

08:30 – 09:30	Registration, coffee and networking
09:30 – 09:50	Welcome speeches Graham Whitehead, Manager of Projects, Global Underwater Hub Stephen Taylor, Managing Director, AquaTerra
09:50 – 10:00	Introduction from conference chairperson Janette Paterson, Wood
10:00 – 11:00	Session 1 - Operator Challenges Dean Dickson, Ithaca Energy Craig Donaldson, bp Ciaran Reid, NEO NEXT+
11:00 – 11:40	Coffee & networking
11:30 – 13:00	Session 2 - Inspection & Maintenance Andy Smerdon, Aquatec Group Mike Killeen, Mako Offshore Brea Stephenson, AISUS Graham Ellis, ROVMONIX
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch & networking
13:40 – 15:15	Session 3 - Interventions & Repair Kevin Nelson, AquaTerra Bernt Schjetne, OceanTech Innovation AS Stuart Lawson, THREE60 Energy, Innovair and Oil States
15:15 – 15:20	Closing comments
15:20 – 16:00	Networking & close

**Please note this is a draft programme and subject to change.*

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Confirmed speakers

Delegates attending the **Splash Zone Conference** on **Thursday, 23 April** will hear from representatives of the following organisations.



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AQUATEC



ITHACA
ENERGY

MakOffshore
Intelligence Centralised

NEO
NEXT+

OCEANTECH
INNOVATION

THRE360
ENERGY

ROVMONIX

innovair

TOOL TEC LTD

OIL STATES

Offshore Structural Integrity Management Conference 2026

Wednesday, 22 April 2026



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Speaker biographies



Graham Whitehead

Manager of Projects

Global Underwater Hub

Graham Whitehead is a project manager with Global Underwater Hub and has over 30 years management and engineering experience, working for a range of upstream oil and gas operators, contractors and SMEs with operations in UK, France, and Brazil.



With a BEng (Hons) in Civil Engineering and an MBA, Graham has risen from offshore engineer with a contractor organisation to project / development manager roles in FTSE registered organisations. Since 2018, Graham has supported the activities of GUH, undertaking several studies focused on cross-sector opportunities.

Speaker biographies



AquaTerra

Stephen Taylor

Managing Director
Aquaterra

Stephen Taylor is Managing Director of AquaTerra Group, with extensive experience across the energy, marine, and infrastructure sectors. Over the last 10 years, he has played a central role in transforming AquaTerra from a specialist access provider into a multi-disciplinary engineering and services company supporting oil and gas, decommissioning, marine, and offshore renewables projects worldwide. His leadership has been defined by a strong focus on safety, operational efficiency, and innovation in complex and high-risk environments.

In 2023, he led a management buyout of the business, securing a controlling stake and marking a significant milestone in the company's evolution. Since then, he has driven a strategy centred on sustainable growth, international expansion, and diversification into emerging energy markets. This includes extending the company's global footprint into new regions and strengthening its capabilities in inspection, maintenance, and decommissioning services, while also positioning the business to play an active role in the energy transition.

With a Master's degree in Product Design Engineering, Stephen combines a strong technical foundation with broad operational and management experience. He has held a range of technical, operational, and leadership roles across the energy supply chain, giving him a well-rounded perspective on the challenges and opportunities facing the sector today.

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Speaker biographies



wood.

Janette Paterson

Subsea Projects Inspection Co-ordinator
Wood

Janette Paterson is a Subsea Inspection Projects Co-ordinator with over 20 years of expertise in subsea inspection, execution, and methodology.

She has effectively delivered subsea inspection guidance, database management, and offshore execution support for multiple operators in the North Sea, significantly contributing to the Wood Subsea Inspection Team.

Outside of her professional life, Janette is an enthusiastic golfer who enjoys perfecting her swing.

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Speaker biographies



AQUATEC

Andy Smerdon

Chairman

Aquatec Group

Andy Smerdon is a multi-disciplinary Chartered Engineer and entrepreneur with four decades of hands-on experience in the design, development, and application of subsea instrumentation.

He founded Aquatec in 1990 to advance underwater measurement and communication technologies and today serves as Chair of Aquatec Group and its specialist subsidiary, Tecprime Technology Limited.

A passionate innovator with multiple granted or pending patents, he is currently pursuing a part-time PhD in Engineering at the University of Aberdeen.

Speaker biographies



Bernt Schjetne

Managing Director

OceanTech Innovation AS

Bernt Schjetne is leading OceanTech Innovation, which has been working with robotic operations in the splash-zone over the last 20 years.

Bernt is one of the founders and have almost 40 years of offshore oil & gas experience in several companies.

During the last decades, ha has been one important instigator for using new technology to solve the offshore challenges with work and inspections in the challenging splash-zone. Game-changing technology has been developed to reduce HSE risk and emissions.



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Speaker biographies



Brea Stephenson

Business Development Manager
AISUS



Brea Stephenson is a Business Development Manager at AISUS, an Aberdeen-based company specialising in remote inspection technology. With experience across the oil and gas sector, he plays a key role in expanding AISUS' presence throughout the wider energy industry.

Working closely with operators and engineering teams, Brea supports the delivery of advanced non-destructive testing (NDT) solutions, particularly within challenging areas such as the splash zone.

AISUS continues to advance the use of AI in defect detection and predictive modelling, providing high-quality data intelligence that enables operators to make faster and informed decisions.

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Speaker biographies



Ciaran Reid

Senior Subsea Engineer

NEO NEXT +



Ciaran Reid is a Senior Subsea Engineer at NEO NEXT+, working within the legacy TEPUK technical services team. He is responsible for subsea integrity management across NEO NEXT+'s North Sea asset base.

This year, Ciaran is leading the NEO NEXT+ splash zone inspection scopes, working closely with inspection vendors and offshore teams to deliver safe and successful operations.

NEO NEXT+ is the largest independent oil and gas producer on the UK Continental Shelf, with a long-term commitment to the sector and a key role in supporting UK energy security.”

Speaker biographies



Craig Donaldson

Subsea Solutions - Subsea Site Projects & Life of Field Lead

bp

Experienced subsea professional with 34 years of offshore and onshore experience, specialising in the delivery of modification, integrity and repair projects within brownfield operational environments.

I have a strong track record of leading multidisciplinary teams to safely plan and execute complex subsea repairs, often in challenging conditions requiring innovative and pragmatic solutions.

I am particularly motivated by solving unique subsea problems, applying technical knowledge, operational experience and collaborative leadership to deliver fit-for-purpose outcomes that maintain asset integrity, minimise risk and support continued safe operations

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Speaker biographies



ITHACA
ENERGY

Dean Dickson

Lead Marine Integrity Engineer
Ithaca Energy

Dean Dickson is a structural and marine integrity engineer with 15 years' experience in the oil and gas industry.

His background spans structural engineering, vessel superintendency, and marine and hull integrity management across offshore assets. He has extensive experience overseeing hull and turret integrity on late life assets.

His work focuses on corrosion management, structural reliability, and risk based integrity strategies to enable safe life extension and continued operations.

Speaker biographies



ROVMONIX 

Graham Ellis

Business Development Manager
ROVMONIX

Graham Ellis is an experienced industrial and operations leader with a background spanning manufacturing, oil and gas, subsea, water treatment, energy, and marine-related industries.

He has held senior roles across the UK, Europe, Africa, and the USA, leading teams in asset management, supply chain, operations, and business development.

His career includes delivering major operational improvements, reducing costs, improving compliance, and introducing practical innovation in technically demanding environments.

His broad industry experience, hands-on approach, and focus on safety, efficiency, and performance give him a strong perspective on the real-world challenges BioBlade is designed to solve.

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Speaker biographies



AquaTerra

Kevin Nelson

Technical Manager
Aquaterra

Kevin Nelson is the Technical Manager at AquaTerra Group, bringing over nine years of experience within the business.

Having joined AquaTerra as a Junior Project Engineer, Kevin has progressed through several roles, most recently as Technical Manager overseeing a range of Inspection, Repair and Maintenance projects for key clients.

He has played a pivotal role in the development and commercialisation of the AquaShim

® stabilisation product range since 2017. As a member of the senior leadership team, Kevin leads the company's technical strategy product development and innovation, while mentoring and developing AquaTerra's technical team.

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Speaker biographies



Mike Killeen

Managing Director

Mako Offshore Ltd.

Michael ("Mike") Killeen is a British offshore engineering entrepreneur and director of Mako Offshore Ltd, a Scotland-based company providing inspection, ROV tooling, and integrity solutions to the energy sector.

He co-founded the business in 2019 and serves as a principal shareholder and Managing Director, helping guide its technical and business development.

He is the inventor of multiple patented offshore and subsea engineering technologies, reflecting a focus on practical, cost-effective inspection solutions.



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Speaker biographies



Nick Rettie

Managing Director
Tool Tec Ltd

Nick Rettie is the founder and Managing Director of Tool Tec. For over 13 years, he has steadily grown the business into an award-winning provider of Remote Intervention Tooling Solutions, supporting projects globally with both standard and bespoke solutions.



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Speaker biographies



Stuart Lawson

Solutions Director and Co-Founder
THREE60 Energy, Oil States, Innovair

Stuart is a leader redefining the inspection of energy assets in challenging, remote, and hazardous environments.

With over 18 years' experience in Oil & Gas and wind energy, and a degree in Artificial Intelligence & Robotics, Stuart has delivered hundreds of offshore projects, combining technical expertise with advanced robotics and AI-driven solutions.

As Solutions Director at Innovair, he's passionate about making energy assets safer and more productive, leveraging cutting-edge technologies and his deep industry knowledge to help clients achieve efficient, reliable, inspections that maximise asset longevity.

Future events from Global Underwater Hub

Global Underwater Hub organises a series of events throughout the year, bringing together businesses to discuss key industry topics. Full event information, including booking details and calls for abstracts can be found on our website at www.globalunderwaterhub.com, where you can also sign up to receive our weekly e-newsletter.

Subsea Cable Insurance Conference & Workshop 2026

Wednesday, 20 May 2026 | **Hilton Canary Wharf, London**

Returning for its fourth edition, the conference will once again convene representatives from across the subsea cabling, offshore energy and insurance sectors. Topics expected to be discussed include: failure modes – physical and electrical; interventions; monitoring; and insurance.



Underwater Robotics Conference 2026

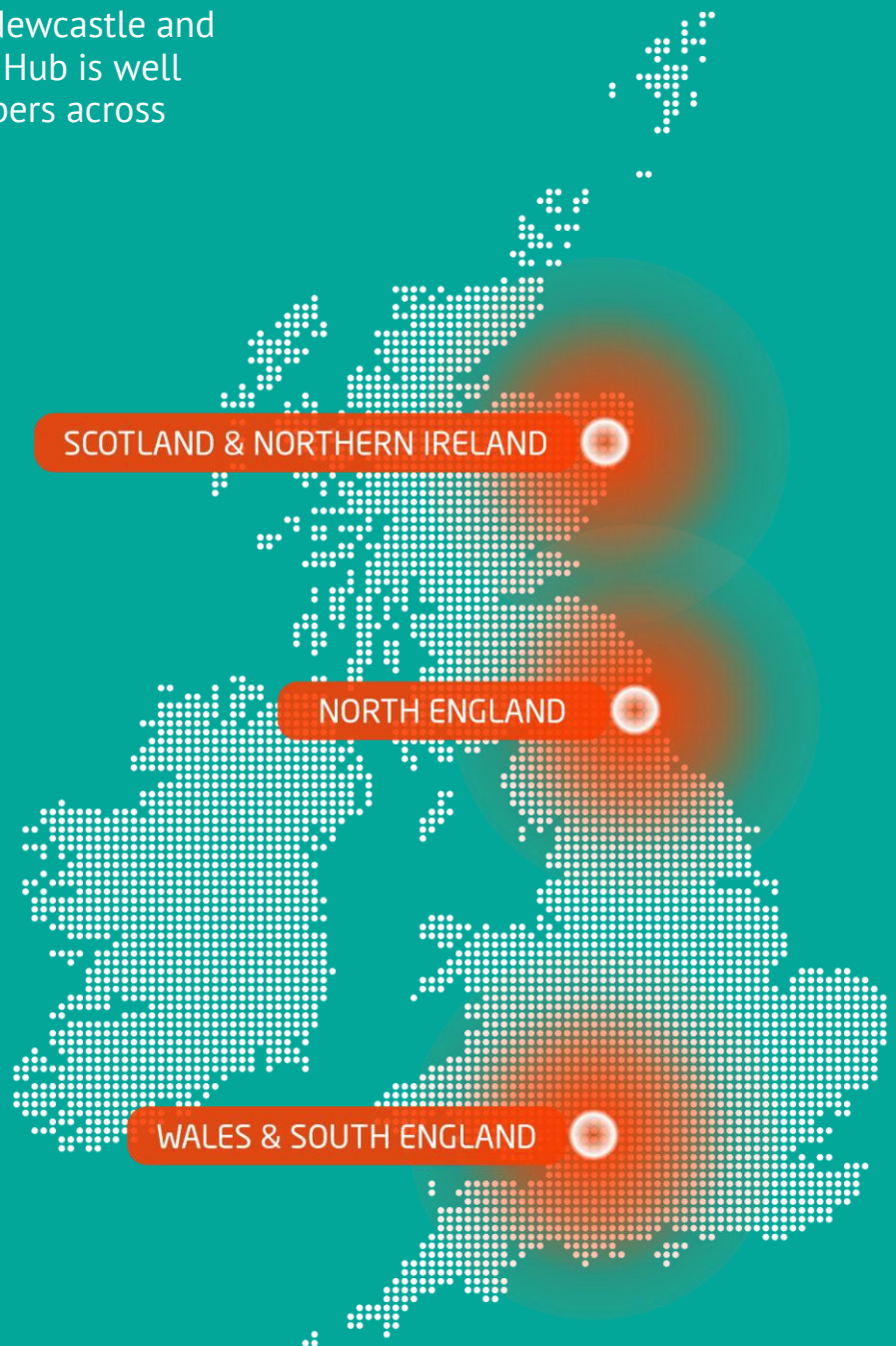
Tuesday, 30 June 2026 | **Murrayfield Stadium, Edinburgh**

This established annual conference is focused on the development and application of underwater robotic technology. The one-day event is set to explore topics including data acquisition, AI and interpretation; regulation and insurance; seabed crawlers and intervention; and the new wave of developments and the challenges and opportunities they bring.



Led and governed by industry, Global Underwater Hub is helping to transform the UK's underwater industry into one of the largest and fastest-growing industries in the country, accelerating the drive to net-zero and creating high value jobs and exports.

With offices in Aberdeen, Newcastle and Bristol, Global Underwater Hub is well placed to support its members across the United Kingdom.



Access. Connect. Grow.



1 Abercrombie Court
Arnhall Business Park
Prospect Road
Westhill
Aberdeen
AB32 6FE

01224 506600
info@theguh.co.uk



www.globalunderwaterhub.com

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