

Training offshore professionals for more than four decades

Andie Marshall, business manager at Petans, discusses how the business helps people train for an exciting career in offshore energy.

Based in Horsham St Faith, at the back of Norwich Airport, Petans has delivered professional safety and survival training to the offshore energy sector for over 40 years.

In order to work, offshore employees must complete some basic safety training. This may include first aid, helicopter underwater escape training, working at height, fire awareness and basic firefighting and personal survival techniques.

Courses vary in length and must be repeated at regular intervals depending upon the industry and its awarding body's specific requirements.

As well as these basic courses, Petans delivers more specialist training such as confined space and emergency response for fire and helideck teams, both to the wider energy sector and beyond.

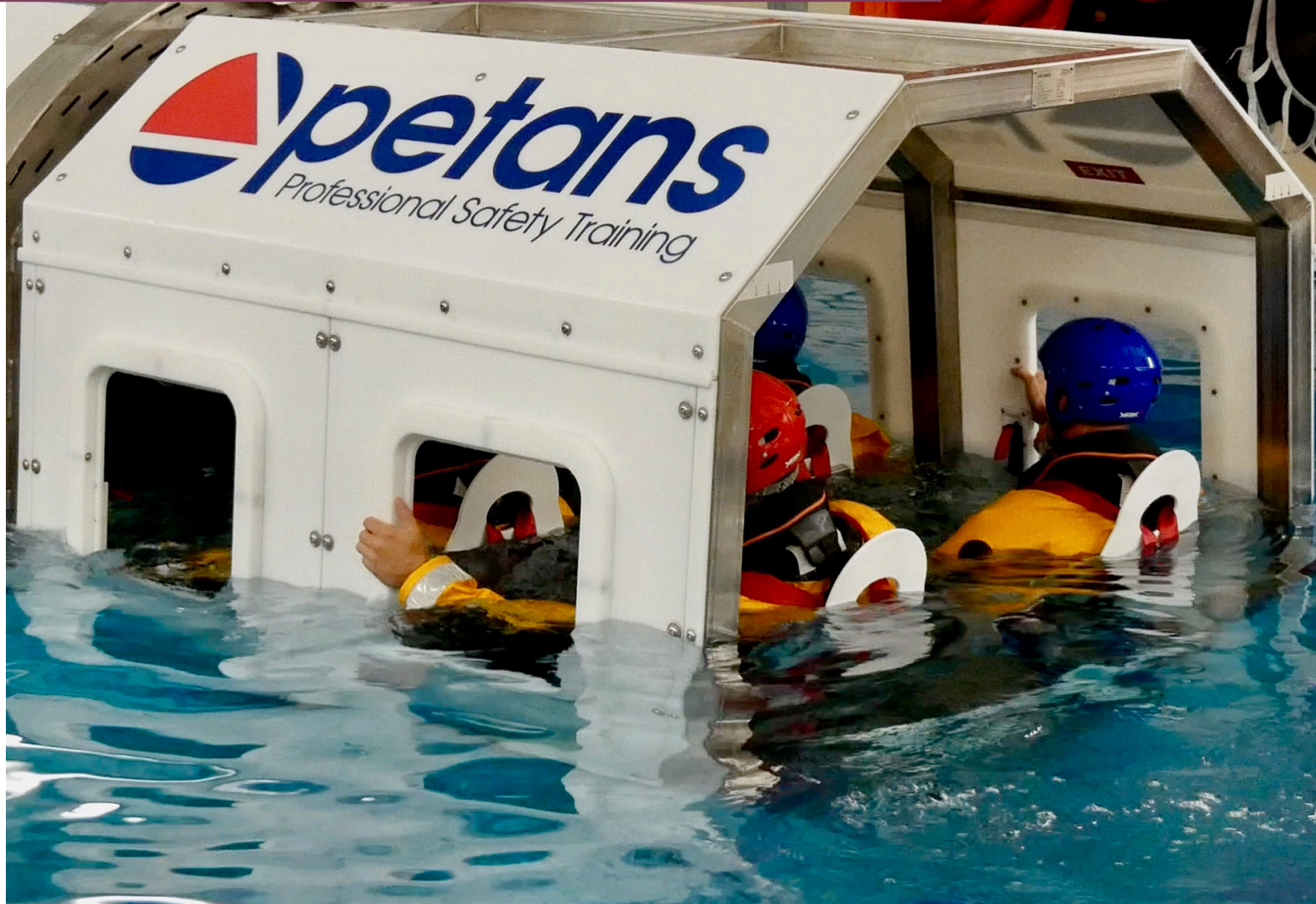
"We have been situated in Horsham St Faith for over 40 years and are well known to the offshore sector, but when the Norwich Northern Distributor Road (NDR) opened in December 2017, we became very visible to the local community, although they are often unsure of what we do," said business manager Andie Marshall.

"Our site is unique to the area, and anyone who visits is always amazed by the size and the vast array of facilities that we have."

As a registered charity, Petans can differentiate itself from competitors by reinvesting into its training centre and facilities.

In recent years, the business has introduced a second dual firefighting module and various firefighting props that allow both the traditional kerosene burn and the burning of cleaner gas.

As well as investing in training facilities and equipment, it also offers innovative grants to support individuals, local companies and the wider energy sector.



Petans has a specialist facility for helicopter underwater escape training. Inset below left, Andie Marshall

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Up until the end of February, Petans ran two grant schemes that offered up to £300 off a training course.

The offshore sector has different safety courses depending upon the industry you wish to work in – oil and gas, renewables or maritime. These safety courses are a must-have for new entrants wanting to forge a career offshore. Although they cannot guarantee employment, they are an essential stepping stone into the industry.

All of Petans' grant programmes can be accessed by employers or individuals.

The New Entrant Grant is open to those who are either on a UK government recognised apprenticeship, an HM Armed Forces resettlement programme or to someone currently unemployed.

When the industry suffered a downturn in 2016, Petans introduced a further grant to



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support those experienced workers who were being made redundant to keep their safety skills in date.

"The aim of the Experienced Worker Grant was to encourage individuals to keep their safety skills in date or diversify their skills across the industry, to help not only their chances of re-employment but also prevent

the industry losing vital experience," said Andie.

Petans' charitable status allows it to look at ways of supporting the industry and the local community.

With the full backing of its trustees, the company recently launched a new grant scheme aimed at official employability trusts including charities,

foundations and not-for-profits.

"Our trustees offer us a great sounding board for ideas," said Andie. "They offer their time freely and are a mix of backgrounds which provides invaluable experience and industry knowledge."

Petans realised that as well as those unemployed, there were charities looking to help low-income individuals enter the energy sector.

Opportunely, the launch of its third grant programme coincided with the launch of Energise, an employability programme new to Norfolk managed by charity Catch22 and funded by Shell.

"Although it is early days, we are delighted that our first Employability Grant delegate completed a three-day safety training course with us earlier this month," said Andie.

"We understand they have gained industry employment, which is great news and demonstrates exactly what the grant is for."

For more information, visit petans.co.uk/grants, email info@petans.co.uk or call 01603 891255