



# M.O.S.T.

*McMillan Offshore Survival Training*

148 Waterville Road  
Belfast ME 04195  
207-338-1603

## **M.O.S.T. Newsletter – August 2008**

*From the desk of John McMillan*

**To Our Friends:**

### **INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN THE FAROE ISLANDS**

As the United States representative to the International Association for Safety and Survival Training, ([www.iasst.com](http://www.iasst.com)) one of my responsibilities is to attend the conferences held twice a year. The last conference was held in the Faroe Islands.

Situated in the heart of the Gulf Stream in the North Atlantic, the Faroe Islands lie northwest of Scotland and halfway between Iceland and Norway. The archipelago is composed of 18 islands covering 545 square miles and is 70 miles long and 687 miles of coastline.

The commercial fishing industry is the most important source of income for the Faroes. This is the primary reason I attended the meeting as the conference focused on safety at sea issues related to the fishing industry. As many of you watch the “Deadliest Catch” you realize the dangers associated with this industry. In the Faroes, the waters are not cold and rough; they are VERY cold and VERY rough. There is a difference. Death is a reality in the fishing industry

Some of the topics discussed at the conference were:

1. Stress indicators for Fishermen
2. Fatigue Factors in Lifesaving Craft
3. Reflections about psychological services to Shipwrecked survivors
4. The Fishing boat of tomorrow

Each one of these topics could be discussed at any industry conference where human life is at risk as we all have stress, fatigues issues, mental discomforts after emotional

tragedies and looking into the future of “what’s the next step” for safety in a particular industry.

Like offshore oil workers, fishermen spend a lot of time away from their families, experience fatigue issues like poor rest factors, mental/physical stress, financial concerns and working environment hazards. We as safety professionals do our best to address these issues but from this conference, I learned there is more to be done as each individual has specific needs. This is the next step of our training is to identify these needs and address them accordingly.

Steve Callahan who wrote the book “Adrift” was at sea for 76 days in a life raft. He was one of the presenters and also a personal friend. I have known Steve since the mid 1980’s. He put it best when he said “You must find psychological rest as an aquatic caveman or it will steal your most valuable piece of equipment, your ability to think”

As with all conferences you get a chance to meet and speak with people during the after hour stress reliever conference. In conversation with other training vendors from around the world, we all agreed that it is difficult to meet the training demands and locate instructors that have a passion for the subject matter and not just driven by the paycheck. With the interest of other international training providers now entering the US market to persuade Gulf of Mexico operators to follow international standards, I make this statement to those that are considering this venture. Make sure you know more about the instructor than he has a wonderful resume, many years of experience, traveled the world, speaks with a different accent, has a nice company uniform with a nice logo, loves to dance and makes his own clothing.

My question is why send the best instructor from our organization when I know it will be difficult to replace him/her? It is just something that not many oil companies would think about as I know I would not send my brother Haas or Wikoff to Nigeria, Qatar, Colombia, Brazil, Angola, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea or Mexico to meet our training request. However, the combat water survival instructor from the Marines, pack your bags.

**John McMillan, President**  
McMillan Offshore Survival Training