

Refining the DP Watch Circle

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Abstract

One of the most important facets of DP Operations is making sure that if you lose location you do so with the minimum risk to personnel, environment, and equipment. Historically, most DP vessels have used the idea “watch circles” to define when it is time to take action. The YELLOW watch circle indicated deterioration of station keeping ability, and time to cease operations and prepare for loss of station. The RED watch circle indicated loss of location, and time to minimize risk and damage

Today, we have much more challenging DP Operations, which require a much more sophisticated understanding of how to manage loss of location.

This paper will discuss how the Watch Circle has evolved into a detailed technical analysis of operating limitations. Today, the Well Specific Operating Guideline is used to assess all risks to the vessel, determine which are the limiting factors, and output a simple set of guidelines by which the DPO can minimize risk to personnel, environment, and equipment no matter what situation arises

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