

Case Study



Consultation, training and specialist rescue provision for remote wind turbine works

Background

As one of the world's leading companies in the wind energy industry, ENERCON innovations have been setting new standards in technological design since 1984. The company has installed more than 27,000 wind turbines, with their E-40 model most prevalent, which pioneered the gearbox-less design in 1993.

MRS Training & Rescue have been providing accredited health and safety training to the wind industry since 2012 from their specialist training facilities in Crossgates, Fife. This includes an actual wind turbine, providing the most realistic of training conditions.

Initial Approach

ENERCON's HSE Manager, Simon Heesom, is a chartered Health and Safety Practitioner and has worked with MRS for over 15 years. He joined ENERCON in 2020 and having had experience of our technical knowledge and experience in confined space and at height work, he requested a site visit to one of the wind turbines in the North of Scotland. We initially provided help and advice in determining if the turbine and work involved was a confined space as categorised by the confined space regulations.

The Planning Stage

Liam Parrish, one of our specialist wind turbine safety operatives, visited the site with Simon and identified what the work was, where it was taking place and the best way to approach it. As this included ENERCON employees doing hot work (welding) inside the hub, Liam also discussed the appropriate training needed, which included managing confined space and medium risk confined space training.

It was also important to ENERCON that they hired professional, specialist rescue provision for when the works took place. So, as well as delivering the training, we provided a 3-person rescue team for the duration of the work on site.

When planning the rescue provision, we established that although the work was being done inside the hub, the hatch from the hub to the nacelle was not gas tight and so the entire area had to be classified as a confined space.



The wind turbine



Planning and preparing rescue provision

“ I have complete confidence in the team at MRS and know that whenever we work with them, I and my team are in safe hands. The quality of their training and service is second to none and they are truly experts in their field. I'd have no hesitation in recommending them to anyone else needing health and safety advice in industry. ”
Simon Heesom - HSE Manager, ENERCON.



What we did

To ensure our team could provide a fast rescue response if required, we set up a fresh air base three quarters of the way up the turbine on an internal platform. There, our team had all our equipment and breathing apparatus on hand, so that we could respond quickly in the event of an emergency.

At the start of the 5-day rescue provision, we conducted a mock emergency rescue exercise to demonstrate our capabilities of getting a casualty from the hub to ground level swiftly and safely. We then provided top person / standby duties each day. This included opening the confined space hatch every morning, checking gas readings initially and throughout the day, setting up appropriate ventilation to extract any fumes from the turbine and managing the overall safety of the team working in the hub.



MRS Training & Rescue's specialist team with ENERCON

View from the rescue platform

