Topic: Cold snaps and winter conditions

**Discussion points**

- **Cross-sector consideration**: One of the most significant impacts of cold snaps and winter conditions is travel and access as it can affect business continuity. Operators, required supplies, and potentially emergency responders can experience restricted access to sites. This can be made more significant if the conditions also result in loss of utilities or power to site. However, covid has made organisations more resilient to access limitations with staff able to continue to work remotely. Winter conditions can also result in equipment being outside of its operating conditions, also effecting business continuity. For example, steel work and associated handling equipment/cranes. Certain electrical switchgear can also struggle in cold weather conditions, potentially resulting in loss of power supplies.

- **Construction**: Flooding is a significant challenge in winter conditions. Both from a business continuity perspective, and from a run-off perspective, with the potential of site run-off making it to natural water courses. This risk is managed at site as part of normal operations. Organisations are adopting sheltered construction techniques, with activities occurring within weatherproof shelters, as well as adopting offsite construction techniques.

- **Oil and gas**: Cold winter conditions traditionally not a challenge for O&G industry, except in regions inexperienced to those conditions.

- **Nuclear**: One of the main operational risks for nuclear sector from winter conditions is disruption to site access, potentially resulting in issues with minimum staffing levels. Nuclear sites have considered this risk and have appropriate arrangements in place to manage it.

- **Climate change**: There was large discussion on the potential for climate change to affect the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC) (see links). As the AMOC supports the transport of heat and moisture from southern, warmer regions, its weakening or loss could significantly affect the UK (and northern Europe’s) climate resulting in colder and dryer conditions. With society and organisations considering increasing temperatures as a result of climate change, the weakening or loss of the AMOC could significantly undermine adaptation measures and actions with huge negative impacts across society and the economy.

**Key Takeaways**

- **Transport interruptions that affect site access have resulted in significant disruption in the past. Improved remote working has improved organisational resilience since covid.**

- **Loss of the AMOC, as a result of climate change, would have significant impacts to society, as we are unprepared for its consequences.**

**Useful links**

- [Met Office AMOC Link](#)
- [Guardian AMOC Link](#)