

North Sea Reporter

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Active abatement projects needed to meet emissions targets, warns NSTA

UK offshore oil and gas emissions fell another 7% in 2024, but the North Sea regulator is warning the industry that it will not meet its long-term emission reduction targets without “serious investment in large-scale active emissions abatement projects”.

The North Sea Transition Authority (NSTA), in a statement yesterday (Tuesday), said its 2025 *Emissions Monitoring Report* showed a fifth consecutive year of reductions, contributing to a decline in emissions of 34% since 2018. Flaring fell 4.8% last year and was 51% lower than in 2018, it added.

The regulator said the target of halving emissions by 2030, which was agreed by government and industry in the North Sea Transition Deal, “is now well within reach”. NSTA CEO Stuart Payne said the reductions to date showed real progress “that comes from real efficiencies and new technologies from the supply chain”.

Just over half of the emissions reductions achieved between 2018 and 2024 were from installations still online at the end of that period, with the rest linked to assets ceasing production, the report said.

The NSTA said its analysis shows emissions have fallen “due in part to robust regulation and industry investments in flaring reduction technologies, more fuel-efficient or low-carbon power generation and gas compression equipment and the adoption of good operational practice, on top of the effect of installations closing down”.

However, the NSTA emphasised that industry needs to do more if it is to hit its 2040 target of lowering emissions by 90% from 2018 levels or achieve net zero by 2050. It warned that “projected reductions are lagging behind ambitions in the longer term unless there is significant new action”.

The regulator pointed out that the North Sea oil and gas sector still accounts for upwards of 3% of total UK greenhouse gas emissions, while most gas that is imported by pipeline results in fewer greenhouse gas emissions per barrel than domestic output. *(Continued on page 2)*