# **MARGATE OFFSHORE WIND FARM**

**IN HOCHIKI** CASESTUDY

#### **CASE STUDY**

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# HOCHIKI LIFE SAFETY PRODUCTS ARE THE 'GO TO' BRAND WHEN IT COMES TO KEEPING ONE OF THE UK'S BIGGEST OFFSHORE WIND FARMS OPERATING SAFELY.

For a country once solely reliant on coal to power its homes and businesses, the UK is now the leader in offshore wind energy. Encouragingly, today 44% of the UK's electricity comes from renewable sources – a figure expected to grow to meet the UK's climate goals of net-zero emissions by 2050 and 40 GW of offshore wind by 2030.

One of the facilities helping to achieve this greener goal is the Margate offshore Wind Farm, operated by London Array. Generating about £1million worth of electricity a day when all 175 turbines are in operation, this wind farm produces enough electricity to power half a million UK homes a year and reduces harmful CO2 emissions by around 925,000 tons per year. But with this incredible achievement, comes the awesome responsibility of keeping the people who are helping to make this green energy production a reality, safe. KM Security Solutions are the contractors responsible for the security, fire safety and evacuation systems on board the offshore and onshore substations, and for them life safety is the number one priority. Therefore, they say Hochiki are their 'go to' manufacturer when it comes to the installation of fire detection products at the sites they operate.

Dan Smith, Technical Services Manager for KM Security Solutions explains: "The constant change in weather combined with sea-salt spray makes offshore wind farms an incredibly hostile environment to work in, not only for people but also for the systems, cabling and devices that help to run it and keep it safe. Anyone who steps foot on one of the wind farm rigs must be highly skilled and trained. All my teams undergo intensive, and ongoing, training to ensure they keep themselves and those around them safe. Therefore, it's imperative we install life safety devices that won't let the teams and premises down in an emergency."

Having worked with Hochiki for well over a decade, Smith described this latest project at the wind farm which paved the way for the current generation of even larger wind farms being built around Britain's coastline, as a refresh of the existing Hochiki technology and systems. "We have been using Hochiki products for well over a decade now. Not only do we trust them to work, but we also trust the devices to last. When you are out at sea, even a few miles off the coast, the weather can change in an instant, and decay is a big problem to tackle. You need to ensure that the life safety products you install are fit for purpose and more importantly weatherproof. The Hochiki products specified are designed to be waterproof and have lasted extremely well. Which is incredible considering the environment they are operating in.

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#### Flexibility is key

For this unique and vital project Visual Alarm Devices (VADs) combined with the CHQ-WPK Weatherproofing Kit, IP-rated manual call points and the Hochiki FIREvac Voice Alarm system was installed across the windfarm's sub-stations. As well as being simple to install, one of the USPs of Hochiki Life Safety devices is the flexibility to be able to operate alongside other brand products via Hochiki's open protocol, ESP. Although Hochiki do manufacture their own fire control panels, such as the L@titude platform, in the case of the Margate Wind Farm project, a control system was already in place, and it was the devices which needed the upgrade. "We do look at other companies, to ensure we are using the best in class, however every time we come back to Hochiki products for several reasons - the main one being the innovation in technology and flexibility the Hochiki range offers us."

The other benefit is the fact that Hochiki provide isolating devices. When you consider the scale of a life safety system on board a Wind Farm Rig, you can imagine the chaos that would ensue should part of the system fail. "Failures can arise from parts of the system experiencing erosion from the weather, where plastic parts can break down, allowing water ingress, causing short-circuits which could impact the entire life safety system onboard. Using the isolating devices from Hochiki prevents an entire system from going down, isolating only the part that has failed, saving time, money, and materials. It allows us to go in as part of our ongoing maintenance project and upgrade parts as and when needed without the need for huge overhauls." The other added benefit of Hochiki isolating devices is, and particularly prudent in a facility which is helping protect the environment, is the reduction in waste, as only the part that no longer works is replaced, not an entire system.

When asked if Smith would recommend Hochiki "absolutely, 10 out 10. We are about to start new projects on several other offshore wind farms around the UK and Hochiki will once again be our go to brand for life safety systems."