



# AT WORK

A SELECTION OF DIFFERENT EXAMPLES FROM THE EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE OF BOSKALIS

## TRAINEES SPEAKING

Already in the first weeks of their programme our trainees are introduced to NINA. How do they view the safety programme? What are their experiences in practice? And how do they see their own role in it?



| Nol van Loon

*Nol van Loon (25), dredging operations*

### “NOT JUST FOR SHOW”

“What strikes me in the NINA training is that it’s about one’s responsibility and starting a conversation. That is what I see in practice as well. When I was working on the JNPT project in Mumbai, we started every meeting with NINA. Initially I thought ‘why would you begin with safety when there are so many other important issues?’ But I quickly found out that it’s not just for show and that everyone shares what has happened. I noticed that it made me much more aware of the risks. And I’m not afraid to take my responsibility. I often went to a yard, for example, where I saw workers doing welding jobs wearing flip-flops and without safety goggles. Should I say something about that, as a visitor? When I asked my supervisor he said I could certainly raise the issue with the men working for us. So that is what I did. And the special thing was that they began confronting other workers about their behaviour. It was a good thing to see.” ■

*Patrick Bollen (25), dredging operations*

### “HOW FAR DOES ONE’S RESPONSIBILITY GO?”

“I liked the NINA training because it starts a discussion. However, what you see in practice is not always how things should be done. Not everyone has the same view. I experienced that several times, for instance with wearing PPE. At first, I never said anything about it to anyone, as it made me feel uncomfortable. In the daily safety meetings all sorts of minor issues are discussed; that is a good thing I think, as they determine everyday practices. In such a meeting I find it easier to express my opinion on safety issues than in a one-to-one situation. What I also find difficult is: how far does your responsibility go? In Central America we were working as a subcontractor on a project. The client’s supervisor used to



| Patrick Bollen

walk barefoot on the pipeline. I raised the issue with my supervisor, who spoke to the project management about it several times, but nothing actually changed. So what can you do? To what extent are you responsible for your client?” ■

*Gijs Heida (25), dredging operations*

### “SITUATIONS ARE DIFFICULT TO ASSESS”



| Gijs Heida

“The NINA values sound very logical but it’s good to pay attention to them. For larger jobs there are procedures, but not for smaller ones that seem

simpler. So then it is important to discuss it together, see the risks and take your responsibility. I find it easier to address subcontractors about their behaviour than a colleague with lots of experience. Although I do notice that people appreciate it if you raise something, as a trainee I am a little cautious. You need to be experienced to properly assess a situation. Is it safe or not? For example, we were going to hoist a plough with a pin that did not fit well. Is the load going to fall or not? I’m not really a good judge of that. All you can do is ask an open question.” ■



| Syward van Wijnbergen

*Syward van Wijnbergen (28), offshore energy operations*

## “TRAINING IS ABOUT CREATING AWARENESS”

“My experience with safety trainings was that they were mainly about explaining rules, which made you dose off rather quickly. With the NINA training, they present a case, you are asked to choose one side and you talk about it with each other. There is no right or wrong: it’s about creating awareness, so it’s completely different. The training also enabled me to explain to others, for instance clients, what NINA stands for. Which parts of it you

are actually going to use in practice strongly depends on the environment, I think. In offshore energy you are much more bound by rules and procedures than in dredging, so there are fewer safety issues. I was on a drilling platform for a month where you needed a permit for everything. There was a procedure for every job. The client we were working for had extremely high safety standards and appreciated NINA, so that was a good match.” ■

*Niels Gerlofs (25), offshore energy operations*

## “BEING TACTICAL”

“Because everyone within the organisation knows the NINA values, it’s easy to talk about it. But how do you start such a conversation? And how can you make sure that your feedback is received positively? This was not part of the training and I find it quite difficult. I try to be tactical and ask open questions. If I’m not sure if something is dangerous I ask my supervisor. For example, during a docking we had to hoist down a screw. During the operation I checked the meters and saw

that the maximum load-bearing capacity was reached. When I pointed this out to the superintendent, he asked: “What would you do?” “Check what the safe workload is earlier”, I replied. Obviously, it was too late for that now, but the next time I would certainly check that in advance. Eventually, we considered the options and decided to divide the load more equally over the pulley tackles by gradually letting these go down and closely monitor the meters.” ■



| Niels Gerlofs



| Tom de Silva

*Tom de Silva (24), offshore energy operations*

## “DO NOT SLAM THE DOOR”

“All NINA values begin with ‘I’. This means that you yourself take the initiative. For example, addressing other people. Personally, I have no problem with that. I try to keep it light-hearted and amiable because you don’t want to slam any doors, do you? An open atmosphere is very important. If the atmosphere is tense, work is much harder, as people tend to pay so much attention to side issues that they lose sight of the main issues. I also found that safety on paper is quite different from safety in practice. I once was the only person on site when some trucks

had to be unloaded. The forklift truck driver was qualified on paper, but actually he barely knew where the steering wheel was. So what do you do? I then decided he had to stop and we needed to bring in another party because I thought it was irresponsible.” ■

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES IN NINA AT WORK? THIS IS YOUR PLATFORM!**  
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