

# European Offshore Wind Deployment Centre Environmental Statement

## Chapter 17: Ministry of Defence





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17	MINISTRY OF DEFENCE .....	4
17.1	Introduction.....	4
17.1.1	Methodology Consultation.....	4
17.1.2	Key Guidance Documents.....	4
17.1.3	Data Information and Sources.....	4
17.2	Baseline Assessment .....	4
17.3	Impact Assessment .....	4
17.3.1	Effect of the EOWDC on the Operability of the Defence Radar Installation at Buchan (Peterhead) .....	4
17.3.2	Effect of the EOWDC on the Black Dog Firing Range .....	5
17.4	Summary .....	5

## 17 MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

### 17.1 Introduction

- 1 This chapter considers the potential implications of the European Offshore Wind Deployment Centre (EOWDC) in relation to any impacts upon the Ministry of Defence (MoD).
- 2 The proposed EOWDC is in close proximity to military facilities such as the Black Dog firing range, therefore the MoD interests and potential conflicts with other activities has been a key consideration for the project.

#### *17.1.1 Methodology Consultation*

- 3 Consultation with the MoD has been ongoing since 2005. Liaison with MoD has been constructive, with several meetings being held at Defence Estates, and one at a Royal Air Force (RAF) base in the north of England to discuss the radar interference issue.

#### *17.1.2 Key Guidance Documents*

- 4 Development of any issues will comply with all relevant MoD guidance documents in this area.

#### *17.1.3 Data Information and Sources*

- 5 In matters of national security, the MoD is the sole holder of the relevant detail to make the assessment of the impact of the project upon their activities

### 17.2 Baseline Assessment

- 6 Consultation with the MoD has raised two key issues relating to the proposed EOWDC, these are:
  - any effect of the project on the operability of the defence radar installation at Buchan (Peterhead)
  - any effect of the project on the Black Dog firing range – a small-arms firing range on the coast nearby, but with an associated exclusion zone at sea during firing

### 17.3 Impact Assessment

#### *17.3.1 Effect of the EOWDC on the Operability of the Defence Radar Installation at Buchan (Peterhead)*

- 7 The MoD undertook an assessment on the current layout 39 (LABER039) in September 2010 as a response to a Request for Scoping Opinion (see Appendix 4.2). They responded that 'the wind turbines will be 26 km from; in line of sight to; and will cause unacceptable interference to the Air Defence (AD) radar at Buchan'.

- 8 Further correspondence revealed that the MoD was of the opinion that the current 11 wind turbine layout was additional to a 10 wind turbine layout (Layout 12, LABER 012, see Site Selection Chapter 2) assessed in 2008 by the MoD and confirmed by the MoD as raising no concerns. This misunderstanding was recently clarified with the MoD, however, the MoD has maintained their objection to the current 11 wind turbine layout.
- 9 Given the response to the assessment of layout 12 (LABER012) the Applicant did not anticipate the change in the outcome of the assessment between layouts 12 and 39 leading to a change in position of the MoD from no concern to now a concern of unacceptable interference.
- 10 At a meeting in June 2011 the MoD confirmed that their advice in response to Scoping 2010 and their current position to a single project of 11 wind turbines remained only if no suitable mitigation could be agreed.
- 11 The Applicant working in conjunction with the MoD therefore needs to develop technical mitigation measures to accommodate these concerns, and plan to do so during the period of consultation on the project.

### *17.3.2 Effect of the EOWDC on the Black Dog Firing Range*

- 12 Regarding the Black Dog Firing range, the MoD has consistently stated that no wind turbines should be placed within the safety exclusion zone at sea.
- 13 While there would be no wind turbines within the firing range exclusion zone, there would be a need for project vessels to enter the area for the purposes of surveying, construction, operations and maintenance. It would therefore be necessary to agree access provisions with the MoD.
- 14 Operational procedures would be agreed with MoD to allow vessel access to the firing range exclusion zone for project activities during the lifetime of the project.
- 15 Once operational procedures have been established with the MoD it is not envisaged that there would be any further impact, therefore any potential impacts upon the firing range are considered to be negligible.

## **17.4 Summary**

- 16 The project has had a long-term relationship with the MoD during its development, through the MoD Defence Estates department in Birmingham. The Applicant understands that plans for the area of the Black Dog Firing Range are acceptable, although further discussions will be needed on operational aspects. There will now need to be an intensive period of work to address MoD concerns regarding the Buchan (Peterhead) radar issue.