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**XODUS**  
PROJECTS



# LT09 Shetland HVDC Link

## Communications Plan

Scottish and Southern Energy plc

Assignment Number: A200409-S04

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**Xodus Group**  
Xodus House, 50 Huntly Street  
Aberdeen, UK, AB10 1RS

**T** +44 (0)1224 628300  
**E** [info@xodusgroup.com](mailto:info@xodusgroup.com)  
**www.xodusgroup.com**





# Communications Plan

**A200409-S04**

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## **CONTENTS**

<b><u>1</u></b>	<b><u>PROJECT OVERVIEW</u></b>	<b><u>1</u></b>
<b><u>2</u></b>	<b><u>SCOPE</u></b>	<b><u>3</u></b>
<b><u>3</u></b>	<b><u>COMMUNICATIONS PLAN</u></b>	<b><u>3</u></b>
3.1	Newsletters	3
3.2	Notices to Mariners	4
3.2.1	Notice to Mariners Updates	5
3.3	Planned External Protection Requirements	5
3.4	Static Gear Fishermen	5
3.5	Mobile Gear Fishermen	5
3.6	Aquaculture Site Operators	5
3.7	Information Posters	5
3.8	Direct Contact	6
3.9	Marine Stakeholder Working Groups	6
<b><u>4</u></b>	<b><u>COMMUNICATION METHODS</u></b>	<b><u>7</u></b>
<b><u>5</u></b>	<b><u>KEY POINTS OF CONTACT</u></b>	<b><u>8</u></b>
<b><u>6</u></b>	<b><u>POST INSTALLATION</u></b>	<b><u>11</u></b>
<b><u>7</u></b>	<b><u>ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS</u></b>	<b><u>11</u></b>



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## 1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

Shetland is not presently connected to the UK mainland electricity Transmission grid and as such is solely reliant on island-based generation, this generation is in the majority derived from fossil fuels with the support of onshore wind.

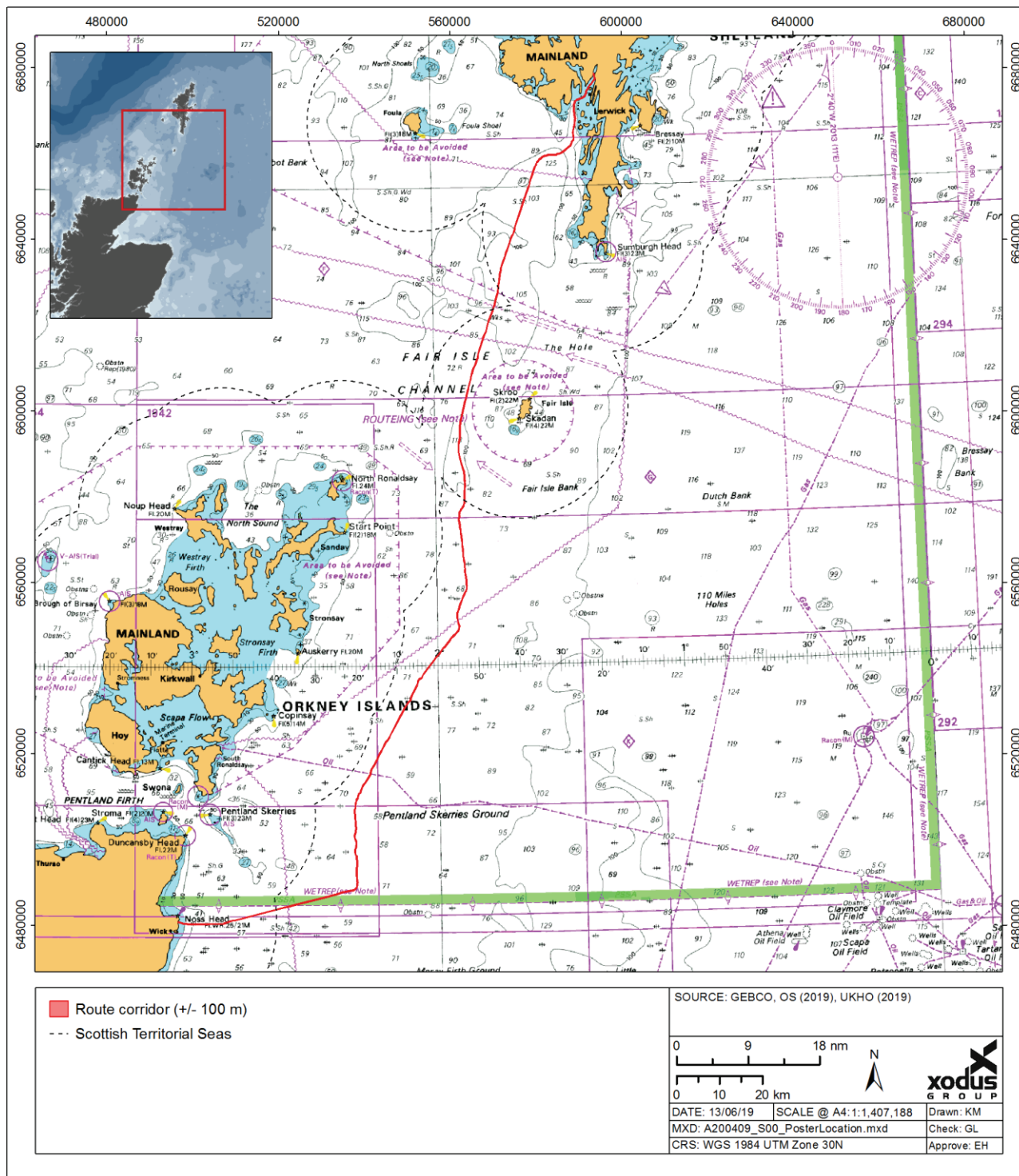
There is currently approximately 600MW of consented renewable energy generation on the Shetland Isles, which will require connection to the UK mainland transmission network once these projects are constructed. Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc (SHE Transmission) is the licenced Transmission Owner in the north of Scotland, and as such, has a requirement to provide a connection to the UK's network when requested by a generator.

In order to meet the dual requirement of the provision of reliable transmission level supply, and export surplus renewable generation, SHE Transmission are planning to install a single circuit 253km long, 600MW High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) link between Weisdale Voe in Shetland and Noss Head in Caithness ('Shetland HVDC Link' or 'the Project'). The marine cable infrastructure will consist of a single bundle comprising two conductor cables and one fibre optic communications cable, to allow control of the substation and HVDC converter station. Marine cable solution provider, NKT, will be responsible for the manufacture and installation of the subsea cable.

An overview of the marine installation corridor is provided in Figure 1-1. Further details on the planned construction and associated marine survey activities are available in the Shetland HVDC Link Marine Construction Method Statement (NKT, 2021), while information regarding operational surveys and maintenance activities is provided in the Shetland HVDC Link Inspection, Repair and Maintenance Plan (Xodus, 2021).



Figure 1-1 Shetland HVDC Link Marine Installation Corridor





## 2 SCOPE

The Communications Plan sets out the procedures for the distribution of information relating to all subsea cable laying, protection and survey activities which will be conducted to facilitate the installation of the Shetland HVDC Link's subsea cable infrastructure ('the cable') to other legitimate users of the sea.

The Communications Plan sets out the liaison procedures that will be followed prior to, during and after the installation of the cables. These procedures have been established to ensure that the cables are planned and installed as safely as possible in accordance with relevant consent conditions and industry best practice. The plan includes details of timing format and method(s) of distribution of:

- > Notices of all operations relating to the installation including, but not limited to, horizontal directional drilling (HDD), cable laying, trenching, installation of external protection, and associated surveys;
- > Notices of hazards to other legitimate users of the sea; and
- > As laid positions of cables and external protection including berm heights relative to the seabed.

This document provides an overview of how commercial fisheries stakeholders will be engaged during the installation and operation of the Shetland HVDC Link, however this is covered in further detail by the Shetland HVDC Link Fisheries Liaison Mitigation Action Plan (Xodus, 2021).

## 3 COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Throughout the Shetland HVDC Link project lifecycle, SHE Transmission has engaged with a variety of stakeholders. SHE Transmission will continue to be in regular contact with relevant stakeholders for the duration of the work. Relevant stakeholders will be contacted before a specific planned work activity that has the potential to affect them.

Stakeholders include the both Statutory consultees to Marine Scotland and Shetland Islands Council (SIC), as well as other non-statutory stakeholders who may have an interest in the project. SHE Transmission wishes to engage with all relevant stakeholders prior to, during and/or upon completion of certain work activities.

In the event that an activity's date or duration was to change outwith the dates initially provided, an update will be issued to the affected stakeholders. In the event that the scope or methodology of the planned work activity was to change, then any stakeholder likely to be affected, including any relevant licensing authority, would be consulted. Any change and associated timeline would be advised prior to the works commencing.

Communication methods to each stakeholder differ depending on the agreements between the parties, however each stakeholder has a nominated point of contact from SHE Transmission, detailed in Section 5. The following methods of communication will be used as appropriate:

- > Email;
- > Telephone call;
- > Direct mail;
- > Newsletters
- > Face to face meetings;
- > Kingfisher bulletins;
- > Website and Social Media updates;
- > Notice to Mariners (NtM); and
- > Marine stakeholder forum.

Formal communications methods are discussed in further detail in the following sub sections.

### 3.1 Newsletters

Project Newsletters will be issued to Kingfisher Information Services, for publication through their Awareness Flyers. In addition, a copy of the newsletter (and a link to the electronic version) will be issued to Fishing News as well as hard copies being distributed to the community of other sea users onshore: hand delivered to vessels in harbour; posted and emailed to relevant bodies; and hard copies left in appropriate locations utilised by the



marine community (for example Harbour Offices, sailing clubs and Fishermen's Missions) and will be available for download from the SHE Transmission's website.

Newsletters will be issued at the following stages of the project:

- > Following finalisation of the marine design, installation methods and programme - at least 8 weeks in advance of marine works;
- > Prior to initial works – at least 4 weeks in advance of marine works;
- > Prior to new phases of work – at least 2 weeks in advance; and
- > At relevant programme stages including completion of works – as required.

### 3.2 Notices to Mariners

Details of the works will be issued to all legitimate users of the sea through Notice to Mariners (NtM) and/or radio navigational warnings and publication in bulletins as required. The NtM will be issued in a format aligned to the UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO) hydrographic note form H102 at the stages of the cable installation set out below:

- > Marine survey operations;
- > HDD works in the marine environment;
- > Seabed preparation;
- > Cable pull in and laying;
- > Cable trenching;
- > Rock placement works; and
- > Completion of works.

Each NtM will contain full details of the vessel, location, activities, contact details and any other relevant information. NtM will be issued at least 20 days prior to an activity's start date (whenever practicable) and will be provided to KIS-ORCA for inclusion in the Kingfisher Bulletin.

In the case of unforeseen changes in programme, incidents or emergencies requiring notification, the NtM will be issued as soon as reasonably possible. Any actions required to rectify an incident or emergency will go ahead even if there is not sufficient time for an NtM to be issued in advance of the operation.

All NtMs will be issued by NKT and SHE Transmission. The distribution list will include:

- > Main recipient:
  - o Source Data Receipt at UK Hydrographic Office.
- > Copied to:
  - o Marine Scotland;
  - o Shetland Island's council (SIC);
  - o Kingfisher Information Service;
  - o HM Coastguard;
  - o Trinity House;
  - o Royal Yachting Association;
  - o Wick Lifeboat Station;
  - o Crown Estate Scotland;
  - o Northern Lighthouse Board;
  - o Scottish Fishermen's Federation;
  - o Scottish White Fish Producers Association;
  - o Shetland Fishermen's Association;
  - o Scottish Creel Fishermen's Federation;
  - o Wick Harbour Master;
  - o Scalloway Harbour Master;
  - o Weisdale Voe aquaculture site operators;
  - o Lerwick Harbour master; and
  - o Orkney Harbour Master.



### 3.2.1 Notice to Mariners Updates

It is intended that the issued NtM will adequately describe the planned activities. However, in the unlikely event that a significant change to these activities becomes apparent, an update will be issued by email to Source Data Receipt at the UKHO and copied to the distribution list set out above.

### 3.3 Planned External Protection Requirements

Details of expected external protection requirements, including indicative locations and berm heights relative to the existing seabed will be included in the Shetland HVDC Link Marine Cable Burial Protection Plan (CBPP). The CBPP will be provided to Marine Scotland and SIC for review not less than 2 months prior to the commencement of works. Where a requirement for additional unplanned external protection is identified during the installation works, Marine Scotland (and SIC if within the Shetland 12NM limit), will be notified of the necessary changes to the CBPP. As-built survey data will incorporate survey of all cable protection measures, as per the provisions of Section 6.

### 3.4 Static Gear Fishermen

Locally affected static gear fishermen will receive the NtMs as set out above. However, SHE Transmission's Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO) will work with local Fisheries Industry Representatives (FIRs) in order to identify the fishermen who will be affected by the project. Discussions will then take place with the affected fishermen to agree the detailed arrangements for removal of static gear well in advance of marine activities. Specific notifications will be given at least one week prior to the planned commencement of the installation or survey operations, insofar as possible. Further details are provided in the FLMAP.

### 3.5 Mobile Gear Fishermen

Mobile gear fishermen will receive the NtMs as set out above. However, further specific liaison between the SHE Transmission FLO and the fishermen who will be affected by the installation operations will take place to ensure that they are clear of the working area(s) of construction vessels prior to construction.

### 3.6 Aquaculture Site Operators

A number of aquaculture sites are located in close proximity to the installation corridor on the approaches to the Shetland Landfall in Wiesdale Voe. Aquaculture site operators will receive the NtMs as set out above. In addition, SHE Transmission's Marine Consents Manager will facilitate further engagement and liaison with the site operators as agreed between the parties, and in accordance with any proximity agreements which are established. Specifically, details of the final cable route, proposed timescales for installation works, exclusion zones and activities which may affect the operation of aquaculture sites will be promulgated as soon as practicable. Relevant aquaculture stakeholders with assets within 2km by sea of the installation corridor include:

- > Blueshell Mussels Ltd;
- > C.W.C Brown Ltd;
- > Grieg Seafood Shetland Ltd;
- > Scottish Sea Farms Ltd;
- > Shetland Mussels Ltd;
- > Zetland Mussels Ltd; and
- > Seafood Shetland (as the trade organisation representing some of the above aquaculture operators in Wiesdale Voe).

### 3.7 Information Posters

Posters regarding the project will be circulated to all appropriate venues both locally and further afield (e.g. in the case of recreational marinas via the RYA) which will include, but not be limited to, Port Authority Harbour Offices, Fisherman's Missions, and other locations such as fish markets which agree to display the poster.



These will outline programme activity and signpost to the project's website, and SHE Transmission's FLO for further information or to give feedback.

### 3.8 Direct Contact

Reminders about the programme of works will be made directly by email or phone by the FLO to all those fishermen who have asked to be kept informed via the consultation process, at least 24 hours prior to the commencement of any works. SHE Transmission will also request member bodies such as the Scottish Fisheries Federation, Scottish White Fish Producers Association, and Shetland Fishermen's Association remind their members by email at least one week in advance of the works commencing.

### 3.9 Marine Stakeholder Working Groups

SHE Transmission will invite representatives from key marine stakeholders to form two working groups during the installation of the Shetland HVDC Link, one consisting of Shetland based marine stakeholders, and the other for those based in Caithness. The aim of the working groups is to:

- > Provide a forum for SHE Transmission to disseminate and discuss updates on proposed activities and schedules to their stakeholders; and
- > Afford stakeholders the opportunity to highlight and discuss any specific requirements and concerns directly with the Shetland HVDC Link project team, in order to ensure mutual coexistence with other legitimate users of the sea.

The makeup of the working groups is yet to be confirmed, however SHE Transmission will ensure the following members (or appropriate deputies) of the project team are available to participate in the working groups:

- > SHE Transmission's Project Manager;
- > SHE Transmission's Marine Consents Manager;
- > SHE Transmission's FLO; and
- > NKT's Project Manager.

In addition, representatives from relevant marine stakeholders will be invited to participate in the Shetland and Caithness working groups, as outlined in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1 Marine Stakeholder Working Group Participants

Shetland	Caithness
Marine Scotland	Marine Scotland
NatureScot	NatureScot
SIC	Commercial fisheries (static and mobile gear)
North Atlantic Fisheries College (NAFC)	Wick Harbour
Commercial fisheries (static and mobile gear)	Recreational water users
Aquaculture site operators	Wick Fabrication Site (Subsea 7)
Scalloway Harbour	-
Recreational water users	-

The working groups will meet regularly prior to and during the installation of the Shetland HVDC Link, with indicative timings as follows:

- > Bimonthly commencing in Q1 2021 until the construction phase starts, then;
- > Following finalisation of the marine construction method and installation programme - at least 2 months in advance of marine works; and
- > At monthly intervals thereafter, until the completion of the installation works.

The frequency of the events will be tailored based on attendee feedback.



## 4 COMMUNICATION METHODS

A variety of communication tools will be used to create a flow of information between SHE Transmission and their marine stakeholders. As well as disseminating key information regarding the construction/installation process, SHE Transmission will ensure open channels of communication in order to allow stakeholders to feed into the process to help identify and mitigate any potential conflicts or hazards which may arise.

SHE Transmission recognise that an accessible two-way communication structure is an essential element in ensuring a smooth installation process. As such, contact details of Shetland HVDC Link Community Liaison Manger and FLO will be included in all relevant communications, as well as signposting to the Project's website.

Table 4-1 details the methods to be employed to communicate with various stakeholder groups.

Table 4-1: Proposed Stakeholder Communication Methods

Stakeholder	Direct							Indirect			
	Face to Face Meetings	Newsletter	Working Group	Email	Telephone	Posters	Letter	Notice to Mariners	Kingfisher Bulletin	Press advertising	Website & Social Media
Local Inshore Fisheries Associations											
Unaffiliated Fishermen											
Scottish Fishermen's Federation											
Scottish White Fish Producers Association											
Shetland Fishermen's Association											
Scottish Creel Fishermen's Association											
Neighbouring Harbour Authorities											
Aquaculture Site Operators											
Maritime and Coastguard Agency											
Marine Safety Forum											
Northern Lighthouse Board (NLB)											
Local marine recreational groups											
RYA											
Local marine tourist operators											
Oil & Gas operators and contractors											
Offshore renewables interests											
Commercial ferry operators											
Shetland Islands Council											
Marine Scotland											
Nature Scot											
NAFC											



## 5 KEY POINTS OF CONTACT

Table 5-1 outlines the project's main stakeholders, their role and the purpose of communication and the key SHE Transmission Contact.

Table 5-1 Key Stakeholders and SHE Transmission Contacts

Stakeholder	Role	SHE Transmission Key Contact
Marine Scotland	<p>Licensing authority for all marine works and as such all consent conditions that require to be met must be demonstrated to them either upon request or as agreed in the license.</p> <p>Specific contact with MS will be made by SHE Transmissions Marine Consents Manager:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To notify the commencement of the works;</li><li>• During the works for the following purposes:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ to provide project updates.</li></ul></li><li>• On completion of the works for the following purposes:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ to notify the completion of the works and submit appropriate completion reports.</li></ul></li></ul>	Marine Consents Manager
Shetland Islands Council (SIC)	<p>Licensing authority for marine works within Shetland 12NM limit and as such all SIC Marine Works Licence conditions that require to be met must be demonstrated to them either upon request or as agreed in the license.</p> <p>Specific contact with SIC will be made by SHE Transmission's Marine Consents Manager:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To notify the commencement of the works;</li><li>• During the works for the following purposes:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ to provide project updates.</li></ul></li><li>• On completion of the works for the following purposes:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ to notify the completion of the works and submit appropriate completion reports.</li></ul></li></ul>	Marine Consents Manager
NatureScot	Statutory consultee to Marine Scotland & SIC.	Marine Consents Manager
Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), including Her Majesty's Coastguard (HMCG)	Statutory consultee to Marine Scotland and SIC. Contact with MCA will be maintained prior to and during the installation to ensure that they are aware of the licenced operations, the presence of support vessels and of the presence of cable protection on the seabed once the cable installation is complete.	Marine Consents Manager



Stakeholder	Role	SHE Transmission Key Contact
Scottish Fishermen's Federation (SFF)	<p>The SFF represent sections of the commercial fishing fleet that operate in Scottish waters. As part of ongoing regular liaison with the SFF, SHE Transmission will keep them apprised of the installation as it proceeds, specifically in relation to the presence of support vessels and of the presence of the cable protection on the seabed once the cable is installed.</p> <p>SHE Transmission will continue to rely on the SFF to provide updates to its members regarding the progress of the project and will provide information to facilitate this.</p>	Marine Consents Manager / FLO
Scottish White Fish Producers Association (SWFPA)	<p>The SWFPA represent the white fish commercial fishing fleet that operate in the North Sea and are members of the SFF. As part of ongoing regular liaison with the SWFPA, SHE Transmission will keep them apprised of the installation as it proceeds, specifically in relation to the presence of support vessels and of the presence of the cable protection on the seabed once the cable is installed. This is particularly pertinent to the prawn trawlers who are members of SWFPA.</p> <p>SHE Transmission will also rely on the SWFPA to continue to provide updates to its members regarding the progress of the project and will provide information to facilitate this</p>	Marine Consents Manager / FLO
Shetland Fishermen's Association (SFA)	<p>The SFA represent the interests of around 90 Shetland based fishing vessels, ranging from large pelagic vessels to small inshore vessels. SHE Transmission will keep the SFA apprised of the installation as it proceeds, specifically in relation to the presence of support vessels and of the presence of the cable protection on the seabed once the cable is installed. This is particularly pertinent to Shetland based vessels.</p>	Marine Consents Manager / FLO
Scottish Creel Fishermen's Federation (SCFF)	<p>The SCFF is a national organisation, representing the interests of creel fishermen around Scotland. SHE Transmission will keep the SCFF apprised of the installation as it proceeds, specifically in relation to nearshore activities which may interact with creel fishing.</p>	FLO
Local Inshore Fisheries Groups	<p>These organisations' members are predominantly local static fishermen who operate in inshore waters in the vicinity of the landfall locations. Regular dialogue between the FLO and local inshore fisheries groups will be maintained prior to and during the installation work, noting that both mobile and static gear commercial fishing operations are present in the area.</p>	FLO



Stakeholder	Role	SHE Transmission Key Contact
Unaffiliated commercial fishermen	There are a number of independent commercial fishing operators who are not affiliated with national or local inshore fisheries groups. The FLO is aware of these individuals and will maintain liaison with them, particularly in relation to the requirement to remove creels to allow works to be carried out.	FLO
Aquaculture Site Operators	Due to the close proximity of several aquaculture sites to the installation corridor on the approaches to the Wesidale Voe landfall, a dialogue will need to be maintained with the operators of these sites, in order to minimise disruption or conflict of activities. The Marine Consents manager will continue to keep site operators apprised of planned activities and schedules.	Marine Consents Manager
Crown Estate Scotland (CES)	CES manage property belonging to the Sovereign. Part of the installation corridor (seaward of MHWS to the 12NM limit) is located within Sovereign territory and, as such, SHE Transmission is required to obtain permission via a seabed lease from CES. The lease application is in progress and will be completed prior to the commencement of works.	Marine Consents Manager
United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (UKHO)	SHE Transmission and NKT will maintain contact with the UKHO to provide regular updates on progress of the works predominantly via NtMs.  The as built position of the cable and associated protection measures will be provided to the UKHO upon completion, such that admiralty products may be updated	NKT/ Marine Consents Manager
Kingfisher Information Service Offshore Renewables and Cable Awareness (KIS- ORCA)	SHE Transmission and NKT will maintain contact with KIS-ORCA to provide details of potential hazards to navigation, should they occur during the works.  The as built position of the asset will be provided to KIS-ORCA on completion of the installation, including the locations of any rock berms for inclusion in cable awareness charts.	NKT/ Marine Consents Manager
Ministry of Defence (MoD)	The MoD regularly uses the North Sea both for exercise and routine national defence operations. The MoD would also be a key contact for other defence agencies that may share in such activities therefore communication between SHE Transmission and the MoD is essential.	Marine Consents Manager
Wick Harbour	SHE Transmission and NKT will maintain contact with the Wick Harbour Master to provide details of planned and ongoing operations that may affect commercial activities at the port.	NKT/ Marine Consents Manager
Scalloway Harbour	NKT will maintain contact with the Scalloway Harbour Master to provide details of planned and ongoing operations that may affect commercial activities at the port.	NKT



Stakeholder	Role	SHE Transmission Key Contact
Royal Yachting Association (RYA)	SHE Transmission will maintain contact with the RYA to provide details of planned and ongoing operations that may affect recreational sailing in the area of the works.	Marine Consents Manager
Local marine recreation and tourist operators	SHE Transmission will maintain contact with the local marine tourist operators to provide details of planned and ongoing operations that may affect recreational kayaking, diving, sailing, or fishing in the area of the works.	Marine Consents Manager
Wick Fabrication Yard (Subsea 7)	Subsea 7 operate the Wick Fabrication Yard and associated bundle two route which crosses the cable installation corridor. SHE Transmission will continue to liaise with Subsea 7 regarding on-going and planned activities so that all parties are aware of potential simultaneous operations.	Marine Consents Manager
Onshore works / Local Residents	Please refer to the project communications strategy for terrestrial engagement.	Community Liaison Manager

## 6 POST INSTALLATION

Within 8 weeks of completion of the licensed operations, SHE Transmission will provide UKHO and KIS-ORCA details of the as built position of the cable and associated cable protection, including berm heights relative to the existing seabed (where appropriate). SHE Transmission will also notify Marine Scotland, MCA, NLB, and the Crown Estates Scotland of the completion of the works, and make relevant as built survey data available. SHE Transmission will liaise with the above stakeholders with regard to the most appropriate format for the delivery of the as-built survey data, however it is envisaged it will likely consist of:

- > Shapefiles;
- > Cable route as CSV;
- > PDF assessment of residual hazards;
- > PDF charts; and
- > Processed survey data.

Post installation surveys will be required during the lifetime of the project as detailed in the Inspection, Repair and Maintenance Plan (Xodus, 2021). SHE Transmission will liaise and communicate with relevant stakeholders prior to survey work and obtain consents as relevant.

## 7 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- > NKT, 2021. Shetland HVDC Link Cable Burial Protection Plan.
- > NKT, 2021. Shetland HVDC Link Marine Construction Environmental Management Plan.
- > NKT, 2021. Shetland HVDC Link Marine Construction Method Statement.
- > Xodus, 2019. Shetland HVDC Link Marine Environmental Appraisal.
- > Xodus, 2021. Shetland HVDC Link Fisheries Liaison Mitigation Action Plan.
- > Xodus, 2021. Shetland HVDC Link Inspection Repair and Maintenance Plan.