

## MORAY FIRTH RENEWABLES ADVISORY GROUP (MFRAG) MEETING MINUTES

<b>Meeting</b>	MFRAG-O	
<b>Date</b>	05 June 2019	
<b>Location</b>	Battleby Conference Centre, Redgorton, Perth PH1 3EW	
<b>Attendees</b>	Marine Scotland Science (MSS)	Jared Wilson (JW) [Chair], Tom Evans (TE)
	Marine Scotland Licensing and Operations Team (MS-LOT)	Nicola Bain (NB), Gayle Holland (GH)
	Marine Scotland Planning and Policy (MS-PP)	Janelle Braithwaite (JB)
	Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)	Erica Knott (EK), Helen Wade (HW)
	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)	Aly McCluskie (AM)
	BOWL	Joseph Deimel (JD), Andrew Jacobs (AJ) (SSE Renewables Environmental Advisors)
	Moray East	Sarah Pirie (SP)
<b>Actions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. JD to speak to Mark Trinder at MacArthur Green re allowing for Moray East construction activities (including during summer 2020) in analysis of BOWL post-construction aerial survey results.</li> <li>2. EK to circulate notes from SNH gull workshop (January 2019).</li> <li>3. Glen Tyler to issue update to group on LBB tagging work carried out by BTO team.</li> <li>4. JD to speak to Mark Trinder about review of ongoing research in puffin colony monitoring, leading to a short summary note.</li> <li>5. JD to speak to Mark Trinder regarding producing potential scopes for gull tagging and puffin monitoring work, and to confirm willingness to do so on basis of MacArthur Green not tendering for survey work.</li> <li>6. Carried forward – MSS to collate a high-level summary of bird collision monitoring kit that has been deployed at offshore wind farm sites in UK/internationally.</li> <li>7. Carried forward - MFRAG-O Secretariat (JD nominee) to consult Scottish Marine Energy Research (ScotMER) (Janelle Braithwaite) re requirement for research into new approaches to flight height measurement.</li> <li>8. Carried forward - MFRAG-O members to discuss Terms of Reference (ToR) at next meeting.</li> <li>9. MFRAG-O to ensure future actions are clear and explicit.</li> </ol>	

### 1. Introductions, Meeting Objectives and discussion of Actions from previous meeting (29 November 2018)

Introductions. JW and JD outlined that a primary aim of the meeting was to progress with scope for BOWL post-construction monitoring.

Actions from previous meeting on 29 November 2018:

1. Action complete
2. Carry action forward. JD to contact Janelle Braithwaite
3. Action complete
4. Action complete
5. Action complete
6. Action complete - covered during discussions in this meeting
7. Carry action forward - rephrase- summarising new technologies available/what equipment has been put at which wind farms. MSS will look at a high-level summary of what monitoring equipment has been deployed at sites in the UK and elsewhere.
8. Action complete
9. Carry action forward - Main MFRAG group TOR's not yet agreed

## 2. BOWL Project Update

JD gave summary update:

- All 84 turbines finished and generating
- Aerial surveys started in May, weather disrupting progress
- Described ongoing snagging arrangements, turbine crews to address over time

## 3. Moray East project update

SP provided an update on the Moray East project:

- Offshore construction commenced in May with the arrival of the piling vessel on site.
- 2/3 pile locations expected to be completed per week, completed 3 so far.
- SP leaving Moray East project at end of June.

## 4, 5 and 6. BOWL Post-Construction Ornithology Monitoring

### Aerial surveys

JD asked if the group were ok to confirm acceptability of BOWL carrying out 1 year of aerial surveys now, then 2 further years following completion of all nearby Moray sites. On basis that disturbance effects from other developments may make repeat surveys unreliable.

JW raised concerns about having too long a period between surveys.

EK suggested aerial surveys this year and next year, then review results and decide future schedule.

JD stated it is easier to do aerial surveys in consecutive years instead of waiting several years.

SP suggested BOWL year 3 surveys could potentially be done alongside Moray East year 1. Need to assess the cost benefit of further surveys at a later stage.

If BOWL do 3 years of monitoring and then Moray East did the same, a longer period of results would be covered.

JD stated that analysis of aerial data for 2019 is to be carried out as soon as data is available.

AM said arguably best to do 2 years of surveys first then reassess.

EK requested Mark Trinder's thoughts on results from the areas which might be affected by other Moray developments, and when the 2019 results are due.

#### Gull tagging

JD looking to confirm details of how much tagging is required

EK to circulate notes from SNH gull workshop (January 2019).

The group had a wide discussion on gull tagging, difficulties involved, and different methods available

AM pointed out that we need to assess the effects of using tag harnesses, effects can be colony specific so this needs to be considered.

AM said it is important to define what we actually need to know, and what questions we're trying to answer. They need to be specific and measurable or there is no added value to the monitoring.

SP noted that Moray East is interested in working collaboratively on survey projects, but highlighted that there is no requirement for Moray East to carry out gull tagging during construction and therefore there is no budget allocated for this work during construction. Needs further discussion and agreement.

JD to ask Mark Trinder if MacArthur Green are happy to produce an ITT for the gull work, on the basis (to avoid conflict of interest) that they wouldn't be able to tender for the monitoring contract itself.

#### Puffin monitoring

HW: time lapse camera set up in the SPA to observe the numbers of birds present and compare it to manual surveys. Also allows assessment of burrows in use. Not big difference in the numbers of birds counted by both techniques.

HW explained that the puffin surveys using the cameras on the cliff are not accurate enough to give the valuable survey information that would be required, too much inaccuracy (trying to promote surveys which are not valuable but are of interest to particular people, not the project).

AM still not clear on how puffin surveys will answer the questions of impacts of offshore wind farms on puffin colonies. Need to ensure that the study design is informed by clear questions and objectives.

Could Mark Trinder provide questions that the survey would be looking to answer? JD to discuss with him and report back.

<b>Actions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. JD to speak to Mark Trinder at MacArthur Green re allowing for Moray East construction activities (including during summer 2020) in analysis of BOWL post-construction aerial survey results.</li> <li>2. EK to circulate notes from SNH gull workshop (January 2019).</li> <li>3. Glen Tyler to issue update to group on LBB tagging work carried out by BTO team.</li> <li>4. JD to speak to Mark Trinder about review of ongoing research in puffin colony monitoring, leading to a short summary note.</li> <li>5. JD to speak to Mark Trinder regarding producing potential scopes for gull tagging and puffin monitoring work, and to confirm willingness to do so on basis of MacArthur Green not tendering for survey work.</li> </ol>
<b>7. AOB &amp; Close</b>	
Group happy that proposed meeting on 5 November 2019 be kept in the diary.	

List of Abbreviations	
BOWL	Beatrice Offshore Windfarm Ltd
BTO	British Trust for Ornithology
ITT	Invitation to Tender
LBB	Lesser black-backed gull
Moray East	Moray Offshore Windfarm (East) Limited
MFRAG	Moray Firth Regional Advisory Group
MFRAG-O	Moray Firth Regional Advisory Group – Ornithology Subgroup
MS-LOT	Marine Scotland Licensing Operations Team
MSS	Marine Scotland Science
ScotMER	Scottish Marine Energy Research (previously SpORRAn)
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
SPA	Special Protection Area (designation under the European Union Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds)
ToR	Terms of Reference