

Louise Bridges

From: navigation safety [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 June 2023 12:20
To: Louise Bridges; navigation safety
Cc: Nick O'Brien; Rachel Antill
Subject: RE: P11917 - Tusker Site Investigation Works

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Hello Louise,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed site investigations works in preparation for the installation of a new subsea fibre optic cable system Tusker. The UK Technical Services Navigation team of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) has reviewed the information provided and would like to comment as follows:

We note the works include Cone Penetration Tests, grab samples, vibrocores and slit trenches. We have assumed that the works in the intertidal area will be undertaken at low tide using machinery rather than a vessel. Please let me know if this is not the case, and I will remove the point 11 below. I believe that no jack up barges will be used, and the works will take approx. 4 weeks to complete over a six-month period. Some of the sites are located in the Traffic Separation Scheme off The Smalls and in high density shipping areas, therefore additional risk mitigation measures are required.

On the understanding that the following takes place, the MCA would have no significant concerns to raise with regards to the safety of navigation and would be satisfied that the risk should be relatively low on this occasion:

1. All maritime safety legislation is adhered to, in particular the COLREGs (Rule 10) at all times;
2. Local mariners and fishermen's organisations (including Kingfisher) must be made fully aware of the activity through a local notification. This must be issued at least 5 days before the commencement of the works.
3. Zone28@hmcg.gov.uk must be notified prior to commencement of activities.
4. All dropped objects which are a danger or hazard to navigation must be reported to NRW, UKHO and HMCG, as soon as reasonably practicable and in any event within 24 hours of the undertaker becoming aware of an incident. NRW may require relevant surveys to be carried out by the undertaker (such as side scan sonar) if reasonable to do so and NRW may require obstructions to be removed from the seabed at the undertaker's expense if reasonable to do so.
5. A risk assessment for operating in the TSS should be undertaken before the works commence, with a process in place for identifying high levels of traffic to avoid;
6. Carry out the surveys in parallel to and in the general direction of traffic flow in the lane.
7. Notify the UKHO (Navwarnings@ukho.gov.uk) for consideration any required navigational warnings;
8. Consider the width of the lanes and whether there is sufficient available sea room for vessels to pass when your vessel is stationary to collect samples etc.
9. Survey vessel to inform any relevant VTS/MRS/MRCC if waiting for any reason.
10. Consider a minimum working limit of horizontal visibility within the traffic lane i.e not less than one (1) nautical mile.
11. If using machinery land side in the intertidal area at low tide, ensure suitable bunding and/or storage facilities are installed to contain and prevent the release of fuel, oils, and chemicals associated with plant, refuelling and equipment, into the marine environment.

You may also wish to liaise with any local fishermen that may be impacted by the works.

Please can you confirm acceptance of the above risk mitigation measures.

Kind regards

Helen

Helen Croxson
UK Technical Services Navigation

From: Louise Bridges [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, June 7, 2023 2:04 PM
To: navigation safety [REDACTED]
Cc: Nick O'Brien [REDACTED]; Rachel Antill [REDACTED]
Subject: P11917 - Tusker Site Investigation Works

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Good afternoon,

We are in the process of applying for a Band 1 marine licence application with National Resources Wales (NRW), and we are required to consult with you prior to submission of our application to ensure no impact on the safety of others at sea.

The marine licence application is to enable pre-construction survey works to support the proposed installation of a new subsea fibre optic cable system, Tusker, which will link Ireland to the United Kingdom, from North Dublin to a landfall near Newgale in Pembrokeshire, West Wales. Only works carried out in Welsh waters are being considered in the marine licence application to NRW (works carried out in Irish waters will be covered under the Irish regulatory system).

The Band 1 licence activities include:

- Seabed CPT's to 3m (offshore);
- Grab samples (2 per location) (offshore);
- Vibrocore/gravity core (120mm diameter) to 3m (offshore); and
- Slit Trenches, 0.8m to 1m in width, up to 2.5m in depth (intertidal area).

The exact locations of the works are not yet known (they will be informed by a preceding geophysical survey), however the survey route is shown in the attached figure.

The duration of the proposed works is expected to take less than 4 weeks in total and should be completed over a 6-month period, with all works due to be completed during daylight hours.

Please would you verify whether you have enough information to consider any impact to the safety of others at sea?

Many thanks,
Louise

Louise Bridges BSc (Hons), MSc, Mem.MBA (She/They)
Marine Technical Specialist

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
www.apemltd.com



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