

International Regulators Forum Offshore Renewables Subcommittee

Mid-Year Virtual Meeting (MS Teams)

Summary of discussions and action points

Country representatives:

Australia	Owen Wilson (Chair)	OIR
	Melba Fisher (Secretariat)	OIR
	Kris Rodgers	OIR
	Sarah Miller	OIR
Canada	Keith Landra	CER
	Christine Bonnell-Eisnor	CNSOPB
	Robert Normore	CNSOPB
	Scott Tessier	CNLOPB
Denmark (Apologies)	Mohamed El Halimi	DWEA
	Bénédicte Crapez	DWEA
Netherlands	Anton van Kuijk	SSM
Norway	Torleif Husebø	HAVTIL
United Kingdom	Samantha Peace	HSE
United States	Michaela Noble	BSEE
	Cheri Hunter	BSEE
	Julie Fleming	BSEE

MINUTES

1	<p>WELCOMING REMARKS AND REVIEW OF THE AGENDA</p> <p>Owen Wilson, Chair of the IRFORES, welcomed all IRFORES Members Denmark expressed apologies for being unable to attend the mid-year virtual meeting. The agenda was agreed. A review of the actions from the kick off meeting in February 2024 AGM was discussed, progress reported and updated accordingly.</p>
2	<p>COUNTRY HIGHLIGHTS</p> <p>Recordings of the presentations are available for sharing among the forum members.</p> <p><u>United States of America:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target of 30 gigawatts (GW) of offshore wind on track for 2030, with an additional 15 GW of floating wind by 2035. A total of 85 GW by 2050 • Progress made in permitting offshore wind projects on the East Coast, including lease sales in the Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, and Gulf of Maine. • Increasing stakeholder engagement efforts with tribes and indigenous peoples, to ensure understanding of emerging offshore wind technologies and address concerns • Unexploded ordnance was noted as a potential issue for offshore wind projects. • Proposals for future initiatives include updating regulations, increasing coordination with other agencies like the US Coast Guard, standardisation of procedures and standards, and enhancing data sharing and international engagement • Challenges such as severe weather events particularly in the South Atlantic, are highlighted as operational risks for the sector • The need for coordination and collaboration among various agencies, industry stakeholders, and international counterparts is emphasised to address regulatory, safety, and operational challenges effectively <p><u>United Kingdom:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The United Kingdom touched upon the history of UK offshore energy, including the transition from early wind turbines to decommissioning older installations and the rapid expansion of offshore wind projects • Discussion about the challenges of regulating a rapidly changing industry, including the need for flexibility in regulatory approaches to accommodate innovation while ensuring strong safety performance • Highlight key safety concerns related to extreme weather events, cyber issues, and the need for industry-wide adoption of relevant safety practices • Ongoing technical research and collaboration with industry partners and stakeholders to address safety and regulatory challenges <p><u>Norway:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norway noted the first test facility was deployed in 2009. Norway has plans to expand its offshore wind capacity, with areas designated for bottom-fixed and floating wind turbines. Contracts have been awarded for new projects, aiming for operational facilities by 2030.



- Norway noted there's discussion among industry and the regulator around the adequacy of safety management systems, with some pressure from industry operators to adopt fewer complex systems. Balancing simplicity with effectiveness in ensuring safety remains a challenge.
- Norway's approach to safety zones differs from other jurisdictions, with reliance on notice to mariners processes rather than establishing physical safety zones around wind turbines, due to challenges with monitoring and enforcing safety zones.
- Norway recognises the value of learning from the experiences of other countries, such as the United Kingdom and the United States, in developing effective regulatory frameworks and safety standards for offshore wind energy.

The Netherlands:

- Overview of offshore wind energy activities in the country, which commenced in 2005, highlighting growth with a target of 70 GW by 2050.
- The Netherlands explained the regulatory framework governing offshore wind energy, including the roles of various government ministries and agencies in ensuring safety, compliance, and environmental protection
- Emphasis on the importance of design choices that minimise risks during both construction and operations. Features such as safe stairways and crew transfer procedures are crucial for reducing hazards
- Identification of several challenges for the future, including the availability of skilled personnel, vessels, and equipment. The Netherlands noted the potential for incidents related to shared use of offshore space and highlighted the need for careful planning and coordination
- Explanation of the process of HSE interface documentation emphasising the role of inspections in ensuring compliance with safety standards and procedures.

Canada:

- Canada noted regulatory preparations are underway, with steps being taken to prepare for offshore renewables, including the development of federal and local regulations, public consultations, and the establishment of safety, security, and environmental protection measures.
- Indication of the expected timeline for regulatory developments, including the issuance of regulations and calls for bids for offshore wind licenses with a target of 5 GW of licensed capacity by 2030 for Nova Scotia.
- Overall collaboration among key regulatory agencies to work through regulatory challenges and share expertise as needed.

Australia:

- Australia does not have commercial-scale offshore renewable energy projects, with only a few pilot projects in wave energy and ocean currents. There are no test projects or commercial-scale projects for offshore wind, but this is expected to change rapidly.
- The Australian government aims to accelerate offshore wind deployment in line with emissions reduction targets. They aim for 82% renewables by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050.
- The first offshore wind licenses in Australia, particularly offshore Victoria, are expected to be granted soon. The licensing process involves a two-stage approach, with a seven-year feasibility licence period followed by a competitive bidding process.
- Australia is working on developing a regulatory framework for offshore renewable energy, focusing on safety, infrastructure integrity, and environmental compliance. The framework is technology-neutral and aims to accommodate emerging technologies.
- Key challenges include ensuring consistency in regulations across jurisdictions, adapting onshore regulations for offshore environments, addressing supply chain pressures, and managing long-term risks posed by climate change.



3	<p>REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE IRFORES/IRF LOGO</p> <p>This session was led by Sarah Miller.</p> <p>The group discussed the selection of a logo concept for the subcommittee within the IRF. Owen Wilson introduced the topic and set up the rules for the voting process. Sarah Miller presented three logo options, each with its own concept and potential implications. Logo concept two, featuring offshore wind turbines alongside oil and gas infrastructure was the preferred choice. There was a brief discussion about the implications of changing the IRF's logo and the desire to future proof the logo to encompass emerging technologies such as hydrogen.</p>
4	<p>ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MID-YEAR MEETING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The subcommittee was notified of Germany and Colombia's expression of interest in joining the IRFORES, which was met with enthusiasm by the members. Some proposed extending invitations to additional countries such as Belgium, Taiwan and Japan. Australia to formally invite the suggested jurisdictions• Australia to liaise with IRF representatives to arrange a one-day IRFORES meeting on October 29, 2024, at Dublin Castle. Action completed, and a placeholder for the IRFORES (AGM) meeting was emailed to the members with detailed information• Establishment of a working group tasked with brainstorming the key topics raised at the mid-year meeting, drafting an agenda, and identifying relevant speakers and guest experts for the AGM. <p><u>We invite volunteers to join Australia in this effort. If you are interested in participating, please contact the IRFORES secretariat at melba.fisher@oir.gov.au at your earliest convenience or by no later than June 14, 2024</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The subcommittee aims to invite G+ to participate in the AGM to share insights into the work of the organisation and discuss potential opportunities for collaboration.• Owen Wilson is seeking the support of the IRF Management Committee to make the necessary branding changes to the website, templates and other materials accordingly
5	<p>KEY TOPICS SUGGESTED FOR THE AGM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safety management systems development and implementation• Processes for certification/verification and asset assurance• Standardisation across the industry for turbine platforms and development of design and operational standards while still encouraging innovation• Design and integrity of floating turbine foundations and associated mooring systems• Influence of extreme weather conditions on safety and infrastructure integrity• Administration of safety zones during construction, installation, and operations.
6	<p>CLOSING REMARKS</p> <p>Owen Wilson thanked all members for taking the time to attend the meeting and is looking forward to seeing members in person at the AGM in October in Dublin/Ireland.</p>