

International Regulators Forum Offshore Renewables Energy Subcommittee

Mid-Year Virtual Meeting 2025 (MS Teams)

Summary of discussions and action points

Country representatives:

Australia	Owen Wilson (Chair)	OIR
	Melba Fisher (Secretariat)	OIR
Canada	Keith Landra	CER
	Robert Normore	CNSOER
	Scott Tessier	C-NLOPB
Denmark	Mohamed El Halimi	DWEA
Germany	Thomas Jahnke (Observer)	FMHA
Netherlands	Anton van Kuijk	SSM
	Hendrik Goos	SSM
Norway	Torleif Husebø	HAVTIL
	Finn Carlsen	HAVTIL
United Kingdom	June Calder	HSE
United States	Apologies	BSEE

MINUTES

<p>1</p>	<p>WELCOMING REMARKS AND REVIEW OF THE 2025 AGM ACTIONS</p> <p>Owen Wilson, Chair of the IRFORES, welcomed all IRFORES Members to the second mid-year meeting. Representatives from the United States were apologies, all other members and observers introduced themselves and their agencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recap of AGM Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The members agreed to explore the formation of technical working groups on shared regulatory challenges • Topics identified at the AGM included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • standardisation of technical and operational standards • safety by design and design principles for floating turbines • compliance monitoring approaches • increased regulatory collaboration • Technical and operational standards was selected as the preferred topic for the first technical session • The planned initial technical session was postponed due to limited member responses and a late withdrawal from the nominated presenter. • The chair proposed holding two technical sessions per year, spaced between the mid-year meeting and the AGM: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q1: Technical Session 1 • Q2: Mid Year Meeting • Q3: Technical Session 2 • Q4: AGM • No objections were raised to the proposed approach and options for the first technical session in Q3 2025 will be revisited and shared with the group. • The members agreed to the following schedule for technical sessions in 2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • host at least two technical sessions at the upcoming AGM in Canada (pending meeting arrangements) • identify one topic for potential deep-dive exploration by a technical working group • monitor participation and resource availability before formalising any working groups • Outreach to additional jurisdictions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact attempts were made to Japan, South Korea, and Colombia following the AGM • No responses have been received to date • Torleif noted that Norway had previously contacted Belgium but without success • There is an upcoming engagement with South Korea later in the year which may provide an opportunity to re-establish contact • Owen invited members to suggest additional jurisdictions for potential outreach or to share existing contacts who may be interested in joining the group
<p>2</p>	<p>COUNTRY UPDATES</p> <p>Recordings of the presentations are available for sharing among the forum members.</p> <p><u>United Kingdom:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The United Kingdom continue a rapid expansion in offshore wind developments, including wind farms and substations



- There has been increased industry engagement, both proactive and reactive, including enforcement actions
- Emerging interest in tidal energy, with early stage work underway
- No changes in legislation in the last 12 months
- Ongoing review of the suitability of existing regulations, which are based on onshore health and safety laws extended offshore, and considering whether specific regulations are needed to address gaps and assess whether current legislation is robust enough for evolving offshore environments
- Currently evaluating first aid and evacuation arrangements in offshore projects, due to identified challenges when project scopes change (e.g., from fixed installations to vessels), affecting medical provision, evacuation logistics and equipment compatibility (e.g., stretchers)
- The UK is exploring models for electrifying oil and gas assets using offshore wind, such as grid connected power from onshore, power from offshore wind farms or substations, etc.
- Some new offshore wind operators are unfamiliar with UK standards, HSE is engaging with them on design expectations and compliance pathways under UK law
- There has been a slowdown in offshore wind developments, developers are reassessing due to technical challenges and economic pressures. The HSE is monitoring whether this is a temporary pause or a long-term trend
- The Hornsea 4 project, one of the UK largest was cancelled due to economic conditions

Norway:

- Norway maintains its target of 30 GW of offshore wind by 2040
- Economic challenges are influencing the pace of development. Political debates continue, though the current government remains supportive of offshore wind
- One area has been awarded to Parkwind (Belgium) and a Japanese partner. The project is in the data collection phase: no final investment decisions (FID) has been made yet
- The Norwegian government recently opened a new area off the west coast for floating wind development of 1.5 GW capacity divided into three sub area. This initiative is heavily subsidised to support technological development and maintain industry momentum
- Regulations are still under development, public consultation has concluded, but complex legal issues remain unresolved. Specifically, the division between onshore and offshore energy laws is creating challenges
- The Petroleum Safety Authority (PSA) is also exploring hydrogen generation and wave energy

The Netherlands:

- The Dutch government announced that only the Nederwiek Wind Farm (Area 6) will proceed to tender in 2025. IJmuiden Ver Gamma A & B (Area 5) tenders are postponed
- Despite delays, long term targets remain unchanged, 2040:50GW, 2050:70GW
- Key challenges include shortage of personnel, accelerated promotion of supervisors (from 10 years to 5 years if experience) and limited global availability of heavy lifting vessels which may lead to operators resorting to non optimal alternatives due to scheduling and availability constraints
- A new Energy Act is scheduled for enforcement in January 2026 and will replace the Electricity Act (1998) and Gas Act. The new Energy Act focuses on energy transition, including wind, solar and grid congestion management
- The State Supervision of Mines (SSM) remains an independent authority, despite recent political interest in altering its autonomy
- The SSM uses drones and coast guard helicopters for inspections and applies a risk based inspection model, prioritising based on available resources and stakeholder coordination
- All offshore infrastructure must be assessed by an independent verifier. Safety by design is a regulatory requirement



- Safety zones are enforced around offshore infrastructure during construction, maintenance, and decommissioning to restrict vessel access
- Drop objects are a recurring safety concern. Medical evacuations due to heart issues have also increased
- Access to platforms is sometimes restricted. Inspectors must rely on operators for elevator access, which limits flexibility. Discussions are ongoing to improve independent access for inspections
- Wind farms are increasingly being used for multi-purpose activities, such as seaweed farming, and ecological innovation

Denmark:

- No major developments in offshore renewables over the past 12 months
- There has been ongoing dialogue with other authorities to share experiences and explore regulatory improvements
- The Danish Working Environment Authority (DWEA) oversees health and safety for both onshore and offshore activities, currently onshore regulations are applied to offshore renewables
- DWEA is evaluating whether a reorganisation is needed to better align with other authorities that regulate both offshore oil & gas and renewables
- No new regulations introduced for offshore renewables
- Inspections are conducted using a risk-based strategy
- Denmark is actively reviewing how best to regulate and inspect the sector moving forward

Canada:

- Canada has three regulators involved (or about to be) in offshore wind energy:
 - CER – Canada Energy Regulator
 - CNSOER – Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Energy Regulator
 - CNLOPB – Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board (soon to be renamed to reflect expanded mandate)
- CER– Canada Energy Regulator regulations for offshore renewables came into force in late 2024, and the other regulators are awaiting finalisation of their regulations
- Nova Scotia Developments:
 - A call for bids for offshore wind is expected in late 2025
 - Both federal and local governments are supportive of advancing offshore wind as part of Canada's broader energy transition
- Newfoundland and Labrador developments:
 - No immediate call for bids, but regulatory readiness is progressing
- Canada is in a transitional phase, aligning regulatory frameworks across jurisdictions to support offshore renewable development
- Regulators are developing guidance systems and oversight practices in anticipation of project activity
- Coordination between federal and local government is key to enabling project approvals and investments

Australia:

- Thirteen feasibility licences have been granted, four additional areas are under consideration, also five management plans approved for feasibility activities
- Australia's recent federal election provided sector stability. Industry activity is expected to increase, with renewed focus on offshore wind
- The marinus link (Tasmania–Victoria interconnector) is in advanced planning, with applications expected soon for design notification and management plan
- New regulations for Work Health & Safety, Infrastructure Integrity, and Environmental Management came into force in December 2024



- The regulations are functioning well, with minor refinements under consideration
- A new regulatory package is currently in development, and expected later in 2025, focusing on:
 - data provision and management
 - diving safety alignment across offshore petroleum and renewables, with the aim of aligning a single diving safety management system to be approved across both sectors
 - broader harmonisation efforts are underway to align:
 - Work Health and Safety (WHS) laws across offshore renewables, oil and gas, and maritime sectors
 - Improve consistency for workers operating across multiple jurisdictions
- Australia is also engaging in ongoing discussion with industry on:
 - financial securities for decommissioning and property removal
 - concerns about barriers to entry under current settings
 - internal working groups are conducting:
 - training needs analysis (TNA) across maritime and offshore renewables
 - benchmarking with international and domestic training standards
- The Offshore Infrastructure Regulator (OIR) has begun active regulation of offshore operations under the new WHS framework
- Initial inspections have been completed with minor recommendations
- Workshops are being held to:
 - educate industry on compliance expectations
 - clarify regulatory interpretations
- Contractor management is a key challenge. Some licence holders are incorrectly assuming that outsourcing work also outsources legal obligations
- Safety by design is a growing area of focus with a design notification scheme in place, and the Marinus Link project expected to be the first one to engage with the design notification process and be provided with a regulatory advice statement from the Regulator.

3

UPDATE ON 2025 AGM AND CONFERENCE LOGISTICS

- The IRF Safety Conference will be held in St. John's, Newfoundland on October 9–10, 2025.
- A series of related meetings will take place around the same time:
 - IRF AGM: October 6–7
 - IOPER (Environmental Regulators): Concurrent
 - Offshore Renewables Subcommittee Meeting: Tentatively scheduled for October 8
 - A joint meeting of all groups is also planned for October 8
- Scott noted that while only half a day is currently allocated for the Offshore Renewables Subcommittee, more time can be arranged if needed
- Owen encouraged jurisdictions to consider whether a longer session is desirable, specially given overlapping participation across forums
- Owen confirmed that the joint session on the afternoon of October 8th will focus on decommissioning, abandonment and financing of small operators, topics that are primarily oil and gas focused
- The scheduling options for the Offshore Renewables Subcommittee are as follow:
 - half-day meeting on the morning of October 8 (as currently scheduled)
 - Split session:
 - Morning of October 8
 - Afternoon of October 9 (overlapping with the IRF conference)
- A previously proposed option to meet the week prior was not ideal due to travel and time constraints
- Proposed agenda structure (Full-Day Option):
 - written jurisdictional updates with a Q&A session (instead of full presentations)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• three technical sessions based on topics identified at the last AGM• industry focus presentation (e.g., from G+ or another relevant group). Reaching out to IMCA or similar bodies for a marine focused industry perspective was suggested• Christine (Canada) has volunteered to assist with session planning
4	<p>ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MID-YEAR MEETING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Redistribute the IRFORES members and observers list post-meeting to ensure all participant details are current• Owen encouraged jurisdictions to provide feedback on preferred scheduling for the IRFORES AGM. Three options will be circulated to the group for feedback:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Half day meeting on the morning of October 8 (two technical topics only)• Full day meeting on October 8 (would require some jurisdictions to split attendance with IRF/IOPER/IUF)• Split session, morning of October 8 and afternoon of October 9 (overlaps with IRF conference)• Scott Tessier will provide the latest draft of the IRF conference program to help jurisdictions make informed decisions• Alicia (Canada IRF logistics) will send a registration link for the IRF AGM and conference to ensure all IRFORES members are included• Owen will coordinate with Christine and others to identify moderators and presenters for the technical sessions