



REPORT

To: Shetland Islands Council

08 March 2011

**From: Harbour Master
Environmental Liaison Officer**

Report No: P&H-06-11-F

Subject: MCA Coastguard Consultation

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report is to bring to the attention of the Members the proposed response to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) consultation on Modernising the Coastguard.

2 Links to Corporate Plan

- 2.1 The recommendations of this report would make contributions to the Council's priorities of Maintaining A Sustainable Environment

3 Risk Management

- 3.1 The MCA proposals on the future of the Coastguard service present possible increase risks to:
- Users of the maritime environment, of which the Council is one.
 - Overall resilience response within Shetland.
 - Pollution prevention and response.

4 Background

- 4.1 HM Treasury released the Spending Review in October 2010. As part of the savings identified by the Treasury, the review recommended not to renew the contract of the Emergency Towing Vessels (ETV) stationed around the United Kingdom.
- 4.2 The 2010 Spending Review also resulted in the removal of the Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft and recommended a review of the Maritime Incident Response Group (MIRG) fire fighting at sea.
- 4.3 On 16 December 2010 the MCA launched the consultation into HM Coastguard Proposals for Modernisation. The proposals are estimated to save £7.5million year on year. The consultation closes on 24 March 2011.

- 4.4 The MCA propose setting up two Maritime Operational Centres and the closing of a number of stations. The majority of remaining stations are to be day stations only. The current proposal is to close either Stornoway or Shetland.
- 4.5 The Harbour Master and the Environmental Liaison Officer (ELO) have drawn up a proposed response to the MCA consultation. The document is attached as Appendix A
- 4.6 The Harbour Master and the ELO also composed a briefing document for the Convenor to present to Mike Penning, Minister for Shipping. The briefing document is the result of consultation with many of the interested parties and is attached to the proposed response to the MCA consultation.
- 4.7 In gathering the information for the proposed response, the Harbour Master and the ELO have worked in cooperation with Orkney Islands Council, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council) and Highland Council. The agreed response to the consultation will be made available to each of the afore mentioned Councils.
- 4.8 Work is also ongoing on two additional annexes:
- A socio-economic impact assessment commissioned by the Economic Development Unit; and
 - A report jointly commissioned by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and Shetland Islands Council entitled “Review of MCA Consultation Process – Implications for Stornoway and Shetland.”

These annexes will be made available to Members once complete and included in the response to the MCA.

- 4.9 On 17 February 2011, the Transport Select Committee announced that it is to conduct an inquiry into the Government’s proposals for modernising the Coastguard. It will also examine the impact of the Government’s decisions not to renew the current contract for emergency towing vessels when it expires in September 2011 and to review arrangements for the Maritime Incident Response Group, which responds to incidents at sea for which fire-fighting, chemical hazard and/or rescue teams may be required. Responses and comments to the Committee are due by 26 April 2011 and are to be submitted in a recommended format.
- 4.10 The Harbour Master, along with representatives from other Scottish ports, has been invited by Transport Scotland to discuss the future of the ETV in Edinburgh on 04 March 2011.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications to the Council arising from this report. However there may be, as yet, unquantifiable costs resulting from the loss of the Coastguard station, the ETV and the MIRC.

6 Policy and Delegated Authority

- 6.1 In terms of Section 23 of the Council's Scheme of Delegation, the Harbour Master, in conjunction with the ELO, has drawn up a reply to the MCA Consultation on Modernising the Coastguard. The response is on behalf of the Shetland Islands Council and as such approval is required by the Council.

7 Recommendations

I recommend that the Council:

- 7.1 Approve the reply to the MCA Consultation; and
- 7.2 Authorise the Harbour Master, working with the ELO, to reply to the Transport Select Committee.

Consultation Response Form

PART 1 – Information about you

Completion of this section is mandatory as it helps with our analysis of results. A note at the end of this form explains that we may be obliged to release this information if asked to do so.

Name:	Roger Moore
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Company Name or Organisation (if applicable)	Shetland Islands Council

Please tick one box from the list below that best describes you/ your company or organisation.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Small to Medium Enterprise (up to 50 employees)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Large Company
<input type="checkbox"/>	Representative Organisation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Trade Union
<input type="checkbox"/>	Interest Group
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local Government
<input type="checkbox"/>	Central Government
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Emergency Service (Police/Fire/Ambulance)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Member of MCA Staff
<input type="checkbox"/>	Member of a Coastguard Rescue Service team.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Member of the public
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please describe):

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation or interest group, how many members do you have and how did you obtain the views of your members?:

Reply is on behalf of the Shetland Islands Council. Shetland Islands Council is 1 of the 32 local authorities across Scotland. It is the most northern local authority in Scotland and it is a major employer within the islands with over 3,000 employees. The Council consists of 22 elected members serving a population of approximately 22,000 people. The Council is a competent harbour authority, pilotage authority and also operates a range of marine vessels that serve both the local community and harbours.

The response was constructed by officers of the Council with an operational interest in the services that the Coastguard and ETV provide. The response was then presented to the Shetland Islands Council for approval before forwarding to the MCA.

<p>If you would like your response or personal details to be treated confidentially please explain why:</p>

PART 2 – Questions about the proposals

Question 1 (Chapter 1)

We have set out the changes that would affect the way the Coastguard needs to operate. Are there any other changes and pressures that should be taken into account in our plans for a modernised Coastguard service? Please provide supporting evidence for your comments.

Quote from Preparing Scotland on Resilience *“Central government’s approach to civil contingency planning is built around the concept of resilience. This is defined as the ability “at every relevant level to detect, prevent and, if necessary, to handle and recover from disruptive challenges”. The processes which underpin resilience from the fundamental elements of civil protection.”*

Quote from Preparing Scotland on Integrated Emergency Management *“Scottish emergency planning and response is based on the principles of Integrated Emergency ManagementThe underlying aim of IEM is to develop flexible and adaptable arrangements that will enable effective joint response to any crisis whether foreseen or unforeseen. It is intended to build the resilience of communities in Scotland to deal with any emergency and, where necessary, to make specific arrangements to deal with particular risks.”* IEM is based on five principles: Assessment, Prevention, Preparation, Response and Recovery.

Removal of the Coastguard function in Shetland reduces our current level of resilience. The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (Contingency Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 place a statutory duty on Cat 1 responders to work with Integrated Emergency Management – by closing the Lerwick station, it would effectively knock out one the legs that support IEM in Shetland through our Shetland Emergency Planning Forum.

The proposals only consider the Coastguard stations in isolation and do not consider the effects of other cuts and reviews both within the MCA (e.g. the ETV) and external to the MCA (e.g. Police, loss of Nimrods, Fire, MIRG etc.).

The new technology that is spoken of in the consultation document is largely based on radio technology and equipment. It is in addition to voice communication transmitted by radio, often VHF, which is line of sight. Smaller vessels and leisure users rarely carry much of this equipment. The consultation document does not take into consideration the reliability of the communications links between the mainland and outlying island groups, such as Shetland. The link from Shetland to the Mainland has failed on a number of occasions.

In the event of a major deep-water spill to the West of Shetland, similar to that of the Gulf of Mexico, the resources required to co-ordinate and respond are likely to overwhelm the proposed structure and leave Shetland more vulnerable. Lessons may well be learned from the upcoming Exercise Sula in May 2011.

Question 2 (Chapter 2)

We have explained the current Coastguard structure and the potential weakness in that structure in the face of increasing demand. Are there other strengths or weaknesses in the current arrangements that we should be taking into account? Please provide supporting reasons for your comments.

The evidence in the consultation document supporting diurnal and seasonal ranges does not hold true for the majority of the Scottish region. In Shetland, like most of Scotland, the level of response shows little variation throughout the year. This may partly be explained by differing types of shipping and maritime users in certain parts of the UK compared to Scotland. The daylight hours in the far North of Scotland, including Shetland, vary substantially dependant on the seasons. This would make the value of the proposed daylight operation scenario for either Stornoway or Shetland questionable.

The consultation states the busiest centres handle over five times as many incidents as the quietest. It is hard to understand why there has been no apparent attempt to weight the severity or duration of incidents. In the warmer and more populated Southern regions, the number of minor incidents which are quickly dealt with (e.g. Inflatable beds blowing off the beach) compared to the response required for incidents such as the Bourbon Dolphin (4 days, 24 hour response) does not seem to be taken into account.

The consultation document refers to the current weaknesses in the 40 year old system. However the staff and equipment in the MRCC's have continually become more sophisticated and the staff more highly trained. It is not the case that all that Coastguard officers do is stand with a pair of binoculars at the window.

The consultation document suggests that the proposed new structure will increase resilience. However, bitter experience has shown that centralised call centres do not deliver the best service and have, at times, placed individuals in greater harm. The NHS 24 call centre has regularly tasked medical response to the wrong settlements of similar names and occasionally to the wrong island groups. The FiReControl system for England and Wales, which effectively proposed centralised call centres, has cost the public purse £435million with ongoing costs even though the system has now been scrapped. Comparisons to air traffic control centralisation only highlight the need for local stations.

The removal of 22 experienced and qualified coastguard officers will result in a reduction in resilience for Shetland. It would leave the islands particularly vulnerable to communications failures between here and the mainland. The current system has in built hard-wired resilience that allows the coastguard station to operate even when links to the mainland are severed. Under the current proposals, a loss of communications between Shetland and the mainland, would leave the volunteers with only handheld radios and binoculars to respond to any incident within the area.

The current station provides many benefits to the local community and marine users. The ability to talk directly to local Coastguard officers to get advice and to respond to Traffic Reports (TR's) is much valued and potentially helps to stop accidents happening in the first place. The loss of the station would be detrimental in this regard, especially for leisure and small boat users that do not have sophisticated equipment onboard. The station also allows a liaison officer from other blue light services to be present e.g. the Greenpeace incident with the Stena Carron where a Police officer was located in the Coastguard station. The local knowledge that the station officers provide in tasking local assets to allow emergency services to reach the more remote islands, in all weathers, cannot be over stated. The local station also provides communications resilience to the main lifeline port for Shetland.

Question 3 (Chapter 3)

Under our proposals we would establish two Maritime Operations Centres handling emergency messages 24 hours a day, supported by a number of sub-centres operating at times of peak demand linked by a national network of radio connections and information sources. In your view, does this provide an appropriate and effective approach to Search and Rescue coordination response? Please provide supporting reasons for your comments.

No, in our view the proposals do not provide a more effective and better approach to handling maritime emergency messages. Modernisation and new technology may help the overall resilience of the Coastguard service especially on certain parts of the mainland. However technology cannot be the only factor considered. Indeed much of what is proposed is not new technology, rather technology based on phone and radio.

We have already mentioned in the previous questions concerns over the communications links and the diurnal / seasonal variations in response. We also have concerns over the loss of local knowledge. The accents, dialects and even language vary greatly throughout the Scottish highlands and islands. Many place names are similar and often referred to by their local name to avoid confusion. The loss of local staff with local knowledge, will undoubtedly increase response times, lead to confusion and place lives at risk.

The proposals suggest that the new system will promote strong links between the officers in the MOC's and the volunteer service. It would be interesting to know how the removal and down grading of coastguard stations in remote locations will help to foster these greater links.

We fail to understand how the change will increase the geographical pool for recruitment. The coastguard already recruits from the length and breadth of the UK. It is our belief that the reverse is more accurate and jobs will undoubtedly be lost in remote areas.

Question 4 (Chapter 4)

Our proposals for Maritime Operations Centres and sub-centres locates these around the UK coastline and makes use of the MCA current estate. What is your opinion on the proposals for the location of these Centres and sub-centres? Please provide supporting reasons for your comments.

It is laudable that the MCA will try and save costs by using existing real estate. However it is concerning that the Coastguard proposal will place the new MOC's in some of the most expensive real estate in the UK. This may have an adverse effect in attracting and maintaining quality and experienced staff. It is also surprising that the MCA is proposing maintaining the Aberdeen centre, which would appear to cost the most to operate. This would seem to be at odds with a service proposing efficiencies and cost savings.

MRCCs Stornoway and Shetland have the same number of officers, a similar amount of incidents in a year and a similar size of area of responsibility. With traffic through the Fair Isle channel and to the North of Shetland, including Russian oil exports, in addition to ever increasing oil and gas related traffic East and West of Shetland and the growing marine renewable industry and growing cruise ship market make the downgrading or closure of MRCC Shetland a highly questionable and potentially dangerous prospect.

Shetland is located at the very North of the UK. It is located near major oil and gas developing regions and is a natural cross roads for shipping using Northern Routes to / from Europe, Scandinavia, Baltic, Russia and the Arctic regions. The island experiences some of the most extreme and varied weather in the UK, including fog. In the event of a major incident it is essential that Shetland can respond and deal with the incident until support can arrive. As seen with the Braer, the arrival of support can take days due to the harsh environment. The removal of the station would undoubtedly affect Shetland's ability to respond effectively.

The Shetland station has an aerial mast adjacent and hard wired to the MRCC providing a stable and secure radio link when remote aerial sites fail. This is a further argument for retaining the Shetland station and correlates directly to paragraph 2 on page 23 of the consultation document where radio masts at existing MRCC sites are quoted as one of the reasons for retaining them.

Question 5 (Chapter 4)

In your view, are the new roles and responsibilities for Coastguard officers at different levels in the proposed structure appropriate to the tasks that need to be delivered? Please provide supporting reasons for your comments.

We have a concern that the loss of so many Coastguard officers (approx 50%) will leave the service vulnerable to illness and stretched in the event of a major incident(s). It is also uncertain how the Coastguard will be able to provide the regular service during such an incident.

In the event of localised severe weather that lasts for days or longer (e.g. this recent severe UK winter) staff may not be able to reach the MOC. With the current proposals there is no indication of how long one MOC could be out of action and the remaining MOC maintain 24 / 7 coverage around the UK, especially if a major incident occurred. There would appear to be little resilience in such a scenario.

We also have a concern that the proposal will mean a large loss of staff that are unwilling to move to the new locations. This would mean a large loss in skills and knowledge and a potential influx of “raw” inexperienced recruits leaving the mariner and coastline vulnerable for a number of years. (e.g. When Scottish Natural Heritage moved location they lost a high percentage of staff who were unwilling or unable to relocate.)

The proposed structure will effectively mean that all local knowledge is slowly lost as staff advance through their training and get assigned different and new roles as part of their training and advancement.

Question 6 (Chapter 5)

Under these proposals the regular Coastguard working in Maritime Operations Centres and sub-centres will draw more heavily on the local knowledge of geography, community and coastal risk provided by the network of local volunteer HM Coastguard Rescue Teams and increased liaison with partner SAR organisations. Do you agree that this is the best way to ensure the availability of such knowledge. Please provide supporting reasons for your statement.

The theory put forward by the MCA in the consultation document would at first glance appear to be logical. However in the more remote regions of Scotland, including Shetland, there are large areas where communications are difficult if not impossible. Satellite phones are unreliable, mobile phone coverage is non-existent and there are radio black spots. In order for an incident to be properly and effectively managed the co-ordinating staff must have local knowledge. This is best provided by having locally based staff in local station with local knowledge.

We are unaware of any consultation with, or plans for enhanced training of the volunteer coastguard service.

We have concerns over the reliance of increased liaison with other SAR organisations that are also under review or are due to be removed.

Question 7 (Chapter 5)

In your opinion, will the proposed strengthening of management for the Coastguard Rescue Service organisation, including the introduction of 24/7 on-call Coastal Safety Officers, provide a more resilient response service to those in need in UK coastal areas? Please provide supporting reasons for your comments.

The provision of Coastal Safety Officer would appear to be an improvement. However there still needs to be a firm link back to a Coastguard station to co-ordinate and provide local support.

Any further comments you may wish to make:

Please see the following pages, which were presented to the Minister for Shipping in London on February. The document outlines many of our concerns over the proposed changes to both the coastguard and the emergency towing vessel cover (ETV).

We find it remarkable and unacceptable that the ETV is not considered within this consultation. It is an essential tool in providing emergency towing, salvage, pollution response, command and control, fire fighting, radio relay station and life saving capabilities.

Freedom of Information

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence.

In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department will process your personal data in accordance with the DPA and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

Brief Points on Coastguard Consultation

Quote from the executive summary of the Coastguard consultation:

“we are changing the way we use our waters and our shores. This is making our coastline far busier than ever before. We are building much larger ships that are less manoeuvrable and drilling rigs and increasing numbers of wind farms pepper the seas around the UK. As a result our seas are becoming much more congested. Weather conditions are also becoming more extreme, with significant weather events becoming more frequent and severe, making work at sea more perilous and increasing the risk of coastal flooding.”



The Main Points on the Coastguard Consultation

- Flaws in the consultation assumptions.
- Links to the mainland.
- Local Resilience and inter agency work.
- Local Knowledge.
- Local Safety.
- Geography / Environment

Flaws in the consultation assumptions

The Coastguard has been through a number of reviews since the 1970's. The current proposals appear to be based on a seasonal / diurnal (day to night range) basis which, while perhaps appropriate for Southern UK where there is a larger leisure market and beach culture, this is not applicable to Northern Scotland. The incidents in Northern Scotland appear to occur at any time of the year or day with no discernable peaks.

There also appears to be no weighting given to the severity and duration of an incident. For example a child blown off the beach on an inflatable may only require a 10-minute response, whilst an event such as the Bourbon Dolphin or Piper Alpha takes many days of 24-hour co-ordination.

The consultation focuses on search and rescue co-ordination provided by the Coastguard and not on the many other services that the station provides to the local area.

E.g.

- Co-ordination of local resources in the event of extreme weather / landslides.
- Co-ordination and local tasking of local emergency helicopter and alternative landing / pick up sites.
- Co-ordination of out of hour's local inter island ferries with other emergency services.
- Local and inshore leisure and small boat users – voyage plans, Local forecasts and information and reporting.
- Importance of incident prevention work.
- Contact between full time professional staff and the volunteer Coastguard Rescue Service.

Links to the mainland.

Communication between Shetland and the mainland is unreliable. In 2009 the connection went down 15 times and in 2010, 11 times. During these disruptions, the present Coastguard station continued to operate through it's hard wired connection to the adjacent antenna. The ETV was used to extend coverage and to act as a repeater / relay station between Shetland and the mainland.

The current connection is based on a commercial operator located on the mainland. Due to distance, availability of transport and weather, this has resulted in delays in getting parts and qualified technicians to Shetland to rectify problems.

If the proposals were to go ahead, a breakdown in the link to the mainland would cause a communications blackout in Shetland and the surrounding waters leaving it vulnerable and unmonitored.

At the time of writing large areas of the Stornoway Coastguard district are without power with several radio masts out of action, including one, on the mainland (near Cape Wrath) that is controlled from Aberdeen. The situation is being contained locally by the Coastguard, however the lack of electricity is causing further problems with any computer dependent communications throughout the Island Chain

Experience of centralised call centres for emergency response in the Highlands and Islands has shown there are many difficulties. There are examples of response staff being sent from or to the wrong location and on occasions to completely different island groups.

Lerwick Port (with a turn over in 2009 £8,350,000) is the lifeline link for Shetland. The local Coastguard, situated overlooking the port, offers an increased resilience to harbour activities. When Lerwick Port has experienced communications failures Shetland Coastguard has been able to ensure that normal operations continue.

Pages 22 and 23 of the Consultation discuss the proposed structure and sub centres

“it would make sense for these centres to be evenly spread across the regions and to be located on the coast. This would facilitate contacts between Coastguard Centres and the volunteers of the Coastguard Rescue Service, and contacts with other Search and Rescue partners with regional resilience forums”

The closure of the Coastguard station will not make this possible due to our remote and distant location.

< see attached sheet on communications >

Resilience and inter agency work.

Removal of the Coastguard function in Shetland reduces our current level of resilience. The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (Contingency Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 place a statutory duty on Cat 1 responders to work with Integrated Emergency Management (IEM)– by closing the Lerwick station, it would effectively knock out one the legs that support IEM in Shetland through our Shetland Emergency Planning Forum. Likewise Stornoway Coastguard are a key participant in the Western Isles Emergency Planning Group, and, even as this document is being written, are leading on our joint response to a severe weather event anticipated over the next few hours.

Both island groups are remote, to mainland Britain and frequently subjected to severe weather. With the long, complex, coastline and large maritime industry, people have come to rely on the Coastguard as the 4th emergency service. The removal of 26 professional staff, at either location, taken in conjunction with cut backs in other emergency services and assets, will leave the islands unable to respond effectively immediately following a major incident. Additional support can be called from elsewhere however, as Shetland has experienced with the Braer, this can sometimes take days to arrive.

The “toolbox” available to deal with any major incident is slowly being eroded away. Currently either under threat or gone:

- Nimrod
- ETV
- Offshore fire fighting
- Police
- Lighthouses

Details of Shetland Coastguard activities in 2010 are attached
:

Local knowledge

Local knowledge is a crucial resource in achieving a prompt response within the first, or golden hour of any incident.

Shetland, Orkney, the North of Scotland and the Western Isles are remote areas with a wide range of dialects, accents and even language. Place names are not always unique and often can be found in all of the regions mentioned. As a result many places have local names for geographical features and locations that are not published on any book or chart.

Shetland and the Western Isles have many single track and challenging roads with numerous hills and radio black spots. Local knowledge of such features is crucial in the early co-ordination of any incident. The closure of the station would mean much, if not all of this local knowledge would be lost.

The current CG station allows local coordination and the exchange of information and professional knowledge between services. It also allows for a liaison person in the Coastguard station in the event of an incident. (e.g. during the Stena Carron and Greenpeace incident off Lerwick Harbour a police officer was based in the CG station). The centralisation of response centres would inevitably lead to a delay and reduction in effectiveness of this liaison.

Shetland maintains good connections, not only culturally, but professionally through the local Coastguard with Faeroe and Norway. Loss of the local station would be detrimental to those connections.

Local Safety

There are also questions and concerns over what would happen to the local services the Coastguard provides.

e.g. to the:

- Small inshore fisheries;
- Inter-island ferries;
- Provision of local weather forecast to near coastal and small boat users;
- Leisure users; and
- Transit Report's (TR's).



Geography / Environment

Scotland has approximately 60% of the UK coastline, however the proposals will mean that it has only 25% of the Coastguard stations.

Shetland

- Shetland is 190 nautical miles from nearest part of UK mainland
- It is approximately 85 nautical miles from Fair Isle to N. Unst
- Never more than 3 miles from the sea in Shetland
- The unusual 'jigsaw' shape of the Shetland Islands packs a profusion of coastal and marine life into the 1700-mile-long coastline of a land area of just 567 square miles. There is about 20 times as much coastline per square mile of land in Shetland as in Sussex or Norfolk. Add in islands of Arran, Islay, Jura, Orkney and Western Isles equates to approx 7380 miles
- Growing oil and gas development to West and North
- Increasing interest in marine renewables
- Large and economically important fishing and aquaculture industries. (Worth £225 million in Shetland in 2006)
- Renowned natural environment.
 - The inshore waters around Shetland are still pristine, and certainly the cleanest in the North Sea
 - The variety of inshore habitats over short distances is remarkable - from seabed over 120m deep to cliffs over 200m high; from tidal lagoons and sandy beaches to caves and kelp forest; from oxygen-depleted waters at the head of Sullom Voe to the turbulent, oxygen-rich waters of Bluemull Sound.
 - The continental shelf around the islands is one of the richest and most productive seas in the world. As a plankton producer it ranks with the Grand Banks of Newfoundland, Russia's Sea of Okhotsk and the Gulf of Alaska. Like the deeper waters west of the shelf edge, it is far more "biodiverse" than a casual observer might suppose
 - Populations of gannets, fulmars, puffins, guillemots,

black guillemots, razorbills, kittiwakes, arctic and common terns, great and arctic skuas, shags, cormorants, eiders, red-breasted merganser and red-throated divers

- Shetland is a vital staging post for migratory birds and has a world-famous ornithological observatory on Fair Isle. Shore birds and wintering wildfowl are particularly vulnerable to coastal oil pollution.
- Populations of grey and common seals and otters are nationally important. Shetland has the highest density of otters in the UK. Grey seals have been recorded as far as 70 miles out in the Atlantic.



Western Isles

Almost all of what has been said about Shetland is equally applicable to the Western Isles.

- The island chain is 120 miles long
- With very few exceptions, habitation is restricted to the coastal strip
- Marine traffic funnels through the Little Minch, between Harris and Skye, with navigation constrained to IMO Recommended Routes with very little room for error.

- Similarly to Shetland, the waters are pristine and support an extremely broad variety of marine life, a fact that is recognised at European Level with the intended imposition of SAC (Special area of Conservation) status in the Sound of Barra and off Mingulay.
- St Kilda is a UNESCO world heritage site
- Aquaculture is an increasingly valuable part of the UK economy, Government statistics attach a value of £377 million to this sector on the Scottish West Coast, with a further £89.3 million valuation of commercial fish landings at the various ports within the same area.

During 2010 the Minch based ETV was tasked 115 times, mainly to provide escort services, however three significant incidents were responded to

1. **Yeoman Bontrup** (Large Bulk Carrier)– major fire whilst alongside at remote loading location. ETV provided boundary cooling and then moved the Casualty to safe anchorage.
2. **HMS Astute** (Nuclear Submarine)- grounded with no suitable MOD tug in the locality
3. **Red Duchess** (Coaster) Disabled on lee shore in adverse weather conditions. RNLI Lifeboat was struggling to contain the situation

2011

4. **RAF Tornado** (Military Aircraft) Ditched in Minch, crew picked up by Coastguard Helicopter, ETV tasked to scene to recover wreckage.
5. **Jack Abry II** (Fishing Vessel) Ashore on Rhum, Lifeboat unable to effect rescue of crew without further serious risk to both parties. Coastguard Helicopter lifted off all 14 crew, ETV tasked to scene to provide initial pollution response and salvage support

In all of the above the ETV played a major role in resolving the situation, and providing a favourable outcome.

Recorded traffic through Minches

Year	Totals
2008	2095
2009	2322
2010	2442

There can also be absolutely no doubt that the presence of a local coastguard station played a crucial part in the speedy and safe recovery of the two man crew who ejected from an RAF tornado in January 2011 and even more so in the airlift of 14 fishermen from the grounded trawler.

Shipping Numbers in 2010 (this is recorded by voluntary reporting)

- Over 9 million gross tonnes of shipping in Sullom Voe
- Over 2 million gross tonnes of shipping in Flotta, Scapa Flow
- Over 900 vessels carried dangerous goods through the Fair Isle channel (approx 29 ½ million gross tonnes)
- Over 2600 reports from vessels transiting the Pentland Firth.
- Over 2400 reported vessel transits of the Minches
- 48 cruise ship visits to Lerwick (> 1 million gross tonnes)
- 69 cruise ship visits to Orkney (Scotland most favourite cruise ship destination and cruisecritic.com most popular cruise ship destination in the UK)
- 181 Transit Reports from leisure craft with over 600 persons onboard
- Lerwick harbour has more than 500 yachts visits annually
- Orkney Harbours had nearly 700 yacht visits.

Tankers GT at Sullom Voe



Year	Total Tanker Gross Tonnage
2010	9233601
2009	9543086
2008	11583543
2007	12581487
2006	14051296
2005	12413531
2004	16580820
2003	18911068
2002	19413482
2001	21803471

Tankers GT at Flotta, Scapa Flow



Year	Total Tanker Gross Tonnage
2010	2080147
2009	2087451
2008	2395647
2007	3935383
2006	3945649
2005	4781924
2004	5493115
2003	5908131
2002	7568109
2001	6910938

QUESTIONS - Coastguard

- What is the basis for assuming a diurnal range for incident response in Scotland?
- With nearly 24 hours daylight in mid summer and on a few hours of daylight in mid winter, what is the purpose of a day only station?
- What are the proposals / plans to upgrade and guarantee a 100% communication link with the major Scottish island groups?
- The new technology referred to in the consultation (AIS, LRIT etc) is already in place. It is not carried by all vessels, particularly not the smaller and domestic vessels.
 - Are there any plans to increase the requirements for more vessels to carry and operate these systems?
 - Will there be more receiving stations? and
 - Will the Coastguard be responsible for monitoring any more or any less routes around the UK?
- Has there been any consideration been taken into the socio economic impact to the more remote regions of the UK by losing the ETV and Coastguard stations?

- With reference to the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, has there been any study done on the effects to local resilience plans by reducing / removing key emergency services from remote island groups?
- Currently the local Coastguard station calls out and co-ordinates out of hours emergency response to allow access to the remote islands. How will this be covered from a distant centre?
- How do the MCA propose to develop and promote communication between the volunteer service and the professional service if the local station is closed on the island groups?
- Has any consideration been taken of the non core functions that local Coastguard stations provide?
- Why has there been no apparent weighting given to the severity or duration of an incident?
- How do the MCA intend to deal with the loss of local knowledge that will inevitably occur if the local stations are closed?
- At present a liaison officer or local meeting room can be used by members of all the services responding to an incident such as the Bourbon Dolphin or the Stena Carron and Greenpeace. If the local station were to close how would this co-ordination and close working continue?

- Has any consideration been taken to the potential growth and development, both in the oil and gas industry and the marine renewable industry in Scottish waters?
- Has the ability to understand local dialects and language been taken into account?
- How many incidents will a MOC be able to handle and still manage routine traffic?
- Are there no other government owned cost effective locations for an MOC than Aberdeen?

ETV

- Insufficient capacity.
- Harbour tugs
- Increasing traffic
- MCA figures for ETV

Insufficient Capacity

We do not believe that there is sufficient capacity in the islands all year round to provide the same response capability and time as the current ETV. There is no doubt that at times there are vessels in the vicinity that may be able to come to the aid of a vessel in distress. However,

- Few of these vessels will be as well equipped to deal with all the potential situations that the ETV is currently outfitted for;
- A vessel engaged in another operation such as anchor work or towing will not be able to respond quickly without putting others at risk or danger;
- Vessels in port may be unable to respond due to crewing, maintenance or contracts.
- There are large periods of time when there are no other suitable vessels available.

Harbour Tugs

Harbour tugs, are designed to work within sheltered waters and are not suitable or able to attend a vessel in bad weather in open waters.

Harbour tugs have a primary role and contracts to work within their given ports. The tugs may not be able to be released without seriously affecting the ability of a port to operate safely.

Harbour Tugs were discounted in the MCA's last review in 2000.

Other nations have realised the need for specialised vessels e.g. Spain, France, Germany, Norway

Increasing Traffic

The consultation acknowledges,

“we are changing the way we use our waters and our shores. This is making our coastline far busier than ever before. We are building much larger ships that are less manoeuvrable and drilling rigs and increasing numbers of wind farms pepper the seas around the UK. As a result our seas are becoming much more congested. Weather conditions are also becoming more extreme, with significant weather events becoming more frequent and severe, making work at sea more perilous and increasing the risk of coastal flooding.”

There is an increase in the development in the oil and gas fields to the North and West of Shetland.

Decommissioning work is likely to begin to the East of Shetland

There is an increase in the use of marine renewables and the vessels that survey sites and install and service the equipment.

There is an increase in the Cruise Ship and leisure market in Shetland and the North of Scotland.

Sullom Voe and Scapa Flow are both important destinations for Ship-to-Ship operations.

MCA figures for ETV

The figures supplied by the MCA for use of the Emergency Towing Vessel are for active towing only and retrospective oil pollution incidents. They do not take into consideration passive escorting or other duties that the vessels currently fulfil.

e.g.

- Offshore fire fighting capability – essential part of the Marine Incident Response Group (MIRG)
- Standby by vessel for the MIRG
- Offshore rescue vessel – rescue and recovery of personnel
- Search and Rescue function
- Pollution response
- The ability to provide a on scene communications and command platform

Nor is the information forward looking

e.g.

- The Russian Export Blend Crude Oil passing Shetland much of which will then proceed West of the Hebrides or during extreme weather opt for passage through the Minches.

It is not like a lorry breaking down at the side of the road, ships continue to move when they suffer problems, causing hazards to other vessels. The lives of those onboard, the environment and local economies are all at risk. The risk from shipping not only comes from tankers.

e.g.

- Cruise ships (48 called at Lerwick and 69 in Orkney with a total of 57,643 passengers)
- Ferry connections to / from Shetland (127,775 passengers in 2010)
- Container vessels (can carry a mixture of hazardous goods)
- Fishing fleet
- Offshore supply and standby boats
- FPSO's (Floating Production, Storage and Offloading vessel e.g. Schiehallion and Foinhaven)
- Naval vessels

The Minches

The majority of southbound Tanker Traffic will route west of the Hebrides, within the Designated Deep Water Route, however this is not without its potential problems, any loss of propulsion (similar to Braer) will quickly develop into a major emergency with a serious risk of grounding should there be any substantial delay in sourcing a suitable tug.

The nearest tugs of any substance are all harbour based, Sullom Voe, Scapa Flow, or the Clyde, being the nearest, and, as referenced elsewhere in this document, are neither designed or equipped for salvage or open water towage in severe weather. Apart from the obvious fact that they all have other taskings and may not be free to drop everything and respond.

During periods of severe weather southbound tankers may opt for a Minch passage as being a less risky option and currently the Coastguard ETV will be tasked as escort.

The availability of the ETV is a major element in the Risk Control Options that have been developed for the Minches.

Minch based ETV

Year	ETV tasked	Totalling (Hrs)	Survey (Hrs)
2010	115	355	691

Orkney / Shetland ETV

Year	ETV tasked	Totalling (Hrs)	Survey (Hrs)
2005	11	59	272
2006	7	120	2289
2007	6	47	1710
2008	6	91	1346
2009	4	71	
2010	4	118	

Background

On 05 January 1993, the tanker Braer, loaded with approximately 85,000 metric tons of Gulfaks crude ran aground on the shores of Southern tip of Shetland.



As a result of the incident the Secretary of State for Transport appointed Lord Donaldson, Mr John Rendle CBE and Professor Alasdair McIntyre to “advise on whether any further measures are appropriate and feasible to protect the United Kingdom coastline from pollution from merchant shipping”. The result of that inquiry became known as “Safer Ships, Cleaner Seas” or the “Donaldson Report”.

The report produced a large number of recommendations and resulted in major changes to improve safety and reduce the risk of pollution.

Recommendation 85 of the report stated that,

“The UK Government should set up a system to ensure that tugs with adequate salvage capacity are available at key points around UK shores.”

It also went on to recommend,

“where adequate capacity cannot be provided in any other way, the UK Government should arrange for the funding of the difference between what is needed and what the private sector can provide.”

Green Lilly – November 1997

On Wednesday 19th November 1997, the M.V. "Green Lilly" ran aground and foundered on Bressay. During the rescue operations, the winchman, Mr Deacon, from the rescue helicopter tragically lost his life. In the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) report that followed the first recommendation of the report stated:

“The Director of Logistics and Maritime Transport of the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions is recommended to: Review previous decisions not to provide the recommended ETV cover in “Fair Isle” and re-examine the need for emergency towing cover in the area.”

Multitank Ascania – March 1999

On 19 March 1999 the 2,780 gross tonnage chemical tanker “Multitank Ascania” caught fire and became disabled in the Pentland Firth. In less than an hour all the crew had been evacuated and a tug from Orkney had made fast to the bow. However 20 minutes after making fast the towline parted. In the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) report that followed, the MAIB stated

“It is possible that had ETV cover been based in the area, appropriate assistance would have been rendered. Although a dedicated ETV would have significant advantages over most other vessels tasked to provide a tow, there is no guarantee that its efforts would be successful. Associated with a chemical cargo, the crew may have been evacuated before the ETV’s arrival. Connecting a tow to an unmanned vessel without power forward in a high sea state is far from easy.”

In 1999 the MCA introduced an emergency towing vessel to be on standby in the Northern Isles. The tug is on 30 minutes notice, all year round.

ETV Review – 2000

In a report published in December 2000 by the MCA a cost benefit analysis of ETV provision was carried out. The calculation reported for an ETV based around Fair Isle and the Minches were:

Base Case NPV of Benefit over 10 Years				
	Pollution Prevention	Safety Benefits	Receipts	Total Benefit
Fair Isle	£5,981,136	£6,931,484	£1,782,836	£14,695,456
The Minches	£12,580,863	£6,327,975	£1,782,836	£20,691,675

In the same report the annual probability of an oil tanker grounding in Shetland waters was calculated as once in every 27 years, once every 18 years in the Minches with the annual probability around the whole of the UK of a grounding from other vessels being as high as four times every year. The provision of an ETV was estimated to reduce the risk by 50%. The report also estimated the following

Breakdown of Costs Incurred UK Economy by the Spilling of One Tonne of Oil					
	Common Costs to crude and bunker oils				
	Fishing	Agriculture	Tourism	Property	Total
Dover Strait	£237	£41	£59	£12	£349
SW Approaches	£416	£41	£59	£12	£528
The Minches	£594	£59	£36	£12	£701
Fair Isle	£475	£59	£29	£12	£575
Irish Sea	£475	£53	£36	£12	£576
	Crude Oil				
	Common Cost Total	Cleanup costs	Value of Oil	Damage to vessel	Cost per tonne
Dover Strait	£349	£594	£71	£119	£1,133
SW Approaches	£528	£594	£71	£119	£1,312
The Minches	£701	£1187	£71	£119	£2,078
Fair Isle	£575	£890	£71	£119	£1,655
Irish Sea	£576	£890	£97	£119	£1,682

	Base Case Annual Pollution Prevention Benefit		
	Cost per tonne spilt	Saved by ETV	Prevention Benefit1
Dover Strait	£1,133	271t	£307,281

SW Approaches	£1,312	273t	£358165
The Minches	£2,078	776t	£1,612,559
Fair Isle	£1,655	463t	£766,635
Total 4 ETVs		1,783t	£3,044,640
Irish Sea	£1,682	358t	£602,084

Annual Values		
	Safety Benefits	Receipts
Dover Strait	£2,292,034	£285,648
SW Approaches	£2,150,299	£285,648
The Minches	£811,092	£228,516
Fair Isle	£888,447	£228,516
Total 4 ETVs	£6,141,872	£1,028,328
Irish Sea	£1,261,852	£228,516



Recently – 2010

Following the Deepwater Horizon incident in the Gulf of Mexico, the UK energy secretary, Chris Huhne, said,

“The Deepwater Horizon gives us pause for thought and, given the beginning of exploration in deeper waters West of Shetland, there is every reason to increase our vigilance.”

It has been reported that officials in the UK department of energy and climate change (DECC) have reviewed the national system for preventing and responding to oil spills and said they found it to be “fit for purpose”.

On 20 October the UK government revealed the national “spending review”. As part of the review it is the intention of the government not to renew the contract for Emergency Towing Vessels around the UK potentially saving £32.5 million. The MCA said,

“The government believes state provision of emergency towing vessels does not represent a correct use of taxpayers’ money, and that ship salvage should be a commercial matter between a ship’s operator and the salvor.”

Shetland knows from experience (*Esso Bernicia, Braer and other major incidents around the world*), that pollution incidents, particularly large ones, usually have some or all of the following consequences:

- Closure of fishing grounds¹;
- Massive destruction of farmed fish and shellfish;
- Loss of markets in the short and longer term;
- Loss of product reputation built up over many decades;
- Bankruptcies among boat owners, fish farm companies, processing factories, sales agents and local suppliers;
- Unemployment among boat crews, fish farm workers, factory hands and employees of local suppliers;
- Mental and physical illness caused to local people and cleanup workers²; In addition, any spill gives an area massive bad publicity, which persists long after the oil has ceased to be visible;

¹ Details of which species are caught where are to be found in the Shetland Marine Atlas, Maps 1 & 2, at: <http://www.nafc.ac.uk/WebData/Files/Part%20Two%20Marine%20Atlas.pdf>

² See two books by Dr Riki Ott, an Alaskan marine toxicologist who studied the health effects of the Exxon Valdez spill: Ott, R., 2005. *Sound Truth & Corporate Myth*. Lorenzo Press - http://www.chelseagreen.com/bookstore/item/sound_truth_and_corporate_myth/ and Ott, R., 2008. *Not one Drop*. Chelsea Green - http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=b-TWppwB_RwC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Riki+Ott&source=bl&ots=gMEPLzqHc5&sig=GV7-1x2D_O628ijPXelZa40ZdMk&hl=en&ei=p5COTO_RHNS7jAfcgtWgBg&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=16&ved=0CFAQ6AEwDw#v=onepage&q&f=false

- A spill inevitably creates costs for local authorities and voluntary organisations that try to respond, often when they have no statutory duty to do so. These cost are often only partially compensated.

Questions

- What assessment have the MCA undertaken into salvage capacity?
- What formal risk assessment have the MCA undertaken into the effect of removing ETV's from the North of Scotland, what is the result of this and what mitigating measures are the MCA proposing?
- What has changed in the since the review of Emergency towing Vessel provision in 2000 which stated, *"ETV cover in the existing geographical locations should be provided on a "Year-round basis". The deployment of ETV coverage in the existing four geographical locations has been fully endorsed and should be maintained"*
- The tug could be tasked for other duties while still providing the essential cover around the UK. Has this been considered?

E.g.

- Fishery Protection
 - UK Border Agency duties
 - Hydrographic surveys
 - Defence related work
- Could the current contract be re-negotiated to become a more viable operation?

- Escorting of vessels is currently done free of charge, has a charging structure and associate legal requirements been examined?
- Can income from the Crown Estate be used to fund / partially fund the ETV?

Those Consulted:

Coastguard

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Highland Council

Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service

KIMO

Lerwick Port Authority

Lerwick Lifeboat

Members of the British Ports Association

Members of the UK Harbour Masters Association

Nautical Institute – Shetland Branch

Northern Constabulary

Orkney Islands Council – Marine Services

Scottish Ambulance Service

Shetland Aquaculture / Seafood Shetland

Shetland Fishermen's Association

Shetland Islands Council – Economic Development

Shetland Islands Council – Emergency Planning & Resilience

Shetland Islands Council – Ferry Services

Shetland Islands Council – Ports & Harbours Operations



Shetland Coastguard and Emergency Towing Vessel - socio-economic study

Brief points to date

1. General

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency has indicated it will only release financial information if submitted under Freedom of Information legislation. FOI requests have been made and the results are awaited.

2. Coastguard operations

- Current Coastguard operations in Shetland involve 24.5 full time equivalent directly employed posts (plus 1 post based in Orkney);
- This is equivalent to a direct injection of some £620,000 into the Shetland economy;
- Additional local expenditure includes contracts for eg grounds, services and property maintenance, cleaning, the maintenance of IT and communications systems, vehicle maintenance;
- Indirect spend might bring the ftes (direct + indirect) up to 25ftes (rounded) with induced impact increasing this to 30ftes as a provisional total subject to revision. Earnings impact would go up to c£750,000.
- 17 volunteer teams from the Coastguard Rescue Service are based in Shetland, from Fair Isle to Baltasound. An additional 6 teams are based in Orkney. Although classed as volunteers they are paid for actual hours worked, including training.
- The 25 MCA staff based in Shetland play a full part in Shetland life, adding to the viability of local services, clubs and societies and playing important roles in community life such as:
 - Community Mediator
 - Drug and Alcohol counsellor
 - Restorative Justice Worker
 - Members of committees for organisations such as the Swan Trust, Pony Club, local halls, Shetland Seafood, Cunningsburgh Show, Sea Angling Club
 - Sports coaching - football, kayaking, swimming

- Fly Tie Instructor
- Local Marina Associations
- Commissioned Army Cadet Officer
- Shetland Dance Teacher.

3. Emergency Towing Vessel

- The ETV divides its time between Shetland and Orkney waters, mostly at sea or at anchor, visiting a port on the islands once or twice a month;
- There are 2 sets of crew (a total of 20 jobs), working a shift pattern of 4 weeks on and 4 weeks off;
- Currently 1 crewman is from Shetland;
- Crew members use scheduled air flights to and from Shetland at changeover;
- Crew members often need to use accommodation at changeover;
- Total expenditure relating to Shetland is around £275,000, covering:
 - pay of crewmember from Shetland
 - travel
 - stores
 - accommodation
 - repairs and maintenance
 - agency fees.
- In addition, crew members can go ashore and spend locally when ship is in port.

6.2 Availability of Commercial Tugs and Towing Vessels from Bonn Agreement States

The following figure presents tugs with a bollard pull of greater than 100 tonnes which are located at other UK ports (black shading) as well as tugs which could be available to assist in an incident under the Bonn Agreement (red shading).

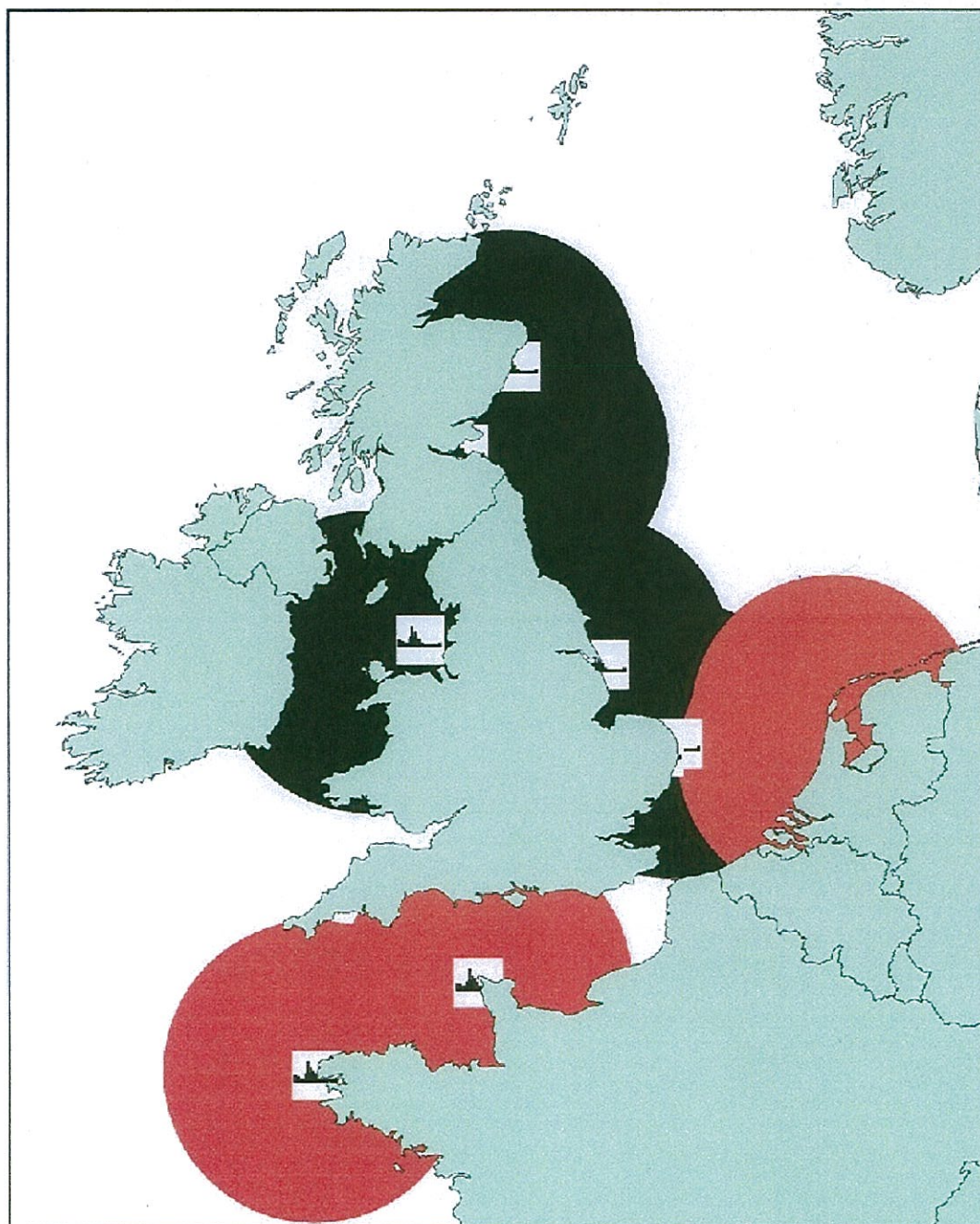
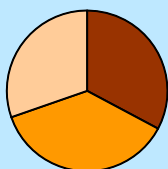


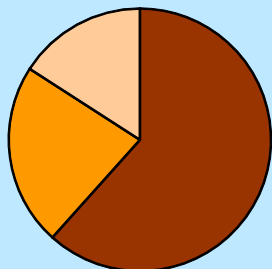
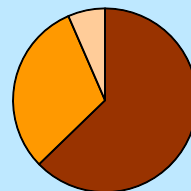
fig.6.2

Pie Charts Showing Potential for UK Reserves Growth



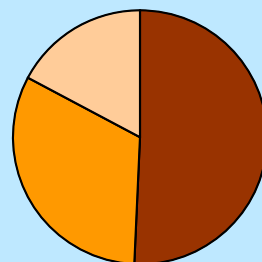
West of Shetland GAS
(billion cubic metres)
Proven and Probable Reserves 40
Possible Reserves 45
PARs 37

Northern North Sea GAS
(billion cubic metres)
Proven & Probable Reserves 84
Possible Reserves 41
PARs 9

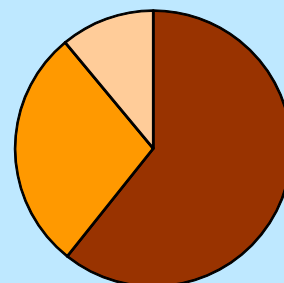


West of Shetland OIL
(million tonnes)
Proven and Probable Reserves 206
Possible Reserves 75
PARs 53

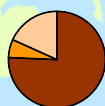
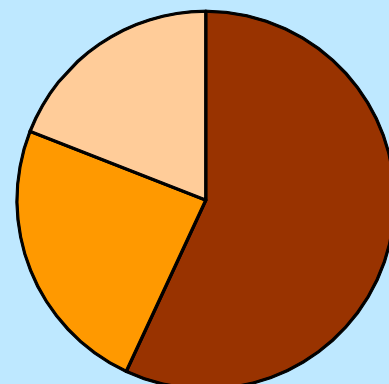
Northern North Sea OIL
(million tonnes)
Proven and Probable Reserves 154
Possible Reserves 98
PARs 52



Central North Sea GAS
(billion cubic metres)
Proven & Probable Reserves 223
Possible Reserves 104
PARs 40



Central North Sea OIL
(million tonnes)
Proven & Probable Reserves 393
Possible Reserves 166
PARs 132

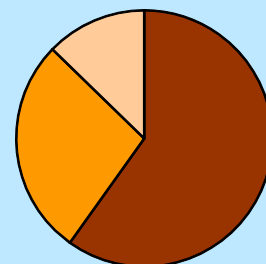


Irish Sea/Celtic Basin GAS
(billion cubic metres)
Proven & Probable Reserves 36
Possible Reserves 3
PARs 9



Irish Sea/Celtic Basin OIL
(million tonnes)
Proven & Probable Reserves 3
Possible Reserves 2
PARs 1

Southern North Sea GAS
(billion cubic metres)
Proven & Probable Reserves 180
Possible Reserves 82
PARs 38



KEY

- Proven & Probable Reserves
- Possible Reserves
- Potential Additional Resources (PARs) - Central Estimate

COMMUNICATIONS FAULTS INVOLVING FAILURES OF BT KILOSTREAMS

SHETLAND – 2010

Background information:

Shetland MRCC (Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre) has 5 aerial sites connected by BT kilostream at Saxa Vord, Collafirth, Fitful Head & Compass Head in Shetland and Wideford Hill in Orkney. These kilostreams are run via cables on Shetland, Orkney and the mainland but the connection over water is at present made by microwave relay links, in several “hops” between islands. This makes them extremely vulnerable to all sorts of interruption such as severe weather. Furthermore, there is little redundancy in the system since, unlike the mainland, there is little opportunity to re-route failed kilostreams for geographic reasons. In the incident on 2nd November 2010, a microwave relay station on the Orkney island of Sanday was struck by lightning. This proved impossible to re-route around and was also difficult to repair quickly due to the adverse weather conditions and the unavailability of ferries to carry engineers from the Orkney mainland to Sanday.

The aerials at the MRCC in Lerwick are “hard wired” into the station and are therefore not affected by Kilostream failures.

According to MCA figures, the reliability of all UK Kilostreams is 99.96%. The same figure for Shetland for 2010 however, is only 99.28% reliability, which means aerials being unusable for 36.67 days of that year.

The primary method of alerting Coastguard teams in Shetland is by Channel 0 VHF Radio pager, therefore if the radio network is down the teams cannot be alerted by that method other than from the MRCC whose aerial would be unaffected by the outage. This would cover most of the teams on the mainland apart from those at Northern extremities and northern isles of Shetland. This means that a MOC would lose the primary means of alerting Coastguard teams for either hilltop distress watch or indeed for incident working over the majority of the Shetland area.

It is often the case that although we can contact teams via telephone from the MRCC, this is usually because the Shetland telephone network is switched locally through local exchanges and does not rely on a link to the mainland like the kilostreams do or indeed the main telephone links to the mainland do, therefore it is entirely possible that we could call out teams by telephone from the MRCC but this facility would not necessarily be available to a MOC if the telephone link to the mainland failed. Furthermore, if we had no need, during an outage, to contact anyone on the mainland, it is entirely possible that whilst the outage may well have also affected the telephone network to the mainland, we would not have noticed it, nor would it have been recorded anywhere in the fault incident. Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. It is entirely possible that during any of the incidents mentioned below, the telephone network may also have been down as well but this fact was not recorded in the incident.

When Coastguard teams are deployed to hilltop sites we maintain contact with them through the radio aerial at the MRCC. This is both necessary for the teams to relay any radio traffic they hear, to ensure the safety of the teams, particularly if the outage has been caused by severe weather and to organise regular relief for volunteers who may well be working the following morning if the incident occurs or goes on overnight. This facility would also not be available to a MOC. If the team are on a hilltop site in a vehicle, how would a MOC maintain comms with them? We know that the mobile phone network cannot be relied upon because outwith the main towns in Shetland, mobile phone coverage is patchy to say the least. Furthermore, the mobile phone network relies on the same microwave relay links to the mainland as BT does. So the only way to maintain both contact with the teams and ensure their safety is through the radio which is hard-wired into the MRCC. This also would not be available if the MCA plans are carried out

because that aerial also would rely on a kilostream link to the mainland. So in circumstances where the radio network is down and Coastguard teams need to be deployed to man hilltop sites to provide radio coverage a MOC could not guarantee continued contact with the teams for either relayed radio traffic or for the safety of the personnel nor could they guarantee being able to contact the teams in the first instance.

Another facility we can currently use for comms outages is the ETV (Emergency Towing Vessel). Being large, ocean-going tugs, by their very nature they have an extensive communications fit. Again, this is a facility which would not be available to a MOC since they are being withdrawn.

The primary means of distress alerting on MF (Medium Frequency) is DSC (digital Selective Calling – essentially a paging system that provides information such as the ship ID, position etc usually linked to the ships GPS but only required to be fitted to vessels greater than 300 GRT). This means that if an MF aerial is lost we also lose the primary distress alerting facility. This would be in breach of our obligations under GMDSS declared Area A2 status. Furthermore, whilst at present we can get around this because again we have an MF aerial “hard-wired” into the MRCC which would not be affected by BT kilostream failures. This facility would again not be available to a MOC as it is scheduled for removal along with the closure of the MRCC.

The usual means of tasking RNLI lifeboats is by telephone through the RNLI COACS system (essentially a paging system), or by voice if a discussion is required with the LOM (Launch Operations Manager). In circumstances such as the November 2nd incident where telephone links with the mainland were lost, there would be no ability to task a lifeboat from a MOC, with all the implications for safety of life that could have. Because we had an MRCC in Shetland and the local telephone network was largely unaffected we could have tasked a lifeboat no problem. The same argument also follows for alerting the Coastguard Rescue Helicopter since the primary means of alerting them is by telephone. With no telephone link to the mainland, ARCC or the MOC could not have alerted the helicopter, unless the crew just happened to be sitting in the helicopter with the power on and could then use their satellite phone.

Major communications outages 2010

06 Feb 10

All aerials in Shetland inoperative (including DSC) apart from the aerials at the MRCC.

Reason: Major BT network fault between Lerwick and the microwave relay station at Shurton Hill

Time lost: 1133 6 Feb

Time restored: 1547 7 Feb

Total down time: **28 hours 14 mins**

What MRCC Shetland did: Shetland MRCC maintained watch on VHF Ch16 & DSC

Sullom Voe Port Control asked to listen on VHF Ch16

ETV Anglian Sovereign asked to listen VHF Ch16

Baltasound & Sumburgh Coastguard teams deployed to hilltop sites to monitor VHF Ch 16

Navigational warning issued via Hydrographers Office

What MOC could not do: Could not maintain distress watch on VHF Ch16 or DSC from MRCC
Could not alert Coastguard teams via Radio pagers.
Could not use ETV for radio distress watch
Could not guarantee comms with teams once deployed.

06 Oct 10

All aerials inoperative (including DSC) including Wideford in Orkney apart from aerials at MRCC

Reason: Unknown

Time lost: 0132 6 Feb

Time Restored: 0201 6 Feb

Total down time: **29 minutes**

What MRCC Shetland did: Shetland MRCC maintained watch on VHF Ch 16 & DSC

Sullom Voe Port Control asked to listen VHF Ch16

Orkney Harbours asked to listen VHF Ch 16

ETV asked to listen VHF Ch16

What a MOC could not do: Could not maintain distress watch on VHF Ch 16 & DSC from MRCC

Could not alert Coastguard teams via radio pagers

Could not use ETV for radio distress watch

Could not guarantee comms with teams once deployed

02 Nov 10

All aerials in Shetland inoperative (including DSC) apart from aerials at MRCC. Telephone and mobile phone network also affected in this incident. BT unable to make quick repairs since engineers living on Orkney mainland could not initially get to Sanday due to unavailability of ferries. BT unable to re-route traffic round this critical relay site.

Reason: Major BT outage due to lightening strike on relay station on Sanday, Orkney.

Time lost: 1457 2 Nov

Time restored: 1007 3 Nov

Total down time: **19 hrs 10 mins**

What MRCC Shetland did: Maintained watch on Vhf Ch 16 & DSC from MRCC

Hillswick, Baltasound, Lerwick, Noness, Sumburgh teams tasked to man hilltop sites.

SIC Ferry Dagalien asked to listen to cover Bluemull Sound

Shetland Sector Manager tasked to co-ordinate teams

Shetland MRCC able to task all SAR resources due to local telephone network being largely unaffected should the need have arisen.

What MOC could not do: Could not maintain distress watch on VHF Ch16 & DSC from MRCC

Could not alert teams via radio pagers

Could not alert teams via telephone network as links with mainland severed, also mobile phone network degraded.

Could not guarantee comms with teams when deployed

Could not contact Ferry Dagalien via radio from MOC

MOC unable to task SAR resources such as RNLI lifeboats and Coastguard helicopter due to unavailability of telephone/mobile phone network.

23 Nov 10

All aerials in Shetland, including DSC, inoperative apart from aerials at MRCC

Reason: BT Fault

Time lost: 2203 23 Feb

Most aerials restored at 2209

Collafirth restored: 0221 24 Feb

Total down time: **4hrs 18 mins**

What MRCC Shetland did: Shetland MRCC maintained watch on VHF Ch16 & DSC

Sullom Voe Port Control asked to listen VHF Ch16

Aberdeen CG asked to listen on VHF Ch 16

What MOC could not do: Could not maintain distress watch on VHF Ch 16 & DSC from MRCC

As well as the above 4 major outages there were a further 13 kilostream faults affecting either one or more aerials in both Shetland and Orkney. These ranged in duration from 2 hrs 8 minutes to 286 hours 34 minutes for one particular aerial. All of the things the MOC could not do for the major outages would have applied in the local area of these aerials also.

Outages so far for 2011

5 incidents involving at least one aerial site, one of which involved all aerials in Shetland except the MRCC for a short period of time.

Outages involving MF Radio – 2010

In all the cases below, MF coverage was provided by the hard-wired aerial at the MRCC. This will not be available to a MOC since the hard-wired aerial is scheduled for removal. Collafirth is to be the main MF aerial for Shetland.

09 Feb 10

Collafirth MF transmitting on very low power, range severely degraded.

Reason: 2 out of 3 amplifiers failed.

Time lost: 1201 09 Feb

Time restored: 2308 17 Feb (equipment fault rectified 1843 17 Feb but was found to have been masking a BT kilostream fault which was not rectified until 2308)

Total down time: **8 days 9 hours 7 minutes**

22 Feb 10

Collafirth MF inoperative

Reason: BT kilostream fault

Time lost: 0900

Time restored: 1108

Total down time: **2 hours 8 minutes**

04 Mar 10

Collafirth MF inoperative

Reason: Faulty transmit/receive unit

Time lost: 0726 04 Mar

Time restored: 1628 12 Mar

Total down time: **8 days 9 hours 2 minutes**

As can be seen the faults with Collafirth MF can be over extended periods of time. At the present moment this is not a problem since coverage is provided by the hard-wired MF aerial at the MRCC but this is slated for removal and Collafirth is due to be the main MF aerial for Shetland. Collafirth also has another problem in that it is initially connected via a microwave dish before its eventual connection to a BT kilostream. This is often subject to the vagaries of the severe weather in Shetland which knocks the microwave dish out of alignment leading to degraded performance of the aerial. To have such an aerial with these problems as the main MF aerial for Shetland is frankly ridiculous. Bearing in mind that with the removal of the hard-wired aerial at the MRCC there will be no back-up. If such incidents listed above occur in the future as currently envisaged then there will be no MF coverage, either voice or DSC, for a large swathe of the Northern North Sea and the UK will find itself in breach of its international commitments under GMDSS, unable to provide the required coverage (up to 150 nautical miles from land) that its declared Area A2 status demands.

We've gathered some statistics over the weekend but like anything they are only as good as what we are told in the first place; for example, ship movement reports through the Fair Isle are not mandatory so a few go through without reporting. Reporting for leisure vessels never has been mandatory so I'd suggest our transit report figures are very conservative.

MARITIME ACTIVITY

MAREPs (merchant shipping)...

Fair Isle channel in 2010: **935** vessel reports

647 laden tankers
218 tankers in ballast
70 "other" type (not tankers)

GT totalled 29,466,791

Pentland Firth in 2010: **2689** vessel reports

Shetland MRCC is the reporting station for the Fair Isle channel while Aberdeen MRCC does so for the Pentland Firth, despite the District 'boundary' running more or less down the middle. Nonetheless, it's an indication of (over) 3600 merchant ships transiting the reporting areas annually.

Cruise ships...

Lerwick hosted **48** visits in 2010 (GT 1,220,455)
Orkney hosted **69** visits in 2010

Combined total **117**

To date, Lerwick have 57 scheduled visits, and Orkney have 65 scheduled visits for 2011. Orkney is Scotland's favourite cruise ship destination and the 3rd most popular in the UK with an average of 70 ships annually.

Leisure vessels...

Transit Reports (TR) received by MRCC Shetland in 2010 numbered **181** vessels with **637** persons on board; lower than our 7 year average of 205 vessels and 939 persons.

Lerwick harbour website says that more than **500** yachts call annually.

Orkney harbours report that for Kirkwall, Stromness & Westray in 2010 they had **698** yachts calling in.

Fishing Vessels...

Not really something the MRCC keeps a track of however, Lerwick harbour (website) says that around 2300 fishing vessels use the port annually and land over 70,000 tonnes of fish valued at over £60 million.

In addition, the islands are at the centre of some of the richest fishing grounds in Europe, and we have strong support from the industry, with a modern local fleet based in the isles including some of the largest trawlers in the UK.

Offshore industry...

Data not available at this time.

Coastal leisure activity...

Hikers/ramblers, climbers, kayakers, sea anglers, surfers etc. All these activities are taking place in our area/District however, the number of incidents as a result are minimal and we do not hold data for the actual numbers of each activity.

Emergency Towing Vessel (ETV) aka Coastguard tug...

The occasions the ETV has been tasked has been declining, as you'll see below however, the duration 'on task' has increased. We've also included the duration spent on hydrographic survey work. Outside of these 'tasking' or 'survey' hours then the ETV will generally have been either at anchor, alongside or on passage between Orkney and Shetland.

2005	tasked on	11 occasions totalling	59 hours	(plus	272 hours on survey)
2006		7	120	(2289)
2007		6	47	(1710)
2008		6	91	(1346)
2009		4	71		
2010		4	118		

Number of incidents 'tasked' for 2005 to 2010: **38** totalling **506** hours.

INCIDENTS

Assisting other Authorities...

The MCA / HMCG are a category 1 responder within the Civil Contingencies act. Out with this responsibility, on a routine basis we assist other island authorities as follows, for example occasions in **2010**:

Ambulance service – helicopter medical transfers/air ambulance:	28
Ambulance service – ferry transport arranged:	55
Ambulance service – assistance with patient:	6
Police – ferry transport arranged:	4
Police – search for missing persons:	8
Police – helicopter assistance:	2
Fire & Rescue – ferry transport arranged:	3

One point to be made here is that we are “enablers”, we make things happen!

Community assistance (animals over banks etc):	7
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Medevacs...

Medical evacuation from a vessel at sea is *usually* preceded by a link call, set up by the MRCC, between the vessel and a doctor ashore, after which if the doctor recommends evacuation.

Medical evacuation from land or from one ‘safe haven’ to another – sometimes hospital to hospital, sometimes from an outer island to the island mainland is *usually* directly at the request of the medical authorities.

During **2010** MRCC Shetland co-ordinated,

67 medical evacuations from a vessel, and
63 medical evacuations from land.

130 in total.

Sport Diving...

Scapa Flow in Orkney is a sport diver’s mecca, on the whole it does not cause the MRCC a major problem however, during **2010** a total of **27** dive incidents were dealt with, the majority of which were for ‘bent’ divers – a.k.a. those showing signs of decompression sickness - and fortunately very few missing divers. (Our stats do not differentiate between bent and missing divers).

Vessels...

A great deal of our time is taken up monitoring situations and preparing to react and/or reacting should they deteriorate further and cause a threat to life, environment or property; we categorise these incidents in a number of ways...

During 2010:

Accident prevention and surveillance:	105 occasions
Reacting to pollution reports (counter pollution):	22 occasions
Vessel drifting or with machinery failure (NUC):	20 occasions
Vessel taking water:	2 occasions
Vessel fire:	2 occasions
Spoken word 'Mayday':	2 occasions
(note: spoken word 'mayday' is from an unknown source, often the only information known is that somebody has transmitted the distress signal, leading to a lengthy search to locate that source).	
Offshore installation:	5 occasions
(note: it is usual practice for MRCC Aberdeen to take the lead and / or coordinate any response to an Offshore installation in the northern North Sea/west Shetland basin, therefore this data for MRCC Shetland is limited).	
406 'EPIRB' transmission (satellite detected distress):	1 occasion
Flare reports:	29 occasions
Man over board:	3 occasions
Vessel reported overdue:	2 occasions

Persons...

During 2010:

Person in the water:	6 occasions
Body recovery:	1 occasion

Misc...

For 2010:

Aircraft incident:	1 occasion
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NOTABLE INCIDENTS

A few of the more notable incidents MRCC Shetland have dealt with over recent years;

15/06/2006	lost person, Ronas Hill:	3 hours
02/10/2006	missing person, Yell:	56 hours
22/02/2007	lost person, Ronas Hill:	10 hours
12/04/2007	capsized anchor handler (Bourbon Dolphin):	70 hours
15/06/2007	capsized dory – search for crewman:	48 hours
04/06/2008	missing person, Yell:	52 hours
24/11/2008	vessel, man over board:	9 hours
07/09/2009	vessel taking water:	21 hours
18/09/2009	vessel fire:	7 hours
09/10/2009	vessel, man over board:	10 hours
25/10/2009	vessel drifting:	9 hours
02/04/2010	missing kayaker:	24 hours
24/04/2010	vessel overdue:	8 hours
17/08/2010	missing person, Hoy:	4 hours
21/09/2010	accident prevention/surveillance (Stena Carron):	100 hours
15/10/2010	vessel, mast/rigging failure:	14 hours
20/01/2011	vessel overdue:	70 hours

INFRASTRUCTURE

Remote aerial sites...

The MRCC in Lerwick is connected to its remote radio sites over the BT network, the circuits are referred to as 'kilostreams'. There may be multiple kilostreams between the MRCC and a particular radio site, depending on the facilities used.

In the MCA proposal document the kilostream reliability figure *of the entire UK* is 99.96, for those sites 'belonging' to MRCC Shetland the overall figure falls to 99.28.

A reliability figure of 99.28% means that during **2010** one or more radio site had failed and coverage was compromised for **0.72%** of the year, or to put that another way, an aerial downtime of 880.08 hours for the year.

Enclosed document 'Communications Faults Involving Failures of BT kilostreams Shetland 2010' explains in more detail.

ETV ATTENDANCE

The following are brief accounts of incidents attended to by ETV's based in the Highlands of Scotland over recent years. This is not an exhaustive list, but only those incidents that could be found in the public domain. The MCA have not published a list of attendances and the vessel operators are prevented from providing such information by a disclosure clause and a clause referring to the "Official Secrets Act" in their contract.

Yeoman Bontrup 2 July 2010

A fire, described as 'fierce' by Clyde Coastguard and potentially polluting, broke out at approximately 3.30pm on the 100,000 tonne self-discharging bulk carrier Yeoman Bontrup, moored at the Glensanda Super Quarry in Morvern, opposite the Isle of Lismore. The fire broke out on a conveyor belt which carried the fire to the ship, causing gas cylinders onboard to explode.

The Anglian Sovereign attended the scene providing vital fire fighting support services helping to douse the fire and cool the hull preventing the ship from sinking at the berth. The fire was not fully extinguished until the 6th July. The Anglian Sovereign (ETV) remained on the scene assisting with towing the stricken vessel to an anchorage, finally leaving the scene on the 10th July.

The nearest harbour tugs available were on the Clyde.



Fire damaged Yeoman Bontrup under tow by Anglian Sovereign

Red Duchess 9 November 2010

The Red Duchess was drifting within half a mile of the shoreline of the Isle of Rum after she lost all power to the engines in a force seven gale. The Anglian Prince (ETV) attended the scene and escorted the thirteen hundred tonne ship to Stornoway. The tow took twenty hours and was undertaken in adverse weather conditions.

No suitable commercial or harbour tug was available to rescue the vessel and were it not for the presence of the Anglian Prince (ETV), the Red Duchess would in all likelihood have foundered.



Red Duchess under tow by Anglian Prince

Atlantic Trader 21 March 2008

The 173m Atlantic Trader with 24 people on board lost power west of Hoy in storm force conditions. After originally declining, she finally accepted a tow by the Anglian Sovereign and was towed to safety in Scapa Flow.



Atlantic Trader under tow off Hamnavoe by Anglian Sovereign in heavy seas.

Wilson Dover 19 March 2010

The Wilson Dover became disabled with steering problems in the early hours of 19th March approximately 50 miles north east of Cape Wrath.

Loaded with fertilizer, the 3,269 dwt vessel was trying to maintain position using its bow thruster, however it became clear the ship could not maintain its head in the storm force weather conditions and the Anglian Sovereign was tasked to take her under tow to safety.

Initially, due to the extreme conditions the tow could not be secured, however eventually a line was able to be placed aboard the Wilson Dover and she was towed to the safety of Kirkwall harbour.



Anglian Sovereign attempting to secure a tow line on the Wilson Dover in heavy seas.

HMS Astute 22 October 2010

HMS Astute ran aground on a shingle bank off the Isle of Skye during sea trials in fair weather conditions. The 7,800 tonne submarine which is the latest addition to the Royal Navy fleet remain stranded on a shingle bank until the following rising tide. The only tug available to attend within a reasonable distance and of sufficient size was the ETV Anglian Prince which was able to tow the submarine off the bank before she became further stranded.

Fortunately weather conditions at the time were favourable; however had there been adverse conditions and no ETV available this minor grounding could have escalated into a major environmental incident.



The Anglian Prince tows HMS Astute to deeper water as she vents emergency steam to atmosphere. Concerns were raised as to how the nuclear reactor was being cooled during the grounding in shallow water.

MV Gerrita 19 February 2005

THE 112,046dwt tanker Gerrita lost power 70 nautical miles North West of the Shetland Islands whilst on route from the Caribbean to Murmansk, Russia. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency sent the emergency response vessel Anglian Sovereign to tow the disabled tanker to Sullom Voe in heavy seas and winds at force 7 to 8.



Anglian Sovereign towing the disabled tanker Gerrita to Sullom Voe for repairs.

Mekahnik Semakov 22 October 2008

The Captain of the Russian general cargo vessel Mekahnik Semakov reported problems to Stornoway Coastguard that he had difficulties with their engines and in particular their fuel oil. At the time a sister ship the Mekhanik Kraskovksi was standing by.

The Mekahnik Semakov which is carrying timber was drifting at the time, and the crew reported they needed an hour to fix their engine. The vessel was around 2.6 miles offshore from the Isle of Skye at the time. The vessel was being constantly monitored from the Coastguard Centre on the Isle of Lewis on their automatic identification system (AIS) which reported the vessel drifting north eastwards at a rate of 0.3 knots.

As no tugs were in the immediate vicinity it was decided that the 'Anglian Prince should undertake the tow to bring the Mekahnik Semakov to a safe anchorage at Broad Bay, Isle of Lewis.

Jim Dickson, Counter Pollution and Salvage Officer for the MCA said

The MCA uses ocean going tugs such as the 'Anglian Prince and which are stationed in the Minch for just such a set of circumstances. The Mekahnik Semakov represented a threat to the coastline and environment this morning, particularly as the repairs had not been effected as the day progressed, and our concern was the increased rate of drift of the vessel once forecast increased winds arrived.

We then took the decision that our ETV would take the vessel to a place of safety. The tow is continuing and likely to bring the Mekahnik Semakov to Broad Bay later tonight for full repairs to be carried out.



Page 1 of 8 Annex I

**MCA EMERGENCY TOWING VESSEL – ANGLIAN PRINCE – THE MINCH
TASKING 1999 – 2000**

Incident DTG & Signal Reference Summary Narrative

15th September 1999

Dutch Warship '**JACOB VAN**

HEEMSKERCH

(Tasking 02-99/00)

01:07 UTC: ETV tasked to standby the Dutch Warship after it had grounded South of the Shiant Islands. Warship was later towed by ETV to safe anchorage in Loch Ewe to assess damage etc.

17th September 1999

Dutch Warship '**JACOB VAN**

HEEMSKERCH

(Tasking 03-99/00)

08:00 UTC: Monitored and accompanied tow by the tug 'WAKER' as far as Cape Wrath. The 'WAKER' was on contract to tow the warship back to Holland.

16th October 1999

MFV '**ORMAZA**'

(Tasking 04-99/00)

02:30 UTC: Stood by the 'ORMAZA' which had gone aground South of Brag Rock, Isle of Lewis. Fifteen crewmen rescued by Coastguard Helicopter. ETV later carried out pollution assessment on scene.

20th September 1999

MT '**STENA AKARITA**'

(Tasking 05-99/00)

20:25 UTC: ETV 'PORTSALVO' tasked to escort the tanker 'STENA AKARITA' through the little Minch. 23:00 UTC: ETV completed task without incident and returned to anchorage at the Shiant Isles.

31st October 1999

MV '**DONNINGTON**'

(Tasking 07-99/00)

06:49 UTC: MV 'DONNINGTON', who had suffered engine failure was towed by ETV to Ullapool for repairs after a protracted operation in severe weather conditions.

02nd November 1999

MT '**PETROTROLL**'

(Tasking 08-99/00)

16:54 UTC: ETV 'PORTSALVO' tasked to escort the laden tanker 'PETROTROLL' Southbound through the little Minch, due to weather constraints. 23:45 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

10th November 1999

MV 'HELLENIC CONFIDENCE'

(Tasking 09-99/00)

13:39 UTC: ETV tasked to escort the bulk carrier 'HELLENIC CONFIDENCE'

Northwards through the Minch, after carrying out repairs to engines. Purely precautionary. 21:30 ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

16th November 1999

MV 'TORM OSPREY'

(Tasking 10-99/00)

23:40 UTC: ETV 'ANGLIAN PRINCE' tasked to escort the tug 'TORM OSPREY', towing the rig 'BORGLAND DOLPHIN' from East of Barra Head Northwards through the little Minch & Shiant Channel due to weather constraints.

Page 2 of 8 Annex I

23rd November 1999

MT 'UNITED ANTON'

(Tasking 12-99/00)

20:05 UTC: ETV tasked to escort laden tanker 'UNITED ANTON', Northbound through the Minch due to weather constraints. 01:20 (24th) ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

16th November 1999

MT 'CATHERINE KNUTSEN'

(Tasking 13-99/00)

23:40 UTC: ETV 'tasked to escort the tanker 'CATHERINE KNUTSEN' through the narrows of the little Minch. 23:05 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

26th November 1999

MT 'POLY TRAVELLER'

(Tasking 14-99/00)

12:10 UTC: ETV 'tasked to escort the tanker 'POLY TRAVELLER' Northbound through the Minch due to stress of weather. 14:32 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

27th November 1999

MT 'NAVION VIKING'

(Tasking 15-99/00)

00:27 UTC: ETV 'tasked to escort the laden tanker 'NAVION VIKING' Southbound through the little Minch. 07:00 UTC: ETV off task upon completion of escort duties.

30th November 1999

MFV 'SOLSTICE II'

(Tasking 16-99/00)

14:06 UTC: Tasked to escort the MV

'SOLSTICE II' back to Lochinver Harbour after the vessel had been disabled by ingress of seawater through wheelhouse 65 nautical miles Northwest off the Butt of Lewis. 01/12/00 08:30 UTC: ETV off task upon successful arrival at Lochinver.

01st December 1999

MT **'NAVIGO'**

(Tasking 17-99/00)

14:02 UTC: ETV 'tasked to escort the tanker 'NAVIGO' Southbound through the Minch. 17:41 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

01st December 1999

MT **'CATHERINE KNUTSEN'**

(Tasking 18-99/00)

15:07 UTC: ETV 'tasked to escort the tanker 'CATHERINE KNUTSEN' Southbound through the Minch. 20:49 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

12^h December 1999

MT **'NAVION VIKING'**

(Tasking 19-99/00)

16:39 UTC: ETV 'tasked to escort the tanker 'NAVION KING' Southbound through the Minch. 19:49 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

13th December 1999

MV **'BRIO'**

(Tasking 20-99/00)

12:10 UTC: ETV 'tasked to escort the vessel 'BRIO' Southbound through the North Minch. 18:34 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

Page 3 of 8 Annex I

17th December 1999

MT **'NORDIC SVENITA'**

(Tasking 21-99/00)

13:09 UTC: ETV 'tasked to escort the laden tanker 'NORDIC SVENITA' Southbound through the little Minch due to adverse weather conditions. 17/12/99 05:42 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

21st December 1999

MT **'PROSPECT'**

(Tasking 22-99/00)

16:54 UTC: ETV tasked to escort the tanker 'PROPECT' Northbound through the little Minch, as a counter pollution measure due to vessel's size. 15:16 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of

escort duties.

04th January 2000

MT '**REBECCA**'

(Tasking 23-99/00)

07:19 UTC: ETV tasked to escort the tanker 'REBECCA' Northbound through the little Minch, as a counter pollution measure due to vessel's size. 09:52 UTC: ETV off task to attend scene of next tasking.

04th January 2000

MT '**PETROTROLL**'

(Tasking 24-99/00)

16:54 UTC: ETV tasked to escort the laden tanker 'PETROTROLL', as a counter pollution measure. ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

09th January 2000

MT '**FRIDRIHS CANDERS**'

(Tasking 25-99/00)

12:58 UTC: ETV tasked to escort the tanker 'FRIDRIHS CANDERS' through the little Minch. 18:55 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

09th January 2000

MV '**TRIOBULK**'

(Tasking 26-99/00)

21:30 UTC: ETV stood by the MV 'TRIOBULK' after the vessel suffered engine failure off Sgier Inoe, Scalpay. After she had restarted her engines, the vessel resumed passage to Stornoway carrying 2400 metric tonnes of road salt. 15/01/00 03:30UTC: ETV off task upon arrival at Stornoway pilot station.

16th January 2000

MT '**CATHERINE KNUTSEN**'

(Tasking 27-99/00)

16:23 UTC: ETV tasked to escort the tanker 'CATHERINE KNUTSEN' through the Northbound recommended route.

23:06 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

17th January 2000

MT '**EVITA**'

(Tasking 28-99/00)

03:26 UTC: ETV tasked to standby the tanker 'EVITA' which was reported on fire. ETV attached tow 12:10, commencing tow at 12:30. Upon arrival at Falmouth, fire was out, but vessel's engine room had a temperature of 50°C. 17/01/00 13:05 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

Page 4 of 8 Annex I

20th January 2000

MT '**KNOCK AN**'

(Tasking 29-99/00)

05:25 UTC: ETV tasked to escort the tanker 'KNOCK AN' through the little Minch using the Northbound recommended route. 08:11 UTC: ETV off task to attend next tasking.

20th January 2000

MT '**NORDIC SAVONITA**'

(Tasking 30-99/00)

06:44 UTC: ETV tasked to escort the tanker 'NORDIC SAVONITA' through the little Minch using the Northbound recommended route. 10:52 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

21st January 2000

MT '**UNITED ANTON**'

(Tasking 31-99/00)

15:26 UTC: ETV tasked to escort the tanker 'UNITED ANTON' Southbound through the little Minch. 22:10 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

22nd January 2000

MT '**PROSPECT**'

(Tasking 32-99/00)

02:20 UTC: ETV tasked to escort the tanker 'PROSPECT' North bound through the little Minch. 22:10 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

26th January 2000

MT '**EAGLE ALBANY**'

(Tasking 33-99/00)

15:53 UTC: ETV tasked to escort the tanker 'EAGLE ALBANY' Southbound through the Shiant's Channel. 22:42 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

02nd February 2000

MT '**POLY TRAVELLER**'

(Tasking 36-99/00)

16:18 UTC: ETV tasked to escort the tanker 'POLY TRAVELLER' Southbound through the Minch. 21:18 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

06th February 2000

MT '**KNOCK AN**'

(Tasking 37-99/00)

05:26 UTC: ETV tasked to escort the tanker 'KNOCK AN' on the recommended

Southbound route through the Minch.
09:35 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

06th February 2000

MT **'POLY TRAVELLER'**

(Tasking 38-99/00)

14:57 UTC: ETV tasked to escort the tanker 'POLY TRAVELLER' North bound through the little Minch due to adverse weather. 18:40 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

06th February 2000

MT **'STEN TOR'**

(Tasking 39-99/00)

17:54 UTC: ETV tasked to escort the tanker 'STEN TOR' through the Minch. 22:44 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

Page 5 of 8 Annex I

08th February 2000

MT **'RAGNHILD KNUTSEN'**

(Tasking 40-99/00)

05:48 UTC: ETV tasked to escort the tanker 'RAGNHILD KNUTSEN' North bound through the little Minch. 09:40 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

08th February 2000

MFV **'NORDSEE'**

(Tasking 41-99/00)

22:15 UTC: Escorted the FV 'NORDSEE' to Stornoway after the vessel suffered severe weather damage to the wheelhouse, resulting in temporary loss of power and loss of navigation equipment.

18th February 2000

MV **'YEOMAN BROOK'**

(Tasking 42-99/00)

16:43 UTC: Tasked to standby the MV 'YEOMAN BROOK', stopped and anchored with engine trouble 3 nautical miles Northwest of Maiden Island.

19/02/00 02:09 UTC: Repairs complete, ETV off task.

25th February 2000

MV **'FINA TIMBER'**

(Tasking 44-99/00)

02:39 UTC: Tasked to standby the listing MV 'FINA TIMBER' South West of Tiree after the deck cargo (timber) shifted. She later stabilised cargo and resumed safe passage, with 100 CM of cargo lost. ETV stood by vessel until it resumed passage to Ireland at 13:40, ETV off task.

27th February 2000

MT 'GERRITA'

(Tasking 45-99/00)

01:44 UTC: ETV tasked to escort the tanker 'GERRITA' North bound through the little Minch. 03:55 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

27th February 2000

MT 'PETROTROLL'

(Tasking 46-99/00)

06:03 UTC: ETV 'tasked to escort the tanker 'PETROTROLL' Southbound through the Minch narrows. 10:35 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

27th February 2000

MT 'KNOCK AN'

(Tasking 47-99/00)

09:01 UTC: ETV 'tasked to escort the laden tanker 'KNOCK AN' Southbound through the little Minch. 15:00 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

29th February 2000

MT 'STEN ODIN'

(Tasking 48-99/00)

01:45 UTC: ETV 'tasked to escort the laden tanker 'STEN ODIN' Southbound through the little Minch. 05:25 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

29th February 2000

MT 'POLY TRAVELLER'

(Tasking 49-99/00)

17:44 UTC: ETV 'tasked to escort the tanker 'POLY TRAVELLER' Southbound through the Minch narrows. 21:55 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

Page 6 of 8 Annex I

04th March 2000

MT 'POLY TRAVELLER'

(Tasking 50-99/00)

16:56 UTC: ETV 'tasked to escort the tanker 'POLY TRAVELLER' Northbound through the Minch narrows. 21:07 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

06th March 2000

MT 'TOVE KNUTSEN'

(Tasking 51-99/00)

03:37 UTC: ETV 'tasked to escort the laden tanker 'TOVE KNUTSEN' through the little Minch. 08:19 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort

duties.

13th March 2000

MT '**KNOCK AN**'

(Tasking 52-99/00)

14:24 UTC: ETV 'tasked to escort the tanker 'KNOCK AN' Northbound through the little Minch. 18:33 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

17th March 2000

MT '**STEN TOR**'

(Tasking 53-99/00)

02:32 UTC: ETV 'tasked to escort the laden tanker 'STEN TOR' Southbound through the little Minch. 07:54 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

23rd March 2000

MT '**CATHERINE KNUTSEN**'

(Tasking 55-99/00)

05:05 UTC: ETV 'tasked to escort the tanker 'CATHERINE KNUTSEN' Northbound through the little Minch. 09:06 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

1st October 2000

MT '**MATCO CLYDE**'

(Tasking 01-00/01)

00:32 ETV tasked to proceed at full speed to escort vessel MT 'MATCO CLYDE' Northbound through the Minch, in ballast condition. Duties completed without incident at 05:35, ETV back on station at 06:50.

1st October 2000

MT '**STEN TOR**'

(Tasking 02-00/01)

00:32 ETV tasked to proceed at full speed to escort MT 'STEN TOR' Southbound through the Minch to a position South of Scalpay. Duties completed without incident at 04:31, ETV proceeded with the above tasking (01 – 00/01).

5th October 2000

'**CANADIAN ACE II**'

(Taking 03-00/01)

15:59 ETV tasked to proceed full speed to standby vessel 'CANADIAN ACE II', a vehicle carrier with 21 POB. Vessel reported engine malfunction with repairs being effected. After a period of 20 minutes, the vessel informed MRSC Stornoway that repairs were complete. ETV escorted the vessel until she completed passage to Eilean Trodday,

with no further engine problems. ETV off task at 19:24 and returned on station 21:00.

Page 7 of 8 Annex I

6th October 2000

MT 'NORDIC TORINITA'

(Tasking 04-00/01)

00:46 ETV tasked to proceed at economical speed to escort MT 'NORDIC TORINITA' Northbound through the restricted area of the Northbound route through the Minch. 05:00 Escort completed without incident, ETV returned to Anchor at Loch Ewe.

7th October 2000

MT 'MAGNITUDE'

(Tasking 05-00/01)

05:12 ETV tasked to proceed at economical speed to escort MT 'MAGNITUDE', North bound through the Minches. 08:15 escort completed without incident.

7th October 2000

MT 'NORDIC MARITA'

(Tasking 06-00/01)

14:33 ETV tasked to proceed at economical speed to escort MT 'NORDIC MARITA' Northbound through the Minches in deteriorating weather conditions. 19:40 Escort completed without incident.

9th October 2000

MT 'NORRISIA'

(Tasking 07-00/01)

00:07 ETV tasked to proceed at economical speed to escort MT 'NORRISIA', North bound through the Little Minch. 02:11 escort completed without incident, ETV returned to anchor at Loch Ewe.

13th October 2000

MT 'PROSPECT'

(Tasking 08-00/01)

01:52 ETV tasked to proceed at economical speed to escort MT 'PROSPECT', North bound through the Little Minch. 06:30 escort completed without incident, ETV off task & vessel continued passage to Shetland.

14th October 2000

MT 'ANNA KNUTSEN'

(Tasking 09-00/01)

19:47 ETV tasked to proceed at economical speed to escort MT 'ANNA KNUTSEN', North bound through the

Little Minch. 21:55 escort completed without incident, ETV off task & vessel continued passage.

14th October 2000

MT 'JUANITA'

(Tasking 10-00/01)

21:55 ETV tasked to proceed at economical speed to escort MT 'JUANITA', North bound through the Little Minch. 01:13 (15th) escort completed without incident, ETV off task & vessel continued passage.

15th October 2000

MV 'ELECTRON'

(Tasking 11-00/01)

04:41 ETV tasked to proceed at full speed to assist MV 'ELECTRON', after the vessel had run aground in Village Bay, St. Kilda.

11:53 ETV released after all personnel were rescued by coastguard rescue helicopter.

Page 8 of 8 Annex I

20th October 2000

FV 'HORIZONTE CLARO'

(Tasking 12-00/01)

23:48 UTC: ETV tasked to proceed at full speed to assist the trawler 'HORIZONTE CLARO', hard aground on rocks and listing, off Soyea Island by Lochinver. All 13 crew taken off by Lochinver lifeboat around midnight. FV 'HORIZONTE CLARO' refloated by ETV at 11:20 UTC, tow was connected at 12:10 UTC and tow commenced to Stornoway harbour at 13:00 UTC. 17:15 UTC: Vessel now berthed securely at # 1 pier, ETV off task.

23rd October 2000

MT 'NORTHIA'

(Tasking 13-00/01)

04:55 UTC: ETV tasked to proceed at economical speed to escort MT 'NORTHIA', North bound through the Little Minch. 09:55 escort completed without incident, ETV off task.

24th October 2000

MT 'POLY TRAVELLER'

(Tasking 14-00/01)

09:56 UTC: ETV tasked to proceed at economical speed to escort laden MT 'POLY TRAVELLER', South bound through the Minch. 17:51 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

29th October 2000

MT 'POLY TRAVELLER'

(Tasking 15-00/01)

07:27 UTC: ETV tasked to proceed at full speed to escort laden MT 'POLY TRAVELLER', North bound through the Minch. 12:30 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

30th October 2000

MT 'GERRITA'

(Tasking 16-00/01)

03:20 UTC: ETV tasked to proceed at full speed to escort MT 'GERRITA', North bound through the Minch. 06:18 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties.

30th October 2000

MT 'ALFA GERMANIA'

(Tasking 17-00/01)

07:19 UTC: ETV tasked to proceed at full speed to escort MT 'ALFA GERMANIA', in ballast, North bound through the Minch. 09:55 UTC: ETV off task upon successful completion of escort duties, on passage to Stornoway to fit communications equipment.

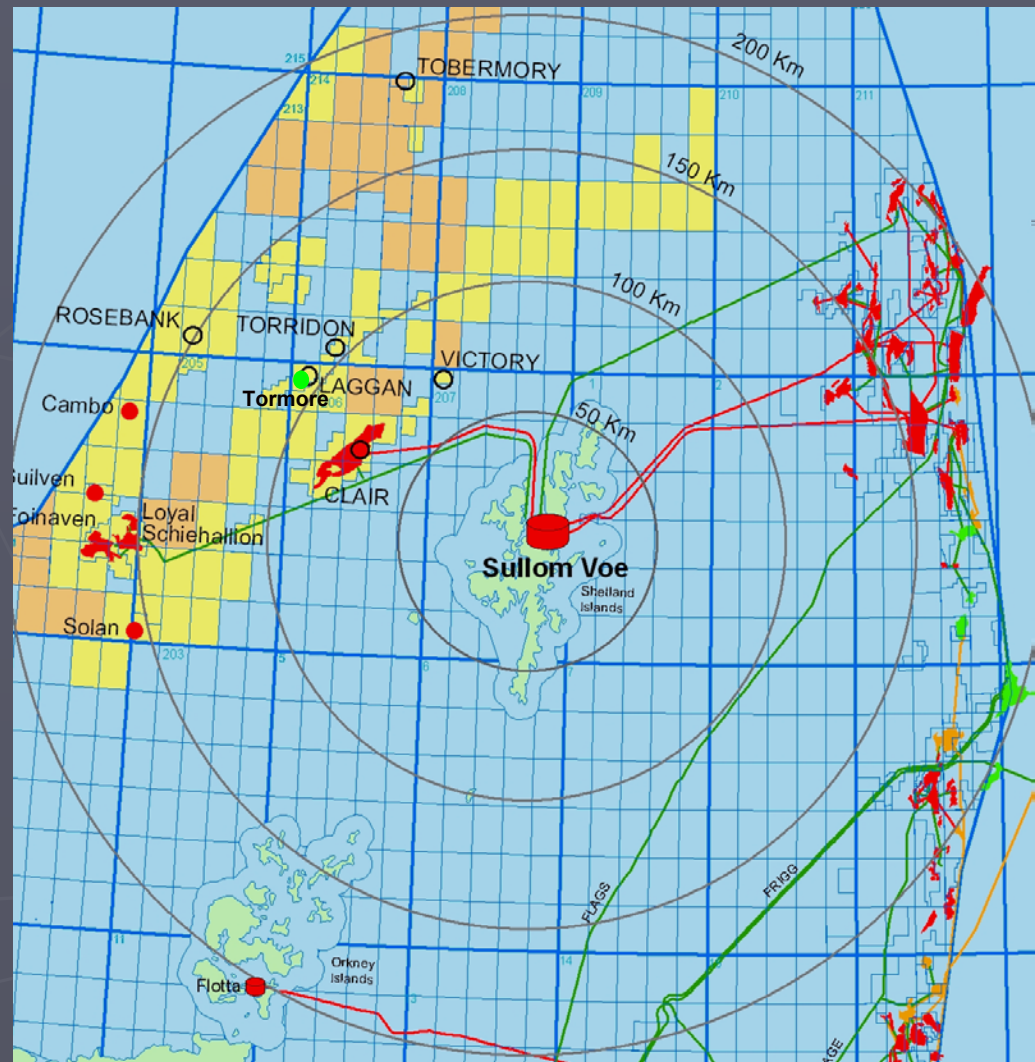
West of Shetland Activity

Area of high exploration
activity potential

30+ companies with
interests in WOS

Ca. 60 licences WOS

Potentially 40+ wells

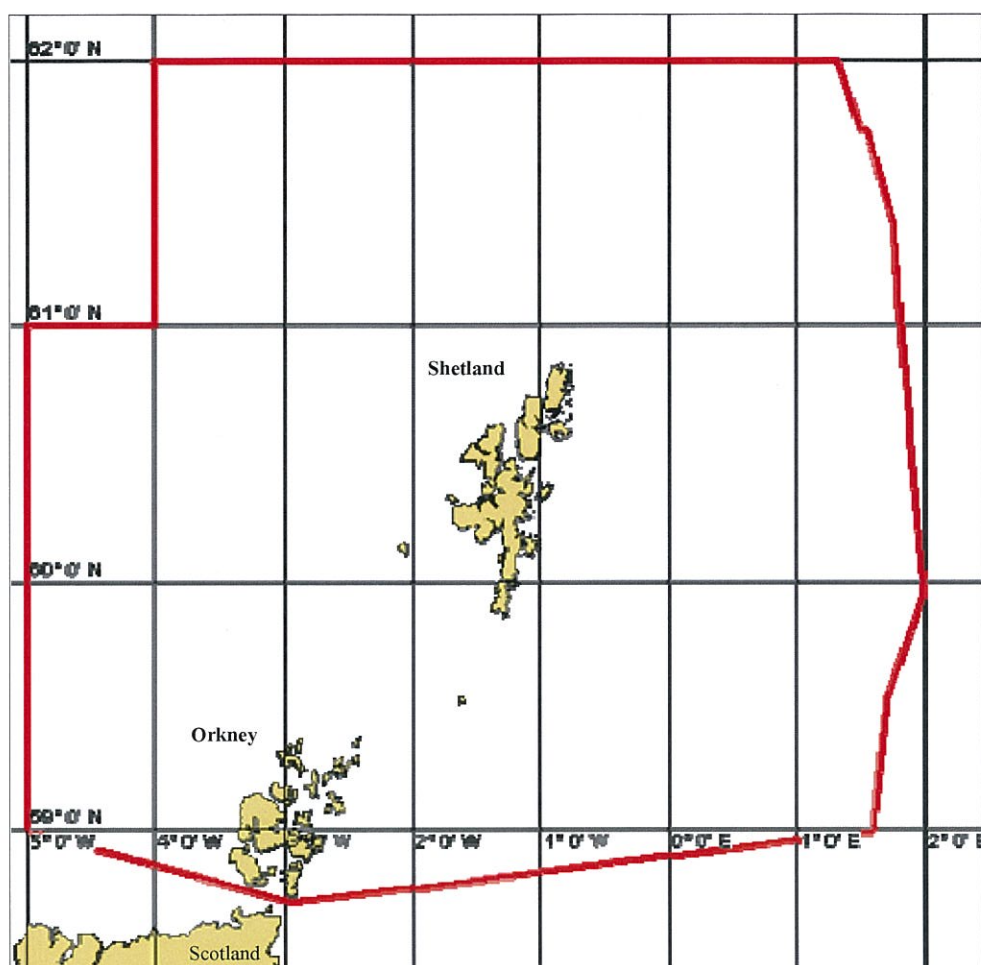


Blocks currently under
licence West of Shetlands

- Blocks licensed in the 24th Round
- Blocks licensed in previous Rounds

MCA SCOTLAND AND NORTHERN IRELAND REGION





Topography:

Shetland Coastguard District encompasses both the Shetland Island and the Orkney Island groups.

The District boundary follows the Anglo/Norwegian median line in the North Sea, beginning on the 59th parallel, north to the 62nd parallel, crosses east-west along the 62nd parallel to 4° West, then south to the 61st parallel, west to 5° West and then south again to the 59th parallel. From here the boundary crosses in a south easterly direction into the Pentland Firth to pass between South Ronaldsay and Muckle Skerry, then north easterly to the median line at 59° 00' 13.8" East. In total the sea area is over 36000 nautical square miles and the land area of both island groups together, 927 statute square miles.

The Shetland Island group is made up of more than 100 islands, holms and rocks, lying between Fair Isle in the south, to Out Stack – the northernmost point of “land” in the UK. Muckle Flugga was the northernmost inhabited point when occupied by the lighthouse keepers, but they have surrendered now.

The surface of the islands is generally low and rocky, with few trees and spare soil. In places cliffs rise above 305 metres, the ‘Kame’ on the island of Foula boasts a sheer drop of 376 metres, only beaten in the UK by St Kilda.

The Orkney Island group contains approximately 70 islands and rocks, stretching north-south from North Ronaldsay to South Ronaldsay, the southern tip of which is 5 miles north of the Scottish mainland, across the Pentland Firth.