

SHETLAND ISLANDS COUNCIL

Notice to Mariners



No 10/26 – West Burrafirth USV Operations

Date: 15/07/2026

Mariners are advised that nearshore geophysical survey operations will be carried out in connection with the proposed Shetland HVDC Link 2 subsea cable. This Notice concerns only those operations working out of West Burrafirth, which will be conducted by X-Ocean using the Unmanned Surface Vessels (USVs) listed below.

Survey operations working out of West Burrafirth are programmed to commence on Friday 17 July 2026 and will continue until completion of the nearshore survey works, subject to weather and operational requirements. Operations may be conducted on a 24-hour basis.

The USVs will operate from West Burrafirth, transiting the harbour and its approaches to and from the survey grounds. During survey operations the USVs will proceed at slow speed and will be restricted in their ability to manoeuvre.

The USVs will display the appropriate lights and shapes in accordance with COLREGs and will transmit AIS.

Mariners, and in particular vessels using the West Burrafirth Harbour area and its approaches, are requested to keep a wide berth of the USVs where safe and practicable to do so, and to contact the X-Ocean Operations Centre, or communicate on VHF Channel 16, if in any doubt as to their intentions.



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Survey Area

The USVs will operate out of West Burrafirth, transiting the harbour approaches to and from the nearshore survey areas associated with the proposed Shetland HVDC Link 2 cable route in St Magnus Bay and Swarbacks Minn.

Survey Vessels

Vessel	Information
USV X-23 & USV X-28 Unmanned Surface Vessels (X-Ocean)	Type: Unmanned Surface Vessel (USV) Call Sign: N/A IMO No: N/A MMSI No: N/A Monitored and controlled 24/7 by the X-Ocean Operations Centre Towed survey equipment may be deployed during operations

Contact

X-Ocean Operations Centre (24 hr): +353 1 223 9950 — xoc@xocean.com

X-Ocean Marine Superintendent (DPA), Stephen Leydon: +353 1 223 9955 — stephen.leydon@xocean.com

X-Ocean Project Manager, Becky Griffiths: +44 (0)20 8098 2102 — becky.griffiths@xocean.com

A full list of current Local Notices to Mariners can be found at;

[Local Notices to Mariners – Shetland Islands Council](#)