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Halite Gas Storage Project - Marine Monitoring Group

27th March 2018

Public Record of Meeting

The Halite Marine Monitoring Group held its first meeting on 27 March 2018. This was attended by representatives from the Environment Agency (EA), Natural England (NE), the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), the North Western Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NWIFCA), the Wyre Rivers Trust, Halite and its monitoring contractors.

The group have developed and agreed it's Terms of Reference (attached on page 2).

The group agreed that The Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) should be invited to join the group to attend future meetings.

The group have held an initial review of the marine monitoring requirements that are included in all the marine permits and licences held by Halite. A number of amendments to the monitoring requirements previously identified are being taken forward for further consideration by the group to address changes in available technologies and data sets and to address some of the concerns that have been raised by the group and other stakeholders.

These include:

- The use of static probes to continually monitor salinity in the marine environment to either replace or compliment the previously planned vessel surveys. This would allow continual and potentially real time reporting.
- The use of drogues and/or new tracers and the use of a pre-operation practice plume tracking survey to ensure that the plume is tracked accurately once the discharge commences.
- Ensuring that the scope, timing and reporting of the pre-pipeline construction ecology survey addresses both the MMO and EA licence/permit requirements.
- Identifying the optimal timing of a second pre-operation ecology survey to ensure seasonality effects are accounted for.
- Identifying an appropriate method for monitoring migratory fish that ensures appropriate baseline data is available.

The Marine Monitoring Group is holding its next meeting during the second week of May.

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Terms of Reference

Purpose of Marine Monitoring Group (MMG)

- To allow the operator to outline their monitoring intentions, in order to satisfy the requirements of relevant operational permits or licences.
- To allow useful discussion from regulators and interested parties, to ensure monitoring proposals are sufficient to demonstrate compliance with relevant operational permits or licences.
- To allow DEFRA group members and partners to co-ordinate necessary monitoring through joint attendance and discussion.
- To provide a forum for jointly reviewing the monitoring data that is collected and allowing useful discussion from regulators and interested parties on the interpretation of the data and identifying any actions that may arise.

Membership of Marine Monitoring Group

- Environment Agency (Area and National representation) – will chair meetings
- Marine Management Organisation (Licensing Managers and Case Officer)
- Natural England (Area and Senior Marine Advisors)
- North Western Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (Senior Scientist)
- Wyre Rivers Trust (Chair and Programme Manager or sub as agreed)
- CEFAS (TBC)
- Halite (company representatives and their consultants/surveyors as required)

Frequency of Meetings

The MMG will initially meet on a monthly basis with the meeting frequency dropping to quarterly once the programme has been more fully established. The frequency of meetings will be reviewed regularly by the MMG. Sub groups may be formed to examine particular issues in more detail and report back to the MMG.

Communications

The MMG will produce regular statements of progress for sharing with other interested parties, ideally after each meeting. Each member organisation has the responsibility for sharing these with their local contacts and networks.

Escalation Procedures

If agreement cannot be reached within the MMG on any matters then the appropriate Agency will consult their relevant management teams for advice to achieve resolution. The MMG does not remove the regulatory role or responsibility of the Environment Agency and Marine Management Organisation who will ultimately be responsible for agreeing changes to permit/licence requirements.

Any permit/licence enforcement issues that may arise will not be discussed at the MMG meetings but will be dealt with by the appropriate Agency through normal procedures. Any discussions that the MMG have on compliance with permit/licence conditions will be conducted on a “without prejudice” basis.