

Minister for Energy and the Environment – Gillian Martin

Briefing for Floating Offshore Wind Conference 2023

What	You have been invited to provide 10 minute opening remarks followed by 15 minutes of Q&A at Scottish Renewables and Renewable UK's annual Floating Offshore Wind Conference.
Where	P&J Live, Corsehill Burn Road, Aberdeen, AB21 9FX
When	4 October 2023 08:50 – 09:30
Key message(s)	The Scottish Government recognises that investment is required to continue our floating offshore wind success story. We will continue to work with industry and UK Government to try to create the correct conditions for investment in Scotland.
Who	Scottish Renewables and Renewable UK. You will be introduced by Claire Mack, CEO of Scottish Renewables.
Why	An opportunity to provide an update on SG policy development to floating offshore wind sector, which is crucial to supporting Scotland's net zero ambitions. MiCase 202300362003
Supporting official	[redacted – reg. 11(2)] Offshore Wind Policy Adviser, [redacted – reg. 11(2)]
Briefing contents	Annex A: Programme Annex B: Biographies Annex C: Q&A Annex D: <i>Speaking Note (provided separately)</i>
Media handling	<i>To follow separately. No communications official attending.</i>
Social media	A pleasure to provide opening remarks at my first @ScottishRenewables and @RenewableUK Floating Offshore Wind Conference as Minister for Energy and Environment.
Greeting party and meeting point on arrival	You will be greeted by Nick Sharpe, Director of Communications and Strategy Scottish Renewables at the main entrance to P&J Live. <i>Contact number:</i> [redacted – reg. 11(2)]
Parking arrangements	Minister can be dropped off at main entrance, parking available on-site at underground car park (pay on exit by cash or card, requires entering vehicle registration number at payment point).

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ANNEX A

Programme

Time	Item
08:50	Arrive at P&J live main entrance <i>You will be met by Nick Sharpe and officials</i>
08:55	Tech set up <i>Nick Sharpe will accompany you backstage to get mic'ed up</i>
09:00	Introduction and conference opening <i>Claire Mack will go through housekeeping and invite you to provide Ministerial opening remarks</i>
09:05	Provide up to 10 minute opening remarks
09:15	Pre-agreed Q&A <i>Claire Mack will ask you 3 - 4 questions depending on time, agreed in advance (set out in Annex C).</i>
09:30	Depart

Biographies



Claire Mack, CEO, Scottish Renewables

Claire has been Chief Executive of Scottish Renewables since October 2017. She is responsible for leading the organisation's work to grow Scotland's renewables sector and sustain its position at the forefront of the global clean energy industry. Claire is a member of a number of many industry and advisory groups, including SEAB and SOWEC.



Nick Sharpe, Director of Communications and Strategy, Scottish Renewables

Nick oversees Scottish Renewables' media and public affairs work and liaising between the organisation's member companies, the media and other stakeholders. A former journalist, Nick trained on the South Wales Echo then spent seven years at the Sun, latterly as Chief Reporter. He then spent a year at Weber Shandwick, one of the world's largest public relations consultancies.

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ANNEX C

Q&A

[redacted – reg. 10 (e)]

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[redacted – reg. 10 (e)]

Engagement note – Minister for Energy and Environment – Opening Remarks and Q&A at Floating Offshore Wind Conference, P&J Live – 4 October 2023, 8:50 – 9:30

The Minister arrived at 8:50 and was met at the entrance by Nick Sharpe, Director of Communications and Strategy, Scottish Renewables, with whom they shared amicable small talk while walking to the conference suite where they met Claire Mack, CEO of Scottish Renewables and chair for the session.

Claire provided a short introduction for the day and invited the Minister to speak.

The Minister delivered a 10-minute speech, largely following the speaking note provided by officials, which covered UK Government's Contracts for Difference Allocation Round 5, the Strategic Investment Model, ScotWind and INTOG leasing rounds, and a just transition for oil and gas workers – where the Minister added a personal story about the impact a lack of just transition for Clydeside had on her family, and noted a just transition is her number one goal in the role.

The Minister's opening remarks were well received by the audience and the chair.

Following her opening remarks, the Minister answered three questions from Claire Mack:

- 1) The first question was about what government can do to help accelerate consenting. The Minister notes that SG has increased resources in the Marine Directorate, and said she was aware that will need to go even further as more applications come in. She then spoke about the need to increase the pool of skilled workers to address staffing shortages in the consenting and planning space – and that this would be another good area for oil and gas workers to transition into.
- 2) Next, Claire asked for the Minister's reflections on their recent visit to the Port of Esjberg, and what could be done to secure investment into Scotland's ports. The Minister spoke about the scale of infrastructure seen in Esjberg, and a commonality between Esjberg and Aberdeen in the oil and gas history. The Minister then noted that Scotland has more certainty around offshore wind than Esjberg ever had, and that SG's work with ports has to speed up. The Minister noted the need to look at both large ports and smaller harbours such as Buckie; and that the whole of the East Coast is full of opportunities for expanding port infrastructure and regenerating communities.
- 3) The final question was about how Scottish Ministers will work with industry to secure a just transition while awaiting the publication of the Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan (ESJTP). The Minister explained that one of the reasons for delaying publication of the final ESJTP to summer 2024 was to allow for proper engagement with stakeholders to ensure a just transition is delivered, and added that SG is taking all consultation responses received very seriously. The Minister added that the Offshore Energy Skills Passport needs to get over the line, and that the UKG's

Energy Bill finalisation will have an impact. She added that the reason she needs to leave is to deliver a Parliamentary statement on that topic, reflecting that some amendments that she wanted to see have been secured, and some in the devolution space haven't yet. Ultimately, the Minister said, the ESJTP needs to provide a clear roadmap and industry and government need to work together to provide that. This concluded the Q&A.

The Minister left the stage and conference room at 9.30. On her way out, she was approached by Alasdair Ferguson, CEO of Port of Kishorn, who invited the Minister to visit the port to see the work they were undertaking in relation to decommissioning oil and gas platforms. Alasdair noted he will email an invitation to the Minister.

Minister departed the venue at 9:35.

Note by [redacted – reg. 11(2)] Offshore Wind Directorate

Minister for Energy and Environment

Speaking note: Opening remarks at Scottish Renewables' and RenewableUK's Floating Offshore Wind Conference

4 October 2023, 09:00 – 09:30

8 – 10 minutes @ 130 words pm = 1040 words – 1300
words

Intro

Good morning. I'm glad to join you here at the P&J Live – thank you to Claire (Mack) for inviting me to speak.

This is my first floating offshore wind conference. I have been told that this is the most exciting of the offshore wind events – *I will not confirm or deny this, but I have to say the commute definitely suits me.*

The achievements of the floating offshore wind sector in Scotland are something to be truly proud of – a brilliant success story so far.

We are, of course, home to the world's first floating offshore wind farm. Our waters also host, as of August, the *second* largest one in the world.

ScotWind and INTOG have placed us firmly at the forefront of the development of floating offshore wind globally – while we’ve not set a specific target for the deployment of floating wind, we have sent a clear message with these leasing rounds that floating offshore wind will be front and centre in our net zero future.

CfD

However – as the Institute for Government put it – the Government in Whitehall managed to “take the shine off a major UK success story” with its latest Contracts for Difference auction.

While there were some positive results from this round – such as the 11 tidal stream projects that secured support – there is no denying that not securing a single megawatt of new offshore wind is a missed opportunity.

This year’s auction raises serious questions about the UK Government’s approach to safeguarding energy security, breaking our reliance on imported energy and, critically, doing everything possible to ensure the energy sector can capitalise on the enormous economic and societal opportunities that offshore wind can provide.

It is critical for governments to understand and hear the significant concerns developers have expressed about increasing pressures on project development costs, including inflation.

We (*Scottish Government*) have spoken with UK Government officials and will continue to engage with them to understand how to influence a better outcome for Scottish floating offshore wind in Allocation Round 6.

If the UK Government is serious about its target for floating offshore wind, it cannot afford to lose any more time with another failed auction outcome.

Supply chain / SIM / SLWG

And to be clear – a better outcome is not just about the gigawatt capacity. We must ensure that we secure benefits beyond the electrons delivered to our grid and consumers.

We are committed to maximising the public benefits of our renewables revolution and we will explore all options open to us to do so.

That is why, working with industry, economic development agencies and Crown Estate Scotland, we were pleased to support the development of the Strategic Investment Model (SIM).

The Strategic Investment Model will help the government, our agencies and the sector to identify key, shared priorities with an initial focus on investment in ports and harbours infrastructure improvements, manufacturing and fabrication.

On behalf of the Scottish Government, I would like to thank all Strategic Investment Model Group members for their time and commitment. We are looking forward to the formal launch of a Strategic Investment Model prospectus in November.

We have now also established a short-life working group with public sector partners to develop a new framework to ensure strategic alignment of public sector investment in offshore renewables supply chain development.

The framework will ensure that, once key infrastructure and supply chain requirements have been identified for the successful and timely delivery of projects in Scottish waters, public sector partners will unify behind a consistent approach to any interventions required to support delivery.

Ultimately, this work will provide the building blocks for us to deliver a successful offshore renewables sector in Scotland, and to maximise the economic opportunities from our enormous offshore wind potential.

ScotWind & INTOG

The lion's share of this potential comes, of course, from the ScotWind leasing round. I was pleased to see that the first updates to the projects' Supply Chain Development Statements resulted in an increase in average projections for investment into the Scottish economy from £1.4 billion per project to £1.5 billion.

And rapid progress is being made to get these projects in the water. Over half of the ScotWind projects are now at the pre-application stage in the consenting process. We have significantly increased the resources within our Marine Directorate to keep up the pace as more projects progress through the consenting process.

Progress is also being made on the Innovation and Targeted Oil and Gas projects. This floating offshore wind leasing and planning exercise presents significant opportunities to

decarbonise oil and gas production in Scotland while, crucially, enabling the offshore wind sector to expand, innovate and drive forward Scotland's ambition to be a renewables powerhouse.

All five innovation projects from this leasing round have signed the exclusivity agreements offered to them, enabling them to progress to the development stage.

These projects are an opportunity to test novel floating technologies, get the floating supply chain ready in advance of the delivery of ScotWind projects, and to build on Scotland's legacy of offshore engineering for a clean energy future.

Oil & gas / Skills transition

And the clean energy future must, in turn, find a place for our oil and gas engineering legacy.

We need to harness the skills, talent, and experience located in the North East to support the buildout of floating offshore wind technologies in Scotland. The Scottish Government is absolutely committed to a just transition, and ensuring we take workers with us on our journey to net zero.

Research from the Robert Gordon University's Energy Transition Institute demonstrates the potential for this transition.

The research highlights that a majority of offshore workers could be delivering low carbon energy by 2030, and that more than 90% of the UK's oil and gas workforce have medium to high skills transferability – they are well positioned to work in adjacent energy sectors.

Crucially, the analysis in the recent 'Powering up the Workforce' report shows that there is a workforce 'goldilocks zone' between 2024 and 2028. This is when the supply chain capability can be developed so that the transferability of the offshore energy workforce is optimised.

This is another reminder that we cannot afford to wait to make key interventions.

We are committed through our flagship £500 million Just Transition Fund to creating jobs, supporting innovation, and securing the highly skilled workforce of the future through key projects such as the digital Offshore Energy Skills Passport and our Energy Transition Skills Hub in Aberdeen.

We continue to call on the UK Government to match our £500 million investment to support a just transition in Aberdeen and the North East.

Conclusion

Ultimately, it is all of our responsibility to get this transition right. While the UK Government holds many important levers to support our net zero future, and the key role floating offshore wind will play in it, Scottish Ministers will continue to work with you to deliver on our joint mission to continue the global success story of Scotland's floating offshore wind sector.

Thank you. I will now pass over to Claire (Mack), who I believe has some questions for me.