



**AQUIND Limited**

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# **AQUIND INTERCONNECTOR**

Statement of Common Ground Between  
AQUIND Limited and the Maritime and  
Coastguard Agency

The Planning Act 2008

Document Ref: 7.5.17

PINS Ref.: EN020022

**AQUIND Limited**

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# **AQUIND INTERCONNECTOR**

**PINS REF.: EN020022**

**DOCUMENT: STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND**

**DATE: 23 DECEMBER 2020**

## DOCUMENT

<b>Document</b>	<b>Statement of Common Ground</b>
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# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1. PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

1.1.1.1. This Statement of Common Ground ('SoCG') has been prepared with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency ('MCA') to show where agreement has been reached with AQUIND Limited during the pre and post Development Consent Order ('DCO') application consultation and in the course of the DCO Examination.

1.1.1.2. This SoCG has been prepared by AQUIND Limited (the Applicant) and the MCA in respect of the Development, collectively referred to in this SoCG as 'the parties'.

1.1.1.3. The purpose and possible content of SoCGs is set out in paragraphs 58-65 of the Department for Communities and Local Government's guidance entitled "Planning Act 2008: examination of applications for development consent" (26 March 2015). Paragraph 58 of that guidance explains the basic function of SoCGs:

*"A statement of common ground is a written statement prepared jointly by the applicant and another party or parties, setting out any matters on which they agree. As well as identifying matters which are not in real dispute, it is also useful if a statement identifies those areas where agreement has not been reached. The statement should include references to show where those matters are dealt with in the written representations or other documentary evidence."*

1.1.1.4. This SoCG comprises a record of agreement which has been structured to reflect topics of interest to the MCA on the AQUIND Interconnector DCO Application ('the Application') and covers topic specific matters agreed, not agreed and actions to resolve between both parties.

1.1.1.5. The position with respect to each topic of interest is presented in a tabular form.

1.1.1.6. The withdrawal of the signed SoCG submitted at Deadline 1 (REP1-111) and resubmission of this SoCG at Deadline 6 has been necessary to accommodate further advice from the MCA submitted at Deadline 4 (REP4-039 and REP4-040). Further email communications between both parties occurred during December 2020 and all matters are now considered resolved and no points of disagreement remain between both parties. The Applicant has responded at Deadline 6 to each matter raised by the MCA in Appendix E of the Applicant's Response to Deadline 4 Submissions (document reference 7.9.23) and this SoCG is also currently under review by the MCA.

## 1.2. THE DEVELOPMENT

- 1.2.1.1. This SoCG relates to an application made by the Applicant to the Planning Inspectorate ('PINS') under the Planning Act 2008 ("Act"). The application was made on 14 November 2019.
- 1.2.1.2. The draft DCO is referred to as the AQUIND Interconnector DCO. The DCO, if granted, would authorise the Applicant to construct, operate and maintain infrastructure and associated development (the 'Proposed Development') including:
- High Voltage Direct Current ('HVDC') marine cables;
  - HVDC underground cables;
  - Converter station;
  - High Voltage Alternate Current ('HVAC') cables; and
  - Fibre optic data transmission cables and associated infrastructure.
- 1.2.1.3. This SoCG is only relevant to the marine aspects of the Proposed Development which comprise of activities including the installation of marine cables that run from Mean High Water Springs ('MHWS') to the UK/France European Economic Zone ('EEZ') Boundary Line.

## 2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1.1.1. The parties have been engaged in consultation since the inception of the Proposed Development.
- 2.1.1.2. A summary of key meetings and correspondence between the parties can be found in Table 2.1:

**Table 2.1: Consultation with the MCA**

Date	Form of Contact	Summary
<b>May 2018</b>	Scoping Opinion Request to the MMO	Scoping response received from the MCA.
<b>September 2018</b>	Meeting with NAB VTS User Group	Introduction to the Proposed Development with representatives from MCA, QHM Portsmouth and ABP Southampton. Information discussed at this meeting is presented in Section 6 of Appendix 13.1 Navigation Risk Assessment of the Environmental Statement ('ES') (document reference 6.3.13.1).
<b>October 2018</b>	Meeting with Dover Straits Working Group	Introduction and update to the Proposed Development with representatives from Trinity House, MCA, P&O ferries, Comité Régional des Pêches Maritimes et des Elevages Marins (CRPMEM), CROSS Gris-Nez (CGN), Société Nationale de Sauvetage en Mer (SNSM) and UK Maritime Pilots Assoc.. Information discussed at this meeting is presented in Section 6 of Appendix 13.1 Navigation Risk Assessment of the ES (document reference 6.3.13.1).
<b>October 2018</b>	Scoping Opinion Request to the PINS	Scoping response received from the MCA. Responses to the MCA scoping responses are presented in Section 6.1 of Appendix 13.1 Navigation Risk Assessment of the ES (document reference 6.3.13.1).
<b>March 2019</b>	Section 42 Consultation	Consultation on Preliminary Environmental Information Report

Date	Form of Contact	Summary
		('PEIR'). Response received from MCA. Responses to the MCA s.42 comments are presented in Table 6.6 of Appendix 13.1 Navigation Risk Assessment of the ES (document reference 6.3.13.1).
<b>08 July 2019</b>	Email	Draft deemed Marine Licence ('DML') shared with the MCA, NAB VTS User Group for review.
<b>16 July 2019</b>	Email	Request for clarification from MCA on calculating compass deviation percentages along the marine cable route.
<b>26 July 2019</b>	Email	Draft DML shared by MCA with the Dover Straits Working Group for review. No feedback from this Working Group received.
<b>07 August 2019</b>	Email	Confirmation received from MCA that compass deviation calculations should be across the whole navigable cable route from the UK to France.
<b>09 August 2019</b>	Email	Feedback received from MCA on draft DML.
<b>05 September 2019</b>	Email update for meeting with NAB VTS User Group	Update provided on Proposed Development and on-going consultation with Langstone Harbour.
<b>04 March 2020</b>	s. 56 Consultation	Relevant Representation ('RR') received from MCA.
<b>04 March 2020</b>	Meeting with NAB VTS User Group	Update provided on the Proposed Development.
<b>10 March 2020</b>	Email	Draft SOCG shared with MCA for review.
<b>18 March 2020</b>	Teleconference	Discussions on draft SOCG and DML.
<b>27 March 2020</b>	Email	Applicant requesting clarifications on requested amendments to the DML conditions.



Date	Form of Contact	Summary
11 May 2020	Email	MCA providing further steer on amendments to the DML requested.
11 June 2020	Email	Updated draft SOCG shared with MCA for second review, along with meeting notes from 18 March 2020
20 June 2020	Email	MCA provided further comment on amendments to DML.
13 August 2020	Email	Revised SoCG shared with MCA to finalise condition wording and definitions agreement in Table 4.1.
25 August 2020	Email	MCA provided further comment on amendments to DML and proposed that the SoCG is final.
01 September 2020	Email	Proposed final SOCG (Rev 001) issued to MCA.
01, 02, 15 and 16 December 2020	Email	Communications between both parties to resolve and agree additional matters submitted by MCA at Deadline 4 in regard to the DML.
23 December 2020	Email	Proposed final SOCG (Rev 002) issued to MCA.

## 2.2. SUMMARY OF TOPICS COVERED BY THE SOCG

2.2.1.1. The following topics discussed between the parties are commented on further in this SoCG.

- Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA');
- Navigation Risk Assessment ('NRA');
- Shipping, Navigation and Other Marine Users; and
- Deemed Marine Licence ('DML').

2.2.1.2. For the avoidance of doubt, matters not covered in this SoCG have not been discussed between the parties as they have not been raised by the MCA in their capacity as statutory consultee and primary advisors to the Marine Management Organisation ('MMO').

## 3. MATTERS WHICH ARE AGREED

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- 3.1.1.1. This section of the SoCG describes the ‘matters agreed’ in detail between the parties.
- 3.1.1.2. The following subsections provide the details of the matters where agreement has been reached between the parties for each technical discipline.
- 3.1.1.3. Each table identifies those matters relevant to individual topics that have been agreed and by whom.
- 3.1.1.4. The Proposed Development has the potential to impact on the following areas which are relevant to the MCA;
- shipping, navigation and other marine users. Chapter 13 (Shipping, Navigation and Other Marine Users) of the Environmental Statement (‘ES’) (Ref: APP-128); and
  - cumulative effects. Chapter 29 (Cumulative Effects) of the ES (Ref: APP-144).
- 3.1.1.5. Tables 3.1 to 3.5 outline the areas of common ground that have been reached in relation to the assessments undertaken and the DML.
- 3.1.1.6. The RR on the application made by the MCA was received on 19 February 2020.
- 3.1.1.7. Further engagement was undertaken with MCA through iterative reviews of the draft SOCG and a teleconference held in March 2020 to discuss the draft SOCG and Examination process. The MCA also submitted further comments on the DML at Deadline 4 (REP4-039 and REP4-040).
- 3.1.1.8. The agreements made during these consultations to date outlined in Section 2 and the RR have been used to populate the tables below and inform this SoCG.

**Table 3.1: Matters Agreed: Shipping, Navigation and Other Marine Users**

Ref	Description of Matter	Agreed Position
<b>EIA</b>		
<b>MCA 3.1.1</b>	<b>Existing Environment</b>	The sources of information within the ES adequately characterises the baseline conditions in terms of shipping activity and marine users within the Proposed Development and surrounding area i.e. the Study Area (Ref: APP-128, Section 13.5).
<b>MCA 3.1.2</b>	<b>Assessment Methodology</b>	The list of potential impacts assessed in the ES is appropriate and the appropriate methodologies (i.e. International Maritime Organisation ('IMO') Formal Safety Assessment ('FSA') methodology) have been employed (Ref: APP-128, Section 13.4; APP-393).
<b>MCA 3.1.3</b>		The worst case scenarios for impacts presented in the ES, are appropriate for the Proposed Development (Refs: APP-128, Section 13.4.3; APP-356).
<b>MCA 3.1.4</b>		Appropriate legislation, planning policy and guidance has been used to inform the assessment (Refs: APP-128, Section 13.2; APP-113).
<b>MCA 3.1.5</b>		The assessment of impacts for construction, operation and decommissioning presented in the ES are appropriate (Ref: APP-128, Section 13.6; APP-393).
<b>MCA 3.1.6</b>	<b>Assessment Conclusions</b>	The conclusions presented within the ES regarding the tolerability of risk to shipping and navigation are appropriate (Ref: APP-128, Section 13.4.2, Table 13.5; APP-393).
<b>MCA 3.1.7</b>		The assessment undertaken of effects of the Proposed Development cumulatively with other relevant plans and projects is appropriate (Refs: APP-128, Section 13.7; APP-394; APP-144).
<b>MCA 3.1.8</b>		The assessment of transboundary effects resulting from the Proposed Development is considered to be appropriate (Refs: APP-128, Section 13.7.3; APP-144).
<b>MCA 3.1.9</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	It is agreed that given the effects of the Proposed Development, the mitigation measures proposed are considered appropriate and are adequately captured within the DML (Refs: APP-128, Section 13.8; APP-489; APP-019, Schedule 15).

**Table 3.2: Matters Agreed: DCO and Deemed Marine Licence**

Ref	Description of Matter	Agreed Position
MCA 3.2.1	<b>Construction Activities</b>	The DML is sufficiently drafted with appropriate conditions to ensure that construction activities will not result in unacceptable navigational risk to shipping and other marine users.
MCA 3.2.2	<b>Operational Activities</b>	The DML is sufficiently drafted with appropriate conditions to ensure that operational and maintenance activities will not result in unacceptable navigational risk to shipping and other marine users.
MCA 3.2.3	<b>Mitigation</b>	The DML sets out appropriate mitigation measures to minimise risk to shipping and navigational safety as a result of the Proposed Development.
MCA 3.2.4	<b>Notifications</b>	<p>In order to provide mechanism to ensure notification to cable exposures occurs in three days of the developer becoming aware of it. The following conditions to the DML are agreed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draft DCO (Ref: APP-019, Rev 005) Schedule 15, Part 2, 2(12) and new licence condition Part 2, 2(13): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>(12) In case of damage to, or destruction or decay of, the authorised development seaward of MHWS or any part thereof the undertaker must as soon as possible and no later than 24 hours following the undertaker becoming aware of any such damage, destruction or decay, notify the MMO, the MCA, Trinity House, the Kingfisher Information Service of Seafish and the UK Hydrographic Office.</i></li> <li><i>(13) ) In case of exposure of the marine HVDC cables on or above the seabed, the undertaker must within three days following identification of any exposure of the marine HVDC cables, issue a notice to mariners and Kingfisher Information Service of Seafish informing of the location and extent of the exposure. Copies of all notices must be provided to the MMO, the MCA, Trinity House and the UK Hydrographic Office within 5 days.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The term 'notice to mariners' has been replaced with 'local notification to mariners' within the DML.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draft DCO (Ref: APP-019, Rev 005) Schedule 15, Part 2, 2(7)(a) &amp; (b) has been amended to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>(7) The undertaker must inform the Kingfisher Information Service of Seafish by e-mail to kingfisher@seafish.co.uk of details regarding the vessel routes, timings and locations relating to the construction of the authorised development or relevant part –</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>(a) at least 14 days prior to the commencement of marine activities for inclusion in the Kingfisher Fortnightly Bulletin and marine hazard awareness data; and</i></li> <li><i>(b) as soon as reasonably practicable and not later than 24 hours on completion of construction of all licensed marine activities'</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>and confirmation of notification in accordance with this paragraph (7) must be provided MMO within 5 days.</i></p>

Ref	Description of Matter	Agreed Position
		<p>The term 'working days' has been removed from the DML and has been replaced by 'days' and number of days has been amended accordingly throughout.</p> <p>Relevant contacts have been included in the DML as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draft DCO (Ref: APP-019, Rev 005) Schedule 15, Part 2, 2(11):</li> </ul> <p>(11) The undertaker must notify HM Coastguard at least 14 days prior to commencement of the licence activities or any part of them advising of the start date of Works No. 6 and Works No. 7 by e-mail to the relevant zone contacts (zone15@hmcg.gov.uk or zone16@hmcg.gov.uk) and a copy of that notice must be provided to the MMO within 5 days.</p>
<p><b>MCA 3.2.5</b></p>	<p><b>Pre-construction plans and documentation</b></p>	<p>In consultation with MCA, the following condition to the DML is agreed;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draft DCO (Ref: APP-019, Rev 005) Schedule 15, Part 2, 4 (1)(c)(iii):</li> </ul> <p><i>(iii) a detailed cable laying plan for the Order limits seaward of MHWS, incorporating a burial assessment which includes the identification of any part of the marine HVDC cables that exceeds 5% of navigable depth referenced to chart datum and, in the event of the identification of any area of cable protection that exceeds 5% of navigable depth, details of any steps (to be determined following consultation with Trinity House and the MCA) to be taken to ensure existing and future safe navigation is not compromised or such similar assessment to ascertain suitable burial depths and cable laying techniques, including cable protection.</i></p>
<p><b>MCA 3.2.6</b></p>	<p><b>Post construction surveys</b></p>	<p>Reference to sonar has been removed from the DML and reference to MGN 543 hydrographic survey guidelines included in the following conditions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draft DCO (Ref: APP-019, Rev 005) Schedule 15, Part 2, 10(3):</li> </ul> <p><i>(3) Within 3 months of completion of construction of the authorised development the undertaker must submit International Hydrographic Office (IHO Order 1A) approved Multi Beam Echo Sounder survey data and report to the MMO, the MCA and Trinity House and UK Hydrographic Office, meeting MGN 543 hydrographic survey guidelines and confirming the final clearance depths over the marine HVDC cables and the associated cable protection. If any area is identified as a possible danger to navigation by the MMO, the MCA, Trinity House and/or UK Hydrographic Office, the undertaker must exhibit such markings with lights, marks, sounds, signals or other aids to navigation as are reasonably required by the MMO, the MCA Trinity House and/or UK Hydrographic Office unless otherwise agreed.</i></p>

Ref	Description of Matter	Agreed Position
		<p>- Draft DCO (Ref: APP-019, Rev 005) Schedule 15, Part 2, 13(10):</p> <p><i>(10) Within 4 weeks of the completion of laying of any new cable protection following the completion of construction, unless otherwise agreed with the MMO, the undertaker must submit International Hydrographic Office (IHO Order 1A) approved Multi Beam Echo Sounder survey data and report to the MMO, the MCA and UKHO, meeting MGN 543 hydrographic survey guidelines and confirming the final clearance depths over the protected cables where the new cable protection has been laid. Once this data has been assessed, if any area is identified as a possible danger to navigation it may require marking with aids to navigation at the undertakers expense.</i></p>
<p><b>MCA 3.2.7</b></p>	<p><b>Mitigation</b></p>	<p>Reference to the 'marine emergency action card' has been removed from the DML at:</p> <p>- Draft DCO (Ref: APP-019, Rev 005) Schedule 15, Part 2, 4(3) –</p> <p><i>No part of the licensed activities may commence until a statement confirming how the undertaker has taken into account the MCA Safety Guidance in so far as is applicable to that part of the licensed activities has been submitted to and approved by the MMO, in consultation with the MCA.</i></p> <p>The definitions for MCA Safety Guidance and the Marine Emergency Action Card are agreed to be included at paragraph 1 of Part 1 to Schedule 15 (DML) to ensure there is sufficient clarity regarding what is required to discharge the condition as follows;</p> <p><i>“MCA Safety Guidance” means those aspects of MGN543 “Offshore Renewable Energy Installations (OREIs) – Guidance on UK Navigational Practice, Safety and Emergency Response Issues” and its annexes that are relevant to the authorised development.</i></p> <p><i>“Marine Emergency Action Card” means the MCA bespoke Emergency Action Card template that will be completed to inform emergency response actions during the construction of the authorised development.</i></p>

**Table 3.3: Matters Agreed: Cable Burial and Protection**

Ref	Description of Matter	Agreed Position
<b>EIA</b>		
<b>MCA 3.3.1</b>	<b>Cable burial</b>	<p>The proposals for cable burial are clearly set out in the ES and are appropriate to minimise risks to navigational safety following the installation of the cable. The MCA will be consulted on pre-construction documentation and notified prior to commencement of works as required by the DML.</p> <p>The proposals for cable burial works are described in the following Application documents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chapter 3 Description of the Proposed Development (document reference 6.3), Sections 3.5.6 to 3.5.9;</li> <li>- Appendix 3.2 Marine Worst Case Design Parameters (document reference 6.3.2), Table 2;</li> <li>- Appendix 3.4 Additional Supporting Information for Marine Works (document reference 6.3.4);</li> <li>- Appendix 13.1 Navigation Risk Assessment (document reference 6.3.13.1), Sections 2 and 4.3.</li> </ul> <p>Assessments of cable installation and operational and maintenance works are presented in the following Application documents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chapter 13 Shipping, Navigation and Other Marine Users (document reference 6.1.13) in Sections 13.6 and 13.7 and mitigation measures are described in Sections 13.6 and 13.8.</li> <li>- Appendix 13.1 Navigation Risk Assessment (document reference 6.3.13.1) Sections 14 and 15 and mitigation measures are proposed in Section 14.4 and 14.6.</li> </ul> <p>Mitigation measures are summarised within Table 1 of the Mitigation Schedule (document reference 6.6) and are secured through the DML as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- DCO Schedule 15, Part 2, 2 Notifications and Inspections;-</li> <li>- DCO Schedule 15, Part 2, 4 Pre-construction Plans and Documentation;</li> <li>- DCO Schedule 15, Part 2, 7 Aids to Navigation;</li> <li>- DCO Schedule 15, Part 2, 10 Post Construction Surveys; and</li> <li>- DCO Schedule 15, Part 2, 11 Cable Burial Management Plan.</li> </ul>
<b>MCA 3.3.2</b>	<b>Cable protection</b>	<p>The proposals for cable protection are clearly set out in the ES and the impacts to shipping and navigation in the area as a result of cable protection have been suitably identified and assessed, with appropriate mitigation proposed to minimise risk to shipping and navigation in the area.</p> <p>The proposals for cable protection are described in the following documents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chapter 3 Description of the Proposed Development (document reference 6.3), Section 3.5.6;</li> </ul>

Ref	Description of Matter	Agreed Position
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Appendix 3.2 Marine Worst Case Design Parameters (document reference 6.3.2), Table 3;</li> <li>- Appendix 3.4 Additional Supporting Information for Marine Works (document reference 6.3.4) Section 1.3.4;</li> <li>- Appendix 13.1 Navigation Risk Assessment (document reference 6.3.13.1), Sections 2 and 4.3.</li> </ul> <p>Assessments for cable protection are presented in the following documents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chapter 13 Shipping, Navigation and Other Marine Users (document reference 6.1.13) in Sections 13.6 and 13.7 and mitigation measures are described in Sections 13.6 and 13.8.</li> <li>- Appendix 13.1 Navigation Risk Assessment (document reference 6.3.13.1) Sections 14 and 15 and mitigation measures are proposed in Section 14.4 and 14.6.</li> </ul> <p>Mitigation measures are summarised within Table 1 of the Mitigation Schedule (document reference 6.6, Rev 002) and are secured through the DML.</p>



**Table 3.4 Matters Agreed: Dover Straits TSS**

Ref	Description of Matter	Agreed Position
MCA 3.4.1	Dover Straits TSS	<p>Impacts to the Dover Strait Traffic Separation Scheme have been considered appropriately in the assessment and appropriate mitigation has been proposed to minimise these impacts.</p> <p>Consideration of potential risk to shipping and navigation in the Dover TSS is presented in Sections 14 and 15 of Appendix 13.1 Navigation Risk Assessment (document reference 6.3.13.1) and mitigation measures are proposed in Sections 14.4 and 14.6.</p> <p>As requested by the MCA, references to the following Notices will be made when drawing up Plans (notably the Cable Burial and Installation Plan) prepared prior to commencement of works.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MSN 1781 Collision Regulations;</li> <li>- MGN 364 Traffic Separation Schemes;</li> <li>- MGN 128 Navigation in the Dover Strait.</li> </ul> <p>The MCA will be consulted on pre-construction documentation and notified prior to commencement of works as required by the DML.</p>

**Table 3.5 Matters Agreed: Navigation Risk Assessment**

Ref	Description of Matter	Agreed Position
MCA 3.5.1	NRA	<p>The mitigation proposed in the NRA is appropriate to minimise impacts on shipping and navigation resulting from the Proposed Development.</p> <p>The MCA will be consulted on pre-construction documentation and notified prior to commencement of works as required by the DML.</p>
MCA 3.5.2	NRA	<p>Risks to shipping and navigation in the area as a result of the Proposed Development are as low as reasonably practicable ('ALARP'). The MCA will be consulted on pre-construction documentation and notified prior to commencement of works as required by the DML.</p>

## 4. SIGNATURES

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Signed on behalf of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency:

Printed name:

Position:

Date:

Signed on behalf of AQUIND Ltd.:

Printed name:

Position:

Date

