

## Maritime Area Regulatory Authority Stakeholder Forum

### Minutes of Meeting One

Date: Tuesday 13 January 2026

Time: 2:00pm to 4:00pm

Location: MARA HQ, 2nd Floor, Menapia House, Drinagh Business Park, Drinagh, Wexford, Y35RF29.

In attendance were representatives from the following organisations:

- Marine Ireland Industry Network
- Marine Renewables Industry Association
- County & City Management Association
- Irish Harbourmaster's Group
- Uisce Eireann
- EirGrid
- Irish Environmental Network
- European Subsea Cables Association
- Wind Energy Ireland
- Marine Institute
- Irish Institute of Master Mariners
- ESB
- DCEE

There were apologies from representative from:

- Irish Fish Producers Organisation
- Irish Farmers Association Aquaculture Section
- Irish South and East Fish Producers Organisation

MARA was represented by

- Vice Admiral (Rtd) Mark Mellet DSM, Chair of MARA Board
- Laura Brien, CEO MARA
- Eoin Leahy, Director of Policy and External Affairs
- Roisin Nolan, Head of Policy

- Suzanne Wylde, Senior Marine Advisor
- Melaine Mageean, GIS Data Manager
- Brendan Cruise, Policy Analyst

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## **1 Welcome and Introductions**

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Eoin Leahy welcomed all the stakeholder forum members to MARA HQ and gave a brief overview of the meeting.

Mark Mellett spoke about the need to overcome sea blindness and hoped that the MARA stakeholder forum would operate in a collaborative capacity.

Laura Brien, CEO of MARA, welcomed all the stakeholder forum members to MARA HQ, and outlined the objective of the Stakeholder Forum

There was also a round table of introductions from the representatives.

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## **2 Introduction to MARA**

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LB gave an overview of MARA's regulatory role in the maritime area, including an overview of the geographical diversification of applications that MARA receives, and types of projects that applied for MACs and MULs.

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## **3 Agreement of Terms of Reference**

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A discussion was held on the draft Terms of Reference of the Forum.

Amendments were agreed upon in relation to sections 2 and 4.

It was agreed that section 5, Appointment and Tenure, would be revised by MARA and shared with the representatives for agreement.

EL emphasised that MARA would be open to other organisations becoming members of the forum.

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## **4 Mapping Requirements**

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MARA GIS section lead MM gave an overview of the mapping requirements for applications. There were three (3) main points delivered:

1. Applicants should refer to MARA Technical Mapping Guidance, located on MARA official website,
2. GIS data to be submitted as part of consent applications,
3. Any mapping queries should be made to MARA.

Members of the forum acknowledged the benefit of the presentation made.

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## **5 Future agenda items discussion**

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A discussion of possible future agenda items for the Forum was held. Items that were considered for future agenda items were:

- Update on exempted usages
  - Interaction with other State agencies
  - Update on application processing timelines
  - Input into MARA's next Statement of Strategy due in 2027
  - Update on research projects funded by MARA
  - Regularisation of existing infrastructure
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- Possibility of various working groups. Potential focus areas include the MAC consent process and Marine Spatial Planning.
  - Data sharing
  - Update on emergency works secondary legislation
  - Update on Dumping at Sea transfer
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## **6 AOB**

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EL highlighted that MARA will be publishing a stakeholder consultation on the review of the MAC levy framework in the coming weeks.