



EIRGRID

EWIC Geophysical Cable Condition Survey

Programme of Survey Work

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1. INTRODUCTION

EirGrid Interconnector Designated Activity Company (DAC) require geophysical data to identify any change in condition of the East West Interconnector Cable (EWIC) including assessing integrity of cable protection and burial, and to guide on any further required mitigation. This document summarises the programme of works for this inspection survey and the environmental frameworks under which operations will be conducted.

2. SCOPE SUMMARY

The purpose of the inspection survey is to accurately measure the seabed level in relation to the EWIC cable and to monitor the conditions of any exposures and the condition of cable protection. Any freespan or other features of note identified in the geophysical data may be visually inspected with a subsea camera deployed using a drop down frame or small observation class ROV.

2.1 Geophysical Equipment

The geophysical survey includes the use of a hull mounted multi-beam echo-sounder (MBES) and a towed sidescan sonar (SSS). The towfish (and camera if required) will be positioned using ultra-short baseline (USBL) subsea acoustic positioning.

An MBES is a remote sensing acoustic device used to map the water depth across a wide swath of seabed. MBES systems suited to the expected water depths range in frequency from 200 to 700 kHz, most commonly around 400 kHz.

Sidescan Sonar is an underwater imaging technology that uses acoustic energy to detect objects (e.g. pipelines and shipwrecks) and enable classification of surficial marine geology (e.g. sediment type, rock outcrop, sand ripples/waves). The system is towed behind the vessel typically 4 to 10m above the seabed. SSS systems operate on two frequencies simultaneously. High frequency is expected to be between 550 and 900 kHz, with low frequency expected to be between 100 and 350 kHz.

2.2 Line plan & schedule

Survey data will be acquired along the full marine section of the existing EWIC cable route. The survey corridor will be up to 25m either side of the cable Route Position List (RPL).

The survey is anticipated to require up to 25 days to complete, including contingency allowances for weather and any operational delays.

2.3 Noise Mitigation

The survey will be conducted according to the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht "Guidance to Manage the Risk to Marine Mammals from Man-made Sound Sources in Irish Waters" (2014), applicable for operations within 1500m of any entrance to an enclosed bay, inlet or estuary.

3. HSE

All survey vessels will be fit for purpose, certified, and capable of safely undertaking all required survey work. The survey contractor and vessels will comply with international and national statute as appropriate, to include:

- S.I. No. 507/2012 - Merchant Shipping (Collision Regulations) (Ships and Water Craft on the Water) Order 2012.

- Sea Pollution Act 1991 which transposes into Irish statute the requirements of the International Convention for the Prevention of Marine Pollution from Ships (MARPOL 73/78)
- Sea Pollution (Amendment) Act, 1999 - which gives effect to the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation, 1990 (OPRC).
- S.I. No. 372/2012 - Sea Pollution (Prevention of Pollution by Garbage from Ships) Regulations 2012.
- S.I. No. 492/2012 - Sea Pollution (Prevention of Pollution by Sewage from Ships) (Amendment) Regulations 2012
- Sea Pollution (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 – which gives effect to the International Convention on Ballast Water Management 2004 (amongst others)

In addition to standard International and national statutes listed above, the following standard environmental procedures and protocols will be followed during the survey campaigns:

- All vessels will comply with the latest International Maritime Organization (IMO) and Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) and environmental requirements for their classification and with any national requirement of the territorial or offshore waters to be operated in.
- The contractor will maintain a suitably certified environmental management system.
- The contractor will take particular care when handling or storing hazardous materials, radiation sources and chemicals.
- Liquid or non-liquid pollutants or waste material will not be dumped, thrown or otherwise disposed of into the sea.
- All refuse and materials shall be kept onboard the vessel and safely disposed of onshore according to the MARPOL convention.
- All substances handled and/or used whilst undertaking the works will be handled, used, stored and documented in accordance with assessments and recommendations of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 1994.
- Where Fuels, Oils and Lubes are required to be stowed on boats, suitable containers will be used and stowed to allow ventilation and safe dissipation of any accidental leaked gas and retention of any leaked liquid.
- No liquid will be discharged into the water at any stage of the work on site. No smoking will be permitted in the vicinity of fuel in storage or when in use.

Health, safety and environmental protection shall be given foremost consideration in the execution of the work and shall be promoted in a proactive and highly visible manner throughout the survey campaign.

Established safety procedures will be followed by both survey personnel and vessel crew.

A Notices to Mariners (NtM) will be issued by the survey contractor prior to mobilisation and distributed to the Maritime Safety Directorate, local fishing organisations, designated fisheries liaison officer, Dublin Port Company and Drogheda Port Company, Malahide, Howth and any other relevant harbour masters and stakeholders.

During the works other vessels will be requested to maintain a safe distance from the survey vessels due to the restricted manoeuvrability of the survey vessels.