

Eskdalemuir Working Group Minutes – 21 August 2024

Welcome

A Scottish Government representative opened the meeting and noted that there had been a lot of change since the group last met, with the change of UK Government and a resulting a change of policy around Onshore Wind.

UK Government Onshore Wind Taskforce

The UK Government representative advised that the new administration had removed the de facto ban on onshore wind in England and had announced the creation of an Onshore Wind Taskforce. The taskforce will bring together Government and industry to identify the main barriers to increasing deployment of onshore wind, with the aim to publish a policy statement committing both Government and industry to a set of actions to take forward. The scope of the taskforce is UK wide, however the main focus is how to drive deployment in England. There are representatives from devolved administrations on the main taskforce and thematic subgroups.

Aviation Investment Fund Company Limited (AIFCL) Update

Since the last EWG meeting, the AIFCL representative noted that they had shared both AIFCL funded Xi Engineering reports, to support the ongoing work being done to produce the Guidance Document for consultation.

It was highlighted to the group that the flowcharts workstream has been commissioned by AIFCL and is currently in draft with a likely completion date of September 2024. The group was invited to consider future funding of workstreams.

SG Guidance Document Latest

The group member responsible for drafting of the SG Guidance Document provided an update its current status. They received the MOD consultation document and highlighted to the group there were no conflicts between the SG Guidance document and MoD consultation document. The SG Guidance Document requires the completion of the work packages and the MOD audit to be completed so that a SIL figure can be agreed. The group member asked that the UK Government update on their position on legislation relating to a SIL and asked that where they might be going with legislation and that both UKG and SG to review the style, length, and content of the document. The SG representative confirmed their legal department are looking at the legislation matter. The DESNZ representative confirmed that they were also looking at options regarding legislation.

MOD Workstreams Latest

The MOD representative advised the baseline audit is ongoing.; however, the undertaking is larger than originally thought and it was not possible to comment on the impact on the SIL at this time.

The MOD representative informed the group that an internal session within MOD was taking place soon that will likely be able to finalise the MOD Consultation Document. The consultation is due to run for twelve weeks and then review the feedback.

The group discussed at a high level some upcoming public inquiries, anticipated for November/December. These inquiries would impact MOD resourcing to work on other workstreams.

AOB

A Scottish Government representative advised SG will continue intergovernmental conversations on the issues discuss in today's meeting. The next meeting of the EWG will be convened at an appropriate juncture.