

# Announcement of United Kingdom 33<sup>rd</sup> Offshore Oil and Gas Licensing Round

## OIL AND GAS AUTHORITY

### Petroleum Act 1998

#### Introduction

1. The Oil and Gas Authority (the '**OGA**') invites interested persons to apply for seaward area production licences pursuant to section 3 of the Petroleum Act 1998 (as amended) (the '**Act**') in respect of certain seaward area blocks for exclusive rights to search and bore for and get petroleum within a defined geographical area.
2. The OGA has discretion to decide whether to issue a seaward production licence and the general terms and conditions for such licences (the '**model clauses**') can be found in the Petroleum Licensing (Production) (Seaward Areas) Regulations 2008 (as amended) unless the OGA thinks fit to modify or exclude them in any particular case.
3. **The OGA accepts no liability for any costs incurred by the applicant in considering or making its application.**

#### Licensing Offer

4. Full details of the offer, including lists and maps specifying the blocks on offer and guidance about licences, the terms which those licences will include, and how to apply, are available on the OGA website at:  
<https://www.nstauthority.co.uk/licensing-consents/licensing-rounds/>  
  
(The OGA operates under, and its website is in, the name North Sea Transition Authority or '**NSTA**'.)
5. Unless an Appropriate Assessment in relation to a particular block is required (see paragraph 11 below), any offer by the OGA of a seaward area production licence pursuant to this invitation will be made within eighteen months of the date of this Notice.

#### Guidance, Deadlines & Fees

6. The OGA's guidance ('**Guidance**') for applicants wishing to apply for a seaward production licence is available here: <https://www.nstauthority.co.uk/licensing-consents/licensing-rounds/>. This includes the evaluation criteria on which applications will be assessed, including a technical marking scheme. Applicants should read the Guidance in full. The information contained in this Notice is a summary only.
7. Any applicants wishing to make an application for a seaward production licence in respect of all or part of any of the blocks on offer must submit completed applications to the OGA by 14.00 hrs GMT on 12 January 2023. Applications should be submitted via the UK Energy Portal, with guidance on how to do this found here: <https://www.nstauthority.co.uk/licensing-consents/licensing-rounds/>

8. A fee for an application for a seaward production licence is required and guidance on this can be found here:  
<https://www.nstauthority.co.uk/media/8108/guidance-note-on-fees-and-charges-regime-april-2022.pdf>
9. Following the closing date for submissions, the OGA may contact applicants to schedule an interview meeting in order to seek clarifications on application content.
10. Any questions on the submission of applications should be sent to:  
[Licensing\\_Rounds@NSTAuthority.co.uk](mailto:Licensing_Rounds@NSTAuthority.co.uk)

### **Appropriate Assessments under the Habitats Regulations**

11. The Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning (**'OPRED'**) at the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy have advised that where the Secretary of State (**'SoS'**) considers that anything that might be done or any activity which might be carried on pursuant to a seaward area production licence application is likely to have a significant effect on a relevant site (whether individually or in combination with any other plan or project), the SoS shall make an appropriate assessment (**'AA'**) of the implications for the relevant site in view of the site's conservation objectives. The SoS can only agree to the grant of any such licence after ascertaining that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of a relevant site.
12. For further information on the AA process is available at  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/offshore-energy-strategic-environmental-assessment-sea-an-overview-of-the-sea-process#appropriate-assessment>