

# ***MAUREEN DECOMMISSIONING PROGRAMME***

## **Section 15. Debris Clearance**

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## **15.1 Introduction**

To the extent practical, items of debris that were dropped on the seabed in the Maureen area have continually been recovered during the field life. ROV surveys around the Maureen Facilities indicate that the seabed debris is minimal and consists primarily of scaffold poles or small sections of grating displaced during storms.

Once the facilities have been removed, post decommissioning surveys and debris removal will be carried out to ensure the seabed is clear of obstructions that might affect fishing activities or other users of the sea.

## **15.2 Subsea Surveys and Debris Clearance**

Upon completion of the Maureen decommissioning work, the following seabed clearance surveys will be carried out:

1. The footprint area and immediate surrounding area where the Maureen Platform and Template once stood will be surveyed.
2. The immediate areas around the Maureen Loading Column and the Moira Subsea Facilities surveys will also be surveyed.
3. All pipeline routes will be surveyed over their full length.

The footprint and immediate areas around where the installations stood will initially be surveyed by a side-scan sonar to determine if there is any debris remaining that can be salvaged by the ROV support vessel or the Diving Support Vessel (DSV).

Any accidental debris located, which will interfere with users of the sea, will be recovered by either the ROV, or by using other equipment from the DSV. If the object located is large it is unlikely to have arisen from Maureen/Moira facilities or operations. If it cannot be recovered by the existing equipment on site, a fix is to be taken on its position for charting as an obstruction for future revisions to navigation charts by the hydrographic office and for the issuance of notices to mariners.

A bathymetric survey will be made over the entire zone by the ROV support vessel.

A side-scan sonar survey will be carried out over a wider area to confirm the location of any other debris that might affect trawling activities. Any accidental debris associated with Maureen operations will be recovered.

Finally, recognised practice would be for a simple pass trawl of the entire area covered by the exclusion zones to be carried out in the presence of the Scottish Fisherman's' Federation representative to confirm that the area is clear and unimpeded for future fishing activities.

The recent study carried out by BMT Marine Information System Ltd under the UKOOA JIP would indicate that the effects of a single pass trawl over the remaining cuttings layer is seen to be minimal. The mathematical model showed that most of the material distributed would then be re-deposited at the existing cuttings layer [Ref. UKOOA Drill Cuttings Initiative Study 3.1 Mathematical Model of Pile Dispersal following Disturbance, Section 4.1.5].

The Maureen Owners are aware that during the period when this document was undergoing consultation, the Marine Laboratory in Aberdeen (SERAD) carried out overtrawl trials on areas of seabed affected by drill cuttings. The findings and recommendations of this study are not yet available, but will be incorporated in the Debris Management Plan for this programme, to be agreed with the DTI in due course.