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Consents given under the Petroleum Act 1998 and Reviews under the Assessment of Environmental Effects Regulations 1999

Enterprise

BLOCK 13/21A – E & F

Pursuant to Regulation 5(8) of the above Regulations, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry gives notice that, being content that the requirements of the above Regulations have been satisfied, he has, pursuant to Licence P185, granted a consent to Enterprise Oil Plc to the getting of petroleum and the drilling of two exploration wells in Block 13/21a – E & F (hereafter referred to as "the project") subject to Enterprise Oil Plc conducting operations in respect of the project in accordance with the relevant environmental statement. The consent for the wells was given on 31/01/01.

Background

Enterprise Oil plc proposes drilling 2 exploration wells in Block 13/21a, 68 km north of Fraserburgh the coast of North East Scotland. The wells are being drilled to determine the size of an oil reservoir discovered during earlier exploration activity in Block 13/21a. Enterprise's proposal is to drill 2 vertical wells both to a depth of approximately 1067 metres below sea surface, using a KCl water based mud system, with drilling cuttings (248 tonnes including sidetrack) and associated mud discharge to sea. No well testing will occur.

During the EIA process, Enterprise identified a number of what it termed hazards both routine and non-routine, which are listed below:

Environmental Sensitivities and Impacts

Routine Hazards

- Atmospheric emissions from power generation;
- Marine discharges including discharge of drilling cuttings and chemicals;
- Noise
- Wastes;
- Physical presence of the rig and support vessels

Non-routine hazards

- Accidental spillage of hydrocarbons
- Atmospheric emissions resulting from a well kick

The effects from each of the identified routine and non-routine hazards were described in detail along with the control measures designed to reduce the potential impacts of the hazards.

Cumulative and transboundary impacts have also been addressed within the ES. No significant environmental impact was identified and the drilling is unlikely to affect any possible future SAC that may be identified in the area.

Recommendation

Overall the ES is satisfactory and adequately assesses the potential environmental impacts of the proposed development. Recommend that consent be given.