



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

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For the attention of:
PPC permit holders on Offshore Combustion Installations

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Dear Operator,

OFFSHORE POLLUTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL (PPC) GUIDANCE

The Offshore Combustion Installations (Pollution Prevention and Control) Regulations 2013 (as amended)

I write to advise you the Department has published Revision 1 of the “Offshore Pollution Prevention and Control (PPC) Guidance” for the Offshore Combustion Installations PPC Regulations 2013 (as amended). Revision 1 supersedes the draft guidance Revision 0 dated 30th March 2023 and follows the subsequent 6-week operator engagement period - conducted with OEUK – and which ended on 15th May 2023.

What is the relevance of the guidance?

The guidance relates solely to offshore combustion installations which operate combustion plant. It provides technical guidance on what must be considered in preparing an application for a PPC environmental permit and explains what must be included in the permit. The guidance is structured to allow Large Combustion Installations (LCI) to be assessed separately from Medium Combustion Installations (MCI). The guidance makes clear the requirements for Large Combustion Plant (LCP) which, by definition can only be located on an LCI, and the requirements for Medium Combustion Plant (MCP) which may be located on either an LCI or an MCI. It also clarifies the installation-wide requirements on an LCI for the use of Best Available Techniques (BAT) and the requirement that the operation of all combustion plant on an LCI is in accordance with specified environmental protection principles.

Overall, the guidance explains the following: to whom the Regulations are applicable; what the requirements of the Regulations are; what the Permit application process involves; ongoing Permit management requirements; what to do when changes to existing offshore combustion installations occur; and the role of OPRED in carrying out compliance and enforcement activities on behalf of the Secretary of State.

Who should use this guidance?

The PPC guidance is directed at operators of a ‘relevant platform’ who may be involved in offshore oil and gas production, gas unloading and storage operations or Carbon Dioxide (CO₂)

storage and unloading operations who have qualifying combustion plant under the Regulations. The guidance may be useful to other stakeholders who have an interest in any such 'relevant platform' throughout its design and operational life cycle.

What are the key dates for compliance under the guidance?

The guidance highlights the relevant dates by which the provisions of the Regulations must be implemented via conditions in an installation's PPC environmental permit and by which compliance with specified Emission Limit Values (ELV) for LCP and MCP must be met.

- In line with the Regulations OPRED implemented the requirements of the LCP BREF by 17th August 2021 for all qualifying LCP on existing PPC permits, and from this date for any new permits for installations with LCP.
- For MCP defined under the Regulations as 'new medium combustion plant' the relevant date for implementing MCP conditions was from 20th December 2018.
- For MCP defined under the Regulations as 'existing medium combustion plant' the relevant date for implementing MCP conditions depends on the rated thermal input of the MCP.
- The relevant date for existing MCP with a rated thermal input greater than 5 megawatts is 1st January 2024 and for existing MCP with a rated thermal input of not more than 5 megawatts is 1st January 2029. In both cases, existing MCP must comply with applicable ELVs by the first anniversary of these dates; 1st January 2025 and 1st January 2030 respectively.

Are there any specific requirements that operators should be preparing for right now?

The Department is making preparations to allow the implementation of requisite PPC permit conditions on all eligible MCP with a rated thermal input greater than 5 megawatts, located on LCI or MCI, by 1st January 2024. This will require operators to apply to vary existing PPC permits for LCI, to implement the requirements of the Regulations on eligible MCP with rated thermal input greater than 5 megawatts. Similarly, it will require operators to apply for a PPC permit for any eligible MCP with rated thermal input greater than 5 megawatts that operates on an MCI. Operators of LCI and MCI are therefore encouraged to use this guidance to identify such MCP and to aid their understanding of the application process for such MCP, in line with the 2018 amendment to the Regulations.

Therefore, if not already done so, operators should now proactively assess their LCI and MCI to determine where they may have existing MCP for which they need to notify and apply to OPRED via a PPC permit application, in good time before the relevant dates for these MCP. The Department will be writing to operators shortly to explain the online application process for permitting existing MCP using the UK Portal Environmental Tracking System (PETS). This will be consistent with the PETS process that operators with PPC LCI permits are already familiar with, when making permit applications and variations, including those for LCP.

It will be necessary for such PPC applications for eligible MCP to be submitted by operators and processed by OPRED in good time during the fourth quarter of 2023.

Should you have any queries about the content of this letter and need advice, please contact the Department using the details above.