

PROCEDURES RELATING TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMPETITION POLICY

COMMISSION

United Kingdom Government notice concerning Directive 94/22/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conditions for granting and using authorisations for the prospecting, exploration and production of hydrocarbons

(Text with EEA relevance)

(2007/C 265/12)

Announcement of United Kingdom 13th Onshore (Landward) oil and gas licensing round

Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform Business

Petroleum Act 1998

Onshore Licensing Round

1. The Secretary of State for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) invites interested persons, in accordance with the Petroleum (Production) (Landward Areas) Regulations 1995 (S.I. 1995 No 1436) and the Hydrocarbons Licensing Directive Regulations 1995 (S.I. 1995 No 1434), to apply for Petroleum Exploration and Development Licences in respect of those onshore areas that have been subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), are above the Low Water Line and that are not subject to an existing petroleum production licence on the date of this Notice shown in areas on maps deposited at BERR, 1 Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0ET, United Kingdom. These maps, may be inspected by prior appointment (Tel. (44-207) 215 50 32, fax (44-207) 215 50 70) between 9.15 a.m. and 4.45 p.m. Monday to Friday during the period of this notice. The maps are also available on the BERR oil and gas website: <http://www.og.berr.gov.uk/>. This is the 13th Round of Landward Licensing.
2. Full details of the offer, including maps of the acreage on offer and guidance about licences, the terms which those licences will include, and how to apply, are available on the Energy Development Unit (EDU) website (see below).
3. Applications will be judged against the background of the continuing need for expeditious, thorough, efficient and safe exploration to identify oil and gas resources within the mainland of Great Britain.
4. Applications will be judged on the basis of the following criteria:
 - (a) the financial viability of the applicant and its financial capacity to carry out the activities that would be permitted under the licence during the initial term including the work programme submitted for evaluating the full potential of the area within the block or blocks applied for;
 - (b) the technical capability of the applicant to carry out activities that would be permitted under the licence during the initial term including the identification of hydrocarbon prospects within the block or blocks applied for. The technical capability will be assessed in part upon the quality of analysis related to the block or blocks applied for;
 - (c) the way in which the applicant proposes to carry out the activities that would be permitted under the licence including the quality of the work programme submitted for evaluating the full potential of the area applied for;
 - (d) where the applicant holds or has held a licence granted under or treated as having been granted under the Petroleum Act 1998, any lack of efficiency and responsibility displayed by the applicant in operations under that licence.

5. The Secretary of State will not award a licence unless he is prepared to approve the applicant's choice of operator at the same time. Before approving an operator, the Secretary of State must be satisfied that the nominee will be competent to plan and manage drilling operations, in terms of the numbers, experience and training of its staff, the proposed procedures and methodologies, the design of its command structure, interfaces with contractors and overall corporate strategy. In considering a proposed operator, the Secretary of State will take into account both new information presented in the application and the nominee's record as an operator, both within the UK and abroad.

6. Comprehensive guidance about this offer can be viewed on the Energy Development Unit (EDU) website: <http://www.og.berr.gov.uk/>

Licences

7. Where the Secretary of State offers a licence pursuant to this invitation, the offer will be made within twelve months of the date of this Notice.

8. The Secretary of State accepts no liability for any costs incurred by the applicant in considering or making its application.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

9. BERR has conducted a Strategic Environmental Assessment of all of the area to be offered to the standard required in Directive 2001/42/EC on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment. The assessment can be found at the Energy Development Unit (EDU) website: <http://www.og.berr.gov.uk/>

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