



About the OMV Maari marine consent application

Introduction

The application by OMV New Zealand Ltd is the third marine consent application to be considered by the Environmental Protection Authority under the new Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) legislation which came into force on 28 June 2013. The EPA is responsible under the *Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf (Environment Effects) Act 2012* for receiving and deciding on applications for marine consents.

The purpose of the EEZ Act is to promote the sustainable management of the natural resources of the EEZ and Continental Shelf. Before the EEZ Act, New Zealand lacked a comprehensive environmental management regime to assess and regulate the environmental effects of activities occurring in the EEZ, between 12 and 200 nautical miles offshore.

Summary of the application

OMV New Zealand Ltd (OMV) has lodged an application for a marine consent to complete their development drilling programme in the Maari field within Petroleum Mining Permit (PMP) 38160. The Maari field is located in the Taranaki Basin approximately 80 km offshore from Opunake, in 80 to 100 m water depth.

The development drilling programme is classed as a planned petroleum activity under the transitional provisions of the EEZ Act (Section 166) and was allowed to commence following the impact assessment that OMV provided to the EPA in June 2013 being accepted as complete.

However, OMV must apply for a marine consent to enable the development drilling programme to continue after the end of the transitional period (28 June 2014).

The activities that OMV have described in their marine consent application that will continue past the end of the transitional period include the removal of the jack-up drilling rig, alteration of the equipment on the Well Head Platform (WHP), installation of submarine pipelines under the seabed, removal of material from the subsoil, deposition of drill cuttings and other materials on the seabed and the generation of vibrations from drilling the wells.

Up to seven development wells will be drilled from within existing conductor slots to oil reservoirs 1000 m to 2500 m below the WHP. Five of these will be side-tracked from existing wells. As each section of a well is completed a casing or liner will be installed and cemented into place to prevent hold collapse and maintain well integrity. No new surface drilling will occur as a result of this programme but some drill cuttings and drilling muds will be deposited on the seabed. The drilling rig is already in position at the Maari field and the legs will be removed

from the seabed following the end of the drilling programme, which is expected to last until June 2015. Some alterations to the WHP will be required to tie in the new wells to the existing Maari production facilities. This work will take place on the top sides of the WHP above the sea surface.

OMV has been removing petroleum and undertaking environmental monitoring from the Maari field in the South Taranaki Bight within PMP 38160 since 2009. As these activities were existing when the EEZ Act came into force (28 June 2013), they are allowed to continue without a marine consent for the term of the PMP, until 2027

The full application

The full application and additional information is available on the Environmental Protection Authority website: <http://www.epa.govt.nz/EEZ/omv/Pages/default.aspx>

Indicative timeline for OMV application

The key activities of the OMV application are provided below with indicative dates. These dates may change throughout the course of the application. For example, the Decision-making Committee has the discretion to extend the hearing. The EPA keeps its website updated and maintains frequent contact with submitters.

Activity	Indicative date
Application documents available on website	26 June 2014
Submission period begins	1 July 2014
Submission period closes	29 July 2014
Notification of hearings	26 August 2014
Hearing opens	23 September 2014
Hearing closes	19 November 2014
Decision to be made by Committee (within 20 days after closure of the hearing).	18 December 2014
EPA to advise the applicant, submitters, etc, of the decision.	As soon as practicable after the decision has been made.
Appeal period closes	15 working days after decision provided to applicant

Further information on the OMV application

Please contact the EPA for further information on the application.

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