

ORKNEY ISLANDS COUNCIL

MARINE SERVICES

NOTICE TO MARINERS

Marine Excursions within the EMEC Test Areas

1. Purpose

This SOP describes the requirements for excursion trips into any of the EMEC test areas.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all passenger carrying vessels, whether organised, accompanied or recommended by EMEC, intending to enter EMEC test areas for the purposes of viewing the sites or for photography. In the event that a third party independently charters a vessel in order to enter the EMEC test areas, it is expected that these guidelines are followed.

It does not permit; contact or any form of interaction with any marine energy devices or buoys, surveys, crew transfers, deliveries or collections to/from devices or to/from working vessels – all of these activities are covered by the EMEC Site Access or Work Permit systems.

3. Vessel Requirements

Prior to a site visit; copies of the vessel MCA code certificate, insurance certificate and Master's qualifications shall be sent to EMEC and shall be electronically filed within EMEC systems for reference. Vessel documentation shall be reviewed by EMEC annually.

Vessels accessing the sites are expected to carry at least a working Class B AIS Transponder to permit tracking of vessel movements by EMEC Operations and Orkney VTS.

4. Excursion Guidelines

Passenger boarding shall take place only at harbour steps or a boat slip. Any loading of equipment or baggage shall be loaded under supervision of the vessel crew and shall be lowered by rope or hoist where required. The vessel master is at all times responsible for the safety and welfare of his crew and passengers. Safe weather limits shall be established for the trip by the master, taking into account the vessel capabilities, number of passengers, experience of the passengers and trip purpose. The vessel master shall review current Notices to Mariners. Vessels are requested to remain at least 500m from devices, unless permitted otherwise by the EMEC Duty Manager or developer.

Wildlife are sensitive to noise and disturbance, particularly marine mammals which use the test sites as a habitat – due care is to be taken.

5. Passenger Briefing

The vessel master shall ensure that all passengers receive a safety briefing which shall include emergency procedures, exits, personal safety equipment, life rafts and an introduction to the nominated first aider.

Marine Excursions within the EMEC Test Areas

6. Notifications

The EMEC Operations team (ops@emec.org.uk, 24 hr Duty Manager on 07624 345411 if out of hours) shall be notified prior to all visits in order to establish activity levels on site and to safely co-ordinate traffic. The vessel shall always notify the EMEC Duty Manager, normally by text, on site entry & egress (including total POB).