

Issues for Scotland's Energy Supply – Inquiry calls for evidence

Response from the RYA and RYA-Scotland

Recreational Boating in Scotland

Over recent years the recreational use of Scotland's coastline has increased, bringing tourism, industry and revenue to a number of key areas, particularly the West Coast. During 2003, the Leisure Marine Industry in Scotland had a turnover of £68.2 million and employed 1,130 people (see References 1 to 3), all of whom were involved in supplying and supporting the wide range of services to recreational boating. The industry supporting recreational boating includes: -

Boat building, Moorings/Berthing/Storage, Boatyard Services and Repairs, New Boat (Dealer) Sales, Waterside Facilities, Equipment Manufacturers, Wholesale Distribution

In addition the recreational boating sector creates direct employment through clubs and training centres as well as substantial indirect employment through local accommodation, shops, restaurants and other hospitality outlets which provide for visitors and resident boats as well as for the various boating events held in Scotland.

The RYA

The RYA (Royal Yachting Association) represents 100,000 personal members, 1500 clubs, many Class (boat-type) associations and a further 2000 registered Training Centres. **RYA Scotland** looks after the interests of 17% of the UK personal membership which is actually resident in Scotland, with a further proportion visiting the area during the cruising season. Scotland has ~150 affiliated clubs and around 200 Training Centres.

The RYA is committed to a planning and environmental strategy for sustainable boating, *Boating for Life*, (see Ref. 4) in which the fundamental aim is to work with stakeholders towards the sustainable use of the UK's coasts and inland waters. These sustainable principles include the protection of the marine environment and the maintenance of employment. In Scotland, the RYA, through RYA Scotland, represents all aspects of boating and is keen to work with the local authorities and offshore energy developers to assist the complementary development of energy resources and recreational boating, so that the interests of each industry are safeguarded.

As the representative of the interests of leisure boaters, RYA Scotland is formally consulted by the Scottish Executive and The Crown Estate on any proposals in Scottish coastal waters which might affect navigation or safety, such as moorings, fish farms, offshore renewable developments, or pier or harbour developments. Responses are given based on the opinion of local experts who advise RYA Scotland on these issues.

Recreational boating and energy development

RYA and RYA-S are concerned that inappropriate siting and design of offshore energy development has the potential to adversely affect recreational boating interests. Experience in England has shown through the provision of information and establishing dialog with developers many of these issues can be overcome. In the past energy development has generally been localised through oil and gas rigs and fields. The future of renewable energy will require larger areas of the navigable water to be taken up by these structures.

Recreational boating and availability

RYA and RYA-S are concerned about the impact that fuel availability for power driven boats (both using power as primary and as auxiliary motors) will have on the sector.

The consequence of an increase in price may drive new technologies and explore the use of alternative fuels e.g., biodiesel and vegetable oils. However marine demand is essentially small and supplier in remote areas may not be able to store several types of fuel.

Consultation Questions

- What is the feasibility, availability, reliability, sustainability, efficiency, capacity and risks of the different energy generations technologies?

Considering 'different energy generation technologies' we are specifically looking at offshore wind, wave and tidal technologies. As RYA and RYA-S our expertise lies in the risks to recreational boating of developing these technologies in the marine environment. The immediate risks relate to navigational safety of small craft and on a broader scale impacting the coastal and island economies that are involved in tourism and recreation.

RYA and RYA-S have developed an Atlas of Recreational Cruising Routes for the UK (Reference 5), including Scotland that identifies key areas where energy developments would have a significant adverse affect on recreational boating (Relevant pages of the Atlas attached).

OFFSHORE WIND ENERGY:

There are relatively few places that appear suitable for offshore wind energy development in Scotland due to the deep water close enough inshore.

Whilst in the UK there are only a few examples of offshore wind developments, we feel that careful siting and design can enable coexistence of both small craft and wind energy development.

For the developments in Scotland (Robin Rigg) and England, we have provided data on rotor clearance heights and have published a Position Statement that contains this information (Reference 6). Additional concerns relate to marking and lighting, effects on radar and emergency shut down procedures details of which are contained in the Position Statement.

TIDAL ENERGY:

There are currently no commercial tidal generation units, however there is a large potential for harnessing tidal energy in Scotland, for example Pentland Firth. Our concerns for the development of this technology is the obstruction of narrow navigational channels. These channels are already potentially hazardous for small craft and need to be approached at the correct state of tide. However, in adverse weather conditions, they may also be essential routes to harbour of refuge.

WAVE ENERGY:

There are currently no commercial wave energy generation units in Scotland. We feel there is scope for small scale generation units to be developed in conjunction with harbour infrastructure e.g., breakwaters. Further offshore our concerns surround the large areas of navigable waters that may be occupied with some of these technologies. There are also likely to be low structures on the surface of the water and difficult to see from small vessels particularly in rough weather conditions. However, the Atlas of Cruising Routes can help in siting areas to avoid conflict with recreational craft.

- What will be the impact of energy availability and price on the demand for energy by commerce and industry in Scotland?

In terms of recreational boating we feel availability and price will impact on the more remote areas of Scotland as people will travel less both overland to get to their boats as well as when on their boats. It is unclear at present whether the current shift from sail to power would reverse or whether people would actually leave the activity entirely having an economic consequence for the marine industry.

- Can the objectives of environmental improvement and economic growth both be met without a major increase in energy costs? What steps should be taken to enable an informed debate on this issue?

We believe that there are circumstances where environmental improvements and economic growth can be met without a major increase in energy costs. For example, technologies currently exist for the use of alternative fuels such as vegetable oils and biofuels in marine diesel engines. However, the uncertainty surrounding future price of these fuels due to taxation is likely to deter people from investing in either new engines or conversion of existing ones.

Additionally, changes have been seen in the fuel consumption of petrol powered outboard engine in a drive to reduce emissions.

RYA has a successful policy of education not legislation originally relating to training requirements and standards. This has recently been adopted through the Green Blue initiative where RYA and The British Marine Federation, the marine industry trade association, has established an ambitious three year environmental education programme where fuel management will be included.

References and useful information sources

1. 'Marine Leisure Industry, European Overview 2003.' British Marine Federation, Egham, www.britishmarine.co.uk
2. 'UK Leisure Marine Industry Bulletin 2003-2004.' British Marine Federation, Egham, www.britishmarine.co.uk
3. 'Watersports Participation Survey 2003.' British Marine Federation, Egham, www.britishmarine.co.uk & Royal Yachting Association, Hamble, www.rya.org.uk
4. 'Boating for Life: Planning and Environmental Strategy for Sustainable Boating.' Royal Yachting Association, Hamble, Hants. www.rya.org.uk
5. Atlas of Recreational Cruising Routes. 2005. Royal Yachting Association, Hamble, Hants. www.rya.org.uk
6. RYA Position Statement on Offshore Wind Farms. Royal Yachting Association, Hamble, Hants. www.rya.org.uk
7. The Green Blue Project Outline: RYA and BMF

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