

GHS/PIC

05 February 2007

Mr S Eades  
Marine Information Network  
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Allington  
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Wiltshire  
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Dear Mr Eades

### **Eastern English Channel – Regional Monitoring Program**

I refer to your letter of 12th January 2007 and our subsequent telephone conversation. As discussed, I apologise for the delay in responding to your letter of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2006 which was due to logistical issues in producing the Regional Environmental Monitoring and Management (REMM) Report 2005-2006. You should by now have received a copy of this document. Additionally, the website [www.eastchannel.info](http://www.eastchannel.info) has been updated to include library links to current documentation including the REMM and the Regional Monitoring Blueprint.

The REMM contains outcomes and actions of the TWG and ECEN meetings held to date. We have forwarded your letters of 4<sup>th</sup> September and 31<sup>st</sup> October to members of the TWG and we believe that members are generally content with the approach adopted by the East Channel Association (ECA) in respect to the issues that you have raised. The group has not convened since the last meeting in July and being a forum for technical discussion it is not anticipated that the TWG will issue responses as a group. The ECA representatives are attendees at both the TWG and the ECEN and are happy to try to address any issues raised by ECEN members, hence our comments below.

With respect to your comments on monitoring thresholds we would refer you to section 7.7 (page 87) of the REMM headed 'Determination of Suitable Indicators of Change'. This lists the indicators of change likely to be measured during the first two years of extraction activity and states that the suitability, validity and practicality of using threshold values as a management tool will be investigated during the first 1-3 years of monitoring activity.

We note your comments on plume dispersion techniques. We believe the various approaches adopted, as specified in the Regional Monitoring Blueprint, are the most practical way to test the predictions made in the Regional Environmental Assessment. As you are aware, these techniques include the study of plume behaviour as well as monitoring of tracer placed on the sea-bed.

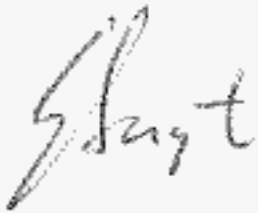
The tracer techniques have been agreed with the relevant regulatory scientific advisors. Leading specialists working with independent consultants, Emu, have designed a workable and representative method of releasing several tonnes of tracer into the sea to monitor seabed transport of sand sized sediment. The reason a seabed release is planned is due not only to safety and practicality issues but also the fact that we are using the tracer to track bedload, rather than suspended load. Suspended load is being assessed separately using ADCP and plume modelling.

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We trust we have addressed the main issues you have raised. We agree that, as far as is reasonable, the Regional Monitoring Program should have the confidence of all parties and that is why we have instigated a program of information dissemination and opportunities for discussion which we believe to be at the forefront in stakeholder engagement.

We look forward to continued dialogue with Marinet through correspondence and attendance at future ECEN meetings.

Yours sincerely



**G H SINGLETON**

On behalf of East Channel Association

cc: D Spooner (DCLG)  
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Z Crutchfield (JNNCC)  
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