



Commission for Energy Regulation

An Coimisiún um Rialáil Fuinnimh

Natural Gas Safety Regulatory Framework for Ireland

High Level Implementation Timetable

CER/07/174

24th October 2007

1.0 Implementation Timetable

The implementation of the gas safety regulatory framework (the 'Framework') commenced with the publication of the Framework Decision Paper (07/172). The planned date for the full implementation of the Framework is **27th February 2009** when the first Annual Report on the functioning of the Framework will be submitted to the Minister. The Commission recognises that the successful implementation of the Framework will require a considerable amount of involvement and work on the part of natural gas undertakings and wider stakeholders. In order to assist stakeholders in understanding the timescale and work requirements that will be placed upon them, the key high level implementation milestones together with their respective planned completion dates are described in the table below.

Implementation Milestones		Completion Date
1	Publication of Framework Final Decision Paper	24/10/07
2	Publication of Consultation Paper on Safety Case Guidelines	24/10/07
3	Publication of Decision Paper on Safety Case Guidelines	05/12/07
4	Agree undertakings safety KPIs (for quarterly safety reporting)	31/01/08
5	Modify undertakings licences	29/02/08
6	Submission of transmission, distribution and supplier & shipper undertakings Safety Cases	28/02/08
7	Completion of Safety Case assessment for transmission, distribution and supplier and shipper undertakings	16/05/08
8	Framework governance arrangements implemented	27/06/08
9	Gas Safety Promotion & Public Awareness approach in place	15/08/08
10	Submission of Marathon Oil Interim Safety Case	30/09/08
11	Submission of 1 st Quarterly Safety Reports for transmission, distribution and supplier and shipper undertakings	10/10/08
12	Completion of Safety Case assessment for Marathon Oil	19/12/08
13	Submission of 2 nd Quarterly Safety Reports for transmission, distribution and supplier & shipper undertakings	09/01/09
14	Submission of Annual Report to Minister	27/02/09

It should be noted that the Commission will continue to:

- hold ongoing discussions with undertakings on the development of their Safety Cases with the objective of providing guidance and clarification on safety related issues as required; and
- meet with all relevant stakeholders on a regular basis to keep them informed of progress throughout the implementation process.

2.0 Points to Note

The Commission will liaise closely with the Minister in relation to commencing the relevant gas safety sections of the *Energy (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006* to correspond with the implementation timetable.

The timetable shows that the transmission, distribution and supplier and shipper undertakings will be operating under their respective Safety Cases with effect from the end of May 2008. This allows for a 6 to 8 month period of operation of the Framework and two periods of quarterly safety reporting prior to the submission of the first Annual Report to the Minister.

As stated in the Decision Paper (07/172), the Commission does not propose to extend its gas safety responsibilities to include LPG at this time. The Commission will focus its attention on the establishment of the natural gas safety regulatory framework in the first instance. Notwithstanding this, the Framework will be developed in a manner which allows for its scope to be extended in a controlled and coordinated way to incorporate the regulation of LPG after a reasonable period of successful operation. In anticipation of the Commission's natural gas safety responsibilities being extended to cover LPG, the Commission will undertake an implementation study into the most appropriate approach for discharging any new responsibilities. This work will commence at the end of Q4 2007. Based on the outcome of that study, the Commission will develop its proposals for the safety regulation of LPG and issue a public consultation document requesting industry and public comment.

Marathon Oil will submit to the Commission an 'Interim Safety Case' for the operation of its combined gas extraction and storage facility at southwest Kinsale by 30th September 2008. At such time as the forthcoming *Petroleum Exploration and Extraction (Safety) Bill* is published, the Commission will gain more clarity on its responsibilities for offshore natural gas safety regulation. At this time, the Commission will review the Marathon Oil Interim Safety Case in the light of its new safety responsibilities under the Bill and determine the additional measures, if any, are required to be implemented by Marathon Oil. Based on the outcome of this review, Marathon Oil will develop a 'Final Safety Case' for its combined gas extraction and storage facility and submit this to the Commission by a date to be agreed.

With respect to the proposed Shannon LNG project, given the early stage of development of this project, the Commission's safety case requirements will be developed through discussion with the safety representatives of Shannon LNG according to a timeline that is mutually convenient to both the Commission and Shannon LNG.

Finally, it should be noted that the implementation timetable for the "*Regulation of the Gas Installer Industry with Respect to Safety*" (ref: CER/07/125) project will be published in a separate paper.

All comments and queries with respect to the above implementation timetable should be directed to the Commission's Gas Safety Manager, Eamonn Murtagh, at emurtagh@cer.ie.