

23rd September, 2011



Commission for Energy Regulation
An Coimisiún um Rialáil Fuinnimh

Mr Liam Breslin,
Druminalass,
Ballinaglera,
Co. Leitrim.

Ref: D/11/15322

Re: Letter on Consultation Paper on Petroleum Safety Framework

Dear Mr. Breslin,

Thank you for your letter of September 13th (our ref: D/11/15315) which was passed to my attention by Commissioner Blaney.

The substantive point in your letter is that the absence of any discussion on “unconventional oil and gas extraction (UE)” within the consultation paper undermines the integrity of the consultation process and the points set out in that paper. Just to note that if there is to be shale gas extraction in Ireland, it will be regulated by the CER from a safety perspective under the Petroleum Safety Framework as the exploitation of shale oil or gas reserves via wells is within the scope of the Petroleum (Exploration and Extraction) Safety Act 2010.

It is important to point out that the consultation paper is just a first step in the public consultation process. Following consideration of responses received to the consultation paper, such as your own, the CER propose to publish a draft decision on the High Level Design of the Petroleum Safety Framework in December 2011. That paper will also be issued for public consultation. Having considered all responses to the draft decision paper, the CER aim to publish its decision paper on the High Level of the Petroleum Safety Framework in April 2012. This public consultation process affords all parties the opportunity to raise issues, see the issues raised by other parties and finally to obtain the CER’s view/response to those issues raised.

As you point out the closing date for the consultation responses is September 27th. The CER will consider the points you have raised with the other responses to the consultation paper. If you are agreeable, the CER propose to publish your letter alongside other responses. This will allow members of the public, statutory agencies and wider stakeholders to decide for themselves the merits of all arguments/points put forward. The CER will also be responding to your specific points below (and those of other respondents) in a consultation response paper which will be published with the Draft Decision paper in December.

I thank you again for taking the time to respond to the paper. If you have any further questions or queries please don’t hesitate to get in contact.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Eamonn Murtagh'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'E'.

Eamonn Murtagh
Project Manager, Petroleum Safety Framework
cc Senator Michael Comiskey

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