HMRC - OT30011 - Licences For Exploration And Exploitation - Onshore Licences

The Onshore regime applies in Great Britain to all territory above low water mark and within “bay closing lines” as defined in regulations; a separate regime is operated in Northern Ireland. The Petroleum (Production) (Landward Areas) Regulations 1995 introduced a single licence, the Petroleum Exploration and Development Licence (PEDL), as the principal Onshore Licence to replace the previous four licence system that covered the various stages of the full development cycle - exploration, appraisal, development and production.

There are two other Onshore Licences:

Supplementary Seismic Survey Licences (SSSLs) which allow seismic acquisition to extend slightly beyond the licensed area, and

Methane Drainage Licences (MDLs) which allow mine operators to extract gas from workings for safety reasons. Other Coalbed Methane projects require full PEDLs.

Five older types of licence are also currently valid but not now issued:

Mining Licences (MLs), issued during or before 1967;

Production Licences (PLs), issued between 1968 and 1984;

and three types of licence introduced in 1984 to cover the identifiable stages of activity:

Exploration Licences (EXLs);

Appraisal Licences (ALs); and

Development Licences (DLs).

Further information on Licences can be found on the DECC website which can be found at https://www.og.decc.gov.uk/.

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