

1 DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR NO. DC2025-__-____
2

3 PRESCRIBING POLICIES FOR OFFSHORE WIND POWER PLANT PROJECT
4 BUFFER ZONES
5

6 **WHEREAS**, all forces of potential energy in public and/or private lands, within the
7 Philippine territory, belong to the State and their exploration, development and
8 utilization are governed by Section 2, Article XII of the 1987 Constitution;
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10 **WHEREAS**, under Republic Act No. 7638, as amended, otherwise known as the
11 Department of Energy (DOE) Act of 1992, the DOE shall establish and administer
12 programs for the exploration, development and utilization of energy resources,
13 including Wind Energy Resources;
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15 **WHEREAS**, on 06 March 2000, the Department of National Defense (DND) issued
16 Department Circular No. 01, otherwise known as the "*Master Development Plan of*
17 *Military Bases and Facilities*," which prescribes the framework for the planning,
18 development, and management of all military installations, including the delineation of
19 operational, security, and buffer zones within and adjacent to defense areas;
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21 **WHEREAS**, the *Philippine Grid Code* (2001 Edition, as amended in 2016),
22 promulgated pursuant to Republic Act No. 9136, otherwise known as the "*Electric*
23 *Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (EPIRA)*," and adopted by the Energy Regulatory
24 Commission through Resolution No. 115, prescribes the technical and operational
25 standards for the planning, connection, operation, and maintenance of the Philippine
26 electric power grid;
27

28 **WHEREAS**, under Republic Act No. 9513, otherwise known as the Renewable Energy
29 Act of 2008, the exclusive right to explore and develop a particular renewable energy
30 area under the said Act shall be through a Renewable Energy Service Contract;
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32 **WHEREAS**, pursuant to the Act, RE developers agreed to enter into an RESC with
33 the DOE covering the Contract Area for the project with the corresponding rights and
34 obligations stipulated therein;
35

36 **WHEREAS**, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), pursuant to its mandate under
37 Republic Act No. 9993 or the Philippine Coast Guard Law of 2009, issued
38 Memorandum Circular No. 01-05, otherwise known as the "*Rules and Regulations*
39 *Prescribing the Establishment, Administration, Operation, and Maintenance of Private*
40 *Aids to Navigation*";
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42 **WHEREAS**, on 06 February 2020, the DOE issued DC No. 2020-02-0002, otherwise
43 known as the "*Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 11361, or the*
44 *Anti-Obstruction of Power Lines Act*", which ensures the continuous and uninterrupted
45 conveyance of electricity by protecting transmission, sub-transmission, and
46 distribution lines, including the prevention of obstructions along power corridors export
47 cables and inter-array cables;
48

49 **WHEREAS**, Executive Order No. 21, series of 2023, entitled “*Establishing the Policy*
50 *and Administrative Framework for Offshore Wind Development in the Philippines*,”
51 provides for a whole-of-government approach to streamline and harmonize permitting,
52 regulatory, and data-sharing processes for the development of Offshore Wind (OSW)
53 projects;

54
55 **WHEREAS**, pursuant to Section 7 of Executive Order (EO) No. 21, the DOE, in
56 coordination with relevant government agencies and stakeholders, has promulgated
57 the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) to operationalize the said EO, including
58 provisions on spatial planning, environmental safeguards, and the delineation of zones
59 and corridors for OSW development;

60
61 **WHEREAS**, on 18 May 2023, the DOE promulgated Department Circular (DC) No.
62 2023-05-0013, otherwise known as the “*Implementing Guidelines of Executive Order*
63 *No. 21: Policy and Administrative Framework for Offshore Wind (OSW) Development*”,
64 which provides the overall framework for the rational and coordinated development of
65 OSW resources in the Philippines;

66
67 **WHEREAS**, on 18 January 2024, the Department of Environment and Natural
68 Resources (DENR) issued DENR Administrative Order No. 2024-02, otherwise known
69 as the “*Interim Guidelines for Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) under the*
70 *Philippine Environmental Impact Statement System (PEISS) for Offshore Wind (OSW)*
71 *Energy Projects*”, prescribing environmental standards and procedural requirements
72 for OSW projects, including those involving subsea cables and associated
73 infrastructure;

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75 **WHEREAS**, on 04 June 2024, the DOE promulgated DC No. DC2024-06-0018
76 otherwise known as the “*Revised Omnibus Guidelines Governing the Award and*
77 *Administration of Renewable Energy Contracts and the Registration of Renewable*
78 *Energy Developers*”;

79
80 **WHEREAS**, on 06 October 2024, the DOE and DENR entered into a Memorandum of
81 Agreement (MOA) granting rights to use offshore areas covered by OSW energy
82 service contracts, including auxiliary and support areas, to streamline the exploration,
83 development, and utilization of OSW resources, and to ensure coordinated
84 management of the seabed and marine space;

85
86 **WHEREAS**, pursuant to Republic Act No. 12065, otherwise known as the “*Philippine*
87 *Archipelagic Sea Lanes Act of 2024*”, the State exercises full sovereignty, sovereign
88 rights, and jurisdiction over all waters, airspace, seabed, subsoil, and resources within
89 the Philippine archipelago, consistent with the Constitution and the United Nations
90 Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

91
92 **WHEREAS**, on 30 June 2025, the DOE issued an *Advisory on the Marine Spatial*
93 *Planning for Offshore Wind Development* establishing the initial national framework to
94 guide the sustainable and responsible development of OSW resources through spatial

95 mapping, environmental and technical assessments, and inter-agency coordination.

96

97 **WHEREAS**, the safe and orderly development of offshore wind projects requires
98 balancing renewable energy expansion with protection of existing marine uses,
99 navigation safety, and environmental sustainability;

100

101 **WHEREAS**, the delineation of OSW Buffer Zones will support the rational and
102 coordinated use of marine space, prevent conflicts among users, and promote
103 sustainable and efficient development of OSW resources;

104

105 **NOW, THEREFORE**, for and in consideration of the foregoing premises, the DOE
106 hereby adopts and promulgates the following:

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108

GENERAL PROVISIONS

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110 **Section 1. General Principles** This Circular sets forth guidelines for the
111 establishment of buffer zones on Offshore Wind Power Project (OsWPP) in
112 accordance with the following principles:

113

114 1.1. Project design, including cable corridors and wake buffer zones, shall apply
115 best available science and technology available in the global market to
116 minimize environmental impacts, ensure safe and efficient subsea cable
117 routing, and mitigate adverse inter-farm wake effects.

118

119 1.2. OsWPPs shall be planned and implemented in a coordinated manner that
120 ensures marine navigation safety, protection of subsea infrastructure, and
121 efficient use of marine space.

122

123 1.3. Developers shall coordinate with neighboring projects and affected
124 stakeholders to reduce conflicts, promote fair sharing of marine resources, and
125 support the long-term sustainable growth of the offshore wind industry.

126

127

128 **Section 2. Definitions of Terms.** As used in this Circular, the following terms shall
129 be defined as follows:

130

131 2.1. *Array Cable* refers to power transmission subsea cables that connect individual
132 wind turbines and are installed within the contract area or buffer zones from the
133 original contract area.

134

135 2.2. *Buffer Zones* refer to areas within a contract area which will be relinquished
136 prior to an OsWPPs Declaration of Commerciality. These areas shall prohibit
137 the installation of any Offshore Wind Turbine Generator.

138

139 2.3. *Export Cable* refers to power transmission subsea cables that connect an
140 OsWPP to the onshore substation and may be installed outside of the contract
141 area. A subsea cable may only be classified as an export cable if they connect
142 an individual WTG or offshore substation to an onshore substation.

- 143
144 2.4. *Contract Area* refers to the total area, which is subject of the OsWESC or WESC
145 as detailed and outlined in the map with its technical description, and where the
146 RE Developer has the exclusive right to explore, develop and utilize the wind
147 resources.
148
- 149 2.5. *Cable Corridor* refers to a designated subsea area where export cables are
150 planned, laid, and maintained to ensure safe and efficient electricity
151 transmission. Cable Corridors may or may not be situated in Buffer Zones.
152
- 153 2.6. *Offshore Wind Power Project or (OsWPP)* refers to a renewable energy project
154 with a duly issued OsWESC or WESC utilizing wind turbines installed offshore
155 to generate electricity.
156
- 157 2.7. *OSW Developer* refers to a holder of an OsWESC or WESC in offshore areas
158 entered into with the DOE granting exclusive rights to develop an OsWPP within
159 a specific Contract Area.
160
- 161 2.8. *Production Area* refers to that portion of the Contract Area identified in metes
162 and bounds by the OSW Developer and approved by the DOE, where wind
163 resources are utilized to produce electricity in Commercial Quantities. This
164 takes into account the buffer zones established within the original Contract Area
165 as well as cable corridors that connect the OsWPP to the onshore connection
166 point.
167
- 168 2.9. *Setback Distance* refers to the minimum inward buffer from the boundary of a
169 Contract Area within which no turbines may be installed, to mitigate wake
170 effects on adjacent projects.
171
- 172 2.10. *Subsea Cable* refers to an insulated power transmission or telecommunications
173 cable installed on or beneath the seabed to transmit electricity, signals, or data
174
- 175 2.11. *Transmission Network Provider or (TNP)* refers refers to the party that is
176 responsible for maintaining adequate grid capacity in accordance with the
177 provisions of the Philippine Grid Code.
178
- 179 2.12. *Wake Effect* refers to the variation in wind speed that lowers the energy yield
180 of wind turbines located downwind of another turbine or wind farm.
181

TRANSMISSION CABLE CORRIDORS

Section 3. Buffer Zones around Contract Areas as Cable Corridors

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186 3.1. Buffer zones of up to 500 m inward shall be established around the boundaries
187 of each OsWPP Contract Area. These zones may be used by developers of
188 adjacent OsWPPs solely for the routing of export cable corridors.
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- 190 3.2. Developers can install/lay array cables on buffer zones that were part of their
191 original Contract Area and may use buffer zones outside their original Contract
192 Area for installation/laying of export cables.

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- 3.3. Buffer zones shall be reflected on the Production Area and the area within the buffer zones shall be relinquished upon the Declaration of Commerciality of the project. OSW developers are not allowed to install offshore wind turbine generators within buffer zones.
- 3.4. Buffer zones shall be automatically established under all Offshore Wind Energy Service Contracts (OsWESCs) upon the effectivity of this Circular. Compliance with the prescribed buffer zones shall be verified during the evaluation of applications for Declaration of Commerciality. Any proposed modification by the OSW Developer shall be duly justified through supporting documentation, which may include, but shall not be limited to the mapping requirements and a detailed technical rationale as provided under the DOE's *Revised Omnibus Guidelines*.

Section 4. Cable Corridor and Route Planning by OSW Developers

- 4.1. It is anticipated that planning of Offshore and Onshore Cable Routes will be undertaken concurrently. Elements of offshore cable route planning should take place after the conduct of an SIS when the grid interconnection point is identified. A developer shall commence the process of Cable Route planning with reference to the onshore Substation Site and onshore grid connection point agreed with the TNP and then consider the principles stipulated herein for the possible onshore cable route and offshore Cable Route.
- 4.2. Cable Corridors must take full account of all Protected Sites as defined under DENR regulations, both marine and terrestrial, where applicable, and any identified sensitive habitats. In planning the cable routes, priority shall be given to avoiding impacts on such areas. Where avoidance is not feasible, potential effects must be minimized through appropriate design measures. Mitigation should only be applied as a final measure, in line with the 'avoid–reduce–mitigate' hierarchy. Where it is not possible to entirely avoid Protected Sites or known sensitive habitats beyond these areas, developers must demonstrate to the DENR that the selected route represents the least environmentally damaging option.
- 4.3. Cable Route planning shall be undertaken in close collaboration with the DENR. Engagement with other relevant non-statutory consultees, such as other sea users or their representatives, including the fisheries sector and port authorities, should also be undertaken where appropriate. Consultation is expected to commence at the earliest stages of route development and continue through to the Development-Environmental Compliance Certificate application stage. Consultees must be kept informed on how their input has been considered and integrated into the planning process. It is recommended that an engagement plan be agreed at the outset with consultees to clarify expectations and ensure that timelines are met. However, the overriding requirement is to provide consultees with a genuine opportunity to offer advice.
- 4.4. Where project-level mitigation of cabling impacts is required, suitable measures should, where possible, be developed in agreement with statutory stakeholders

243 and be capable of being secured through project design and/or consent
244 mechanisms. All mitigation measures must be acceptable to the relevant
245 competent authorities.

246
247 4.5. To promote efficient land use and effective cable deployment, cable route and
248 landfall planning shall anticipate, and must not impede, future development
249 needs, particularly in areas where space is constrained. Developers are
250 expected to demonstrate a coherent, systematic, and sequential approach to
251 route and landfall site selection, including appropriate cable spacing and layout
252 considerations.

253
254 4.6. The advancement of the national Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) framework
255 and any updates hereto and its relevant data applicable to Route Planning shall
256 form part of cable corridor planning.

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258 **Section 5. Cable Route Study and Approval**

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260 **5.1. Initial Assessment and Proximity Check of proposed Cable Routes**

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262 5.1.1. For all proposed Cable Routes, the developers must first provide
263 geographical information of indicative routes for initial assessment and
264 proximity check to the DOE. This geographical information will be used
265 to identify any existing assets, interests or plans granted or noted by
266 the DOE or other relevant government agencies which may be affected
267 by the proposed Cable Route.

268
269 5.1.2. The data should be supplied in ESRI shape file or file geodatabase
270 format in a geodetic WGS1984 (EPSG code 4326).

271
272 5.1.3. The data will be retained as confidential information in a GIS database
273 under the DOE-ITMS and used to enhance DOE's understanding of the
274 developer's likely Cable Route. The initial findings of the Proximity
275 Check will be shared with the developer, highlighting any spatial
276 interactions (subject to any confidentiality restrictions).

277
278 5.1.4. The establishment of subsea cable corridors shall take into
279 consideration the presence of existing subsea assets such as power
280 cables, telecommunications cables, oil and gas pipelines, and other
281 critical marine infrastructure as well any existing or prospective plans
282 for the subsea area. Identified subsea infrastructure within Contract
283 Areas and proposed cable corridors must be given a 500 m buffer.

284
285 5.1.5. For all indicative routes that cross the Contract Areas of other
286 OsWPPs, the DOE will subsequently notify the affected developers and
287 require further coordination and consenting for the crossed Contract
288 Areas.

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290 5.1.6. The DOE shall provide the initial findings to the Developer after 30
291 calendar days from receipt of the geographical information set out in
292 Section 5.1.1..

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5.1.7. Developers may submit revised proposals for Cable Route following the DOE’s initial feedback.

5.1.8. DOE’s feedback on the proposals received shall serve as the guidance for the developer before formalizing at least two proposed cable routes for assessment in the CRS to form part of their submissions for the issuance of the Development ECC.

5.2. **Requirements for Cable Route Study (CRS)** Export cable corridors shall be identified through a CRS, which ensures avoidance, reduction, and mitigation of adverse impacts on marine habitats, existing seabed uses, and navigation channels. The CRS comprises a set of requirements for developers in the planning of offshore Cable Routes. Compliance with these requirements is secured within the Development ECC (D-ECC) and must be demonstrated within the Construction and Operation Plan (COP) document which will accompany the application to the DENR for a D-ECC. Developers must justify through the CRS, the identified routes or any alternatives considered.

5.2.1. Developers must assess at least two indicative export cable corridors including route plans/options, in their Construction and Operations Plan (COP) considering the following options:

5.2.1.1. Developers can use buffer zones including those delineated from Contract Areas of adjacent OsWPPs;

5.2.1.2. Developers may also use other areas outside contract areas including onshore areas if practicable.

5.2.2. Within the proposed cable corridor the developer must identify (and map where possible) the following, which are to be given significant weight in Cable Route planning:

5.2.2.1. Protected Sites

5.2.2.2. Other Environmentally Critical Areas as defined under applicable DENR regulations.

5.2.3. Developers must prepare an outline view of the possible cabling infrastructure requirements (acknowledging that this may change as the design of the project evolves). The outline should include the potential number and capacities of array and export cables with their indicative spacing requirements and the additional structures (e.g. offshore/onshore substations and converter stations) which the project is likely to require. Where there are uncertainties in the required infrastructure these should be set out (with reasons).

5.2.4. Within the Cable Corridor, developers must identify (and where possible, map) hard engineering constraints such as existing infrastructure or other contract areas, challenging ground conditions

343 and sections of the coast where landfall is not possible. Developers
344 should also form an initial view on the likely areas within the Cable
345 Corridor where cable preparation works and/or cable protection may
346 be needed (noting that this information is likely to change as survey
347 work is undertaken).
348

349 5.2.5. Other requirements set by the DENR under DAO No. 2025 – ____
350

351 5.3. **Review and approval of the Cable Route** DAO No. 2025 - ____ and the
352 provisions stipulated therein on the review and approval of the COP and D-ECC
353 shall also serve as the process for review and final approval of the cable route
354 and corridor.
355

356 **Section 6. Offshore Transmission Planning** A long-term strategic plan for
357 offshore infrastructure shall be developed to guide the coordinated and sustainable
358 development of future offshore activities. This plan will set out a spatial and temporal
359 framework for the deployment, operation, and decommissioning of offshore assets,
360 ensuring compatibility with environmental, economic, and social objectives. It shall
361 identify priority development areas, potential cable corridors, and shared infrastructure
362 zones, taking into account cumulative environmental effects, navigational safety,
363 fisheries, and other legitimate sea uses. The plan will also include provisions for data
364 collection, monitoring, and review mechanisms to support adaptive management, as
365 well as clear processes for stakeholder engagement and inter-agency coordination.
366 Its development shall be evidence-based, aligned with national marine and energy
367 strategies, and reviewed periodically to reflect technological advances, evolving policy
368 priorities, and emerging environmental or spatial constraints.
369

370 **Section 7. Establishment of an Offshore Transmission Plan – Technical**
371 **Working Group** Within 30 days after the effectivity of this Department Circular, a TWG
372 shall be established composed of members from DOE-REMB, DOE-EPIMB,
373 TRANSCO, NGCP and DENR to carry out activities in formulating a long-term plan for
374 Offshore Transmission Infrastructure stipulated in Section 6 of this Circular.
375

376 **Section 8. Overlaps and Shared Use** 377

378 8.1. Proposed export cable corridors shall not traverse the contract areas and cable
379 corridors of other OsWPPs except if the following conditions are met:
380

381 8.1.1. The OSW developer proposing to establish cable corridors crossing the
382 contract areas of other developers shall first secure the consent of the
383 developer owning the contract area they intend to cross. In addition to
384 securing consent of the affected developer, exceptions may be strictly
385 granted only under the conditions set out in this Section and must be
386 justified with supporting documents (also included in the CRS) subject
387 to evaluation of the DOE.
388

389 8.1.2. Technical Necessity - The developer demonstrates that no reasonable
390 alternative routing is technically feasible.
391

- 392 8.1.3. Environmental Benefit - The proposed overlapping route results in
393 demonstrably lower overall environmental impacts compared to
394 available alternatives.
395
- 396 8.1.4. Economic Viability – The developer demonstrates that the proposed
397 cable corridor crossing the contract area is more economical for the
398 project, resulting in reduced costs.
399
- 400 8.2. Any exception shall be subject to the approval of the DOE Secretary, based on
401 supporting cable route studies and consultation with DENR, affected
402 developers, and any other stakeholders.
403

404 **Section 9. Post-installation Requirements.** Developers must submit as-laid and
405 as-built coordinates of all cables, substations, and protection measures to DOE for
406 information and record-keeping purposes within 60 days of completion. Any post-
407 installation adjustments or cable repairs outside approved corridors shall require prior
408 DOE approval.
409

410 WIND WAKE EFFECT MITIGATION

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412 **Section 10. Setbacks for mitigating wind wake effects.**
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- 414 10.1. New applications for OsWESCs after the effectivity of this Circular shall not
415 have an Area of Interest that is within 1 km of an existing OsWESC or WESC
416 Contract Area.
417

418 **Section 11. Coordination of Neighboring Projects.**
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- 420 11.1. The DOE shall provide OSW Developers with an updated list of existing
421 OsWESCs and other offshore wind projects located within thirty (30) kilometers
422 of their Contract Areas, together with information on the respective
423 development status of these projects. Developers must assess potential wind
424 wake impacts with the identified projects and take reasonable measures to
425 minimize such impacts. These measures may include optimizing turbine layout
426 and spacing, coordinating with neighboring developers on project design and
427 data sharing, applying advanced wake modeling tools, or selecting turbine
428 technologies that reduce wake interactions.
429
- 430 11.2. The DOE shall identify and designate Key Projects, including, but not limited to,
431 GEA-winning projects, as priority developments for which neighboring
432 developers shall, to the extent practicable, design their project layouts and
433 operational strategies to minimize adverse wake effects.
434
- 435 11.3. Developers may coordinate with neighboring developers to increase or
436 decrease setback distances, provided that any such adjustments are
437 demonstrated to result in no net loss of overall energy generation across the
438 affected projects. All agreed adjustments shall be communicated in writing to
439 the DOE for information and record purposes prior to implementation.
440

441 11.4. Coordination between developers for the purpose of mitigating inter-farm wake
442 effects shall be conducted in good faith and within reasonable timeframes to be
443 prescribed in a further issuance by the DOE. The absence of agreement
444 between developers within the prescribed period shall not, by itself, constitute
445 grounds for withholding or delaying the permitting processes.
446

447 **Section 12. Wake Loss Impact Assessment.** Given the Philippines' seasonal wind
448 climate, characterized by alternating Northeast and Southwest monsoon regimes,
449 developers shall consider seasonal and directional wind variability when conducting
450 WLIAs and designing project layouts. Such conditions may cause projects to
451 alternately act as upwind or downwind installations, underscoring the need for
452 coordination and data sharing to minimize mutual wake effects throughout the year.
453

454 12.1. All OSW Developers shall prepare a Wake Loss Impact Assessment (WLIA) to
455 quantify potential wake-induced impacts on DOE shortlisted neighboring
456 projects under Section 11.1 of this Circular, including designated Key Projects
457 identified by the DOE. In the absence of designated projects, a WLIA is not
458 required. The WLIA shall reflect coordination outcomes under Section 11 and
459 consider both directional and cumulative wake effects.
460

461 12.2. WLIA results shall be submitted to the DOE for information and monitoring
462 purposes prior to the commencement of construction. The DOE may use the
463 results to inform infrastructure coordination, and cumulative impact
464 management.
465

466 12.3. Preparation and submission of a WLIA shall not require concurrence or
467 approval from neighboring developers. Developers shall, however,
468 demonstrate that reasonable consultation and data exchange have been
469 undertaken with potentially affected projects, including a summary of
470 engagement activities and technical rationale for the chosen design.
471

472 12.4. The absence of agreement between developers on WLIA outcomes shall not
473 delay or preclude DOE permitting. Where disagreements arise, the DOE may
474 request clarifications or supplemental analysis but shall proceed with permitting
475 based on the best available evidence.
476

477 12.5. The DOE will issue further guidance on procedures and acceptable parameters
478 for conducting WLIAs to promote consistency, transparency, and comparability
479 across offshore wind projects.
480

481 **MARINE NAVIGATION SAFETY**

482
483 **Section 13. Safety Zones.** Safety zones are exclusion zones and shall prohibit the
484 entry of vessels of all sizes, except those identified and cleared under Section 14 of
485 this Circular. Safety Zones related to OsWPPs are not automatically established and
486 shall be upon application by the developer to the PCG. PCG shall have the final
487 approval of the safety zones in consultation with the DOE, host coastal communities
488 and port authorities.
489

490 **Section 14. Vessels Permitted in Safety Zones.** Only vessels specifically
491 designated by the developer and/or cleared by the PCG/MARINA may operate within
492 established safety zones. These may include but are not limited to:

- 493
- 494 14.1. Emergency Vessels
- 495
- 496 14.2. Law Enforcement Vessels
- 497
- 498 14.3. Authorized Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Vessels
- 499

500 **Section 15. Safety Zones During Construction or Maintenance.** Upon request of
501 the developer to the Philippine Coast Guard, a rolling 500-meter radius safety zone
502 shall be established around each offshore wind structure and/or foundation while
503 under construction or major maintenance. The “rolling” designation means that the
504 safety zone shall apply only to individual structures or foundations where construction
505 vessels are present and shall move with the progression of works.

506

507 **Section 16. Safety Zones During Normal Operations.** During normal operations,
508 operators may request a safety zone with a radius of up to 50 meters around each
509 installed offshore wind turbine. The remainder of the contract area shall remain
510 accessible to vessels within the allowable activities and size limits under Section 18.

511

512 **Section 17. Promulgation of Safety Zones.** Any approved safety zones shall be
513 endorsed by the DOE to NAMRIA for promulgation in NAMRIA nautical charts,
514 Navigational Warnings, and Notice to Mariners.

515

516 **Section 18. Prohibited Access on OsWPPs.** In general, the Production Area of an
517 OsWPP shall remain accessible to the public with strict exceptions for the following:

- 518
- 519 18.1. OsWPPs shall remain prohibited to vessels with a Length Overall (LOA)
520 exceeding twenty-five (25) meters, except those authorized by the DOE, DENR,
521 PCG, or other competent authorities for inspection, maintenance, safety, or
522 emergency operations.
- 523
- 524 18.2. Trawling, dredging, or any activity involving seabed disturbance shall be
525 prohibited within the Production Area, except where expressly authorized as
526 part of the approved project operations or environmental monitoring programs.
- 527
- 528 18.3. Anchoring or mooring of unauthorized vessels, including recreational craft,
529 within the Production Area and Cable Corridors shall be strictly prohibited.
- 530
- 531 18.4. Unauthorized diving, swimming, or sub-surface operations within the
532 Production Area shall not be permitted due to safety and security
533 considerations.
- 534
- 535 18.5. The discharge, disposal, or release of any substance that may cause pollution,
536 turbidity, or damage to project assets or the marine environment within the
537 OsWPP area shall be strictly prohibited.
- 538

- 539 18.6. Any construction, survey, or maintenance activity by third parties within the
540 OsWPP Production Area or its designated safety zones shall require prior
541 notification to the DOE and coordination with the project operator.
542
- 543 18.7. Activities that may interfere with navigation safety systems, data transmission,
544 or power export cables—including the use of bottom-contact fishing gear,
545 seismic surveys, or anchoring operations—are prohibited unless expressly
546 authorized.
547
- 548 18.8. The DOE, in coordination with the PCG and other relevant authorities, may
549 establish and enforce additional temporary or permanent exclusion zones
550 within the OsWPP area to ensure public safety, protect the marine environment,
551 or secure critical infrastructure.
552

553 **Section 19. Navigational Safety Risk Assessment.** 554

- 555 19.1. All OsWPP Developers regardless of proximity to known shipping lanes/routes
556 shall conduct a Navigational Safety Risk Assessment (NSRA) as part of their
557 project studies, identifying:
558
- 559 19.1.1. Types of vessels transiting through the contract area;
560
 - 561 19.1.2. Volume and frequency of vessel traffic;
562
 - 563 19.1.3. Types of maritime activities undertaken in the area.
564
- 565 19.2. NSRAs shall follow International Maritime Organization (IMO) Formal Safety
566 Assessment principles and recognized national guidance (e.g., MCA
567 Methodology / NVIC 02-07 equivalents promulgated by PCG), with consultation
568 of PCG, MARINA, NAMRIA, and affected port authorities/pilotage.
569
- 570 19.3. The NSRA shall form part of the submissions to PCG for their issuance of a
571 Letter of No Objection (LONO) and Navigational Safety Clearance Certificate
572 (NSCC).
573

574 **Section 20. Buffer for Shipping Lanes.** 575

- 576 20.1. Shipping lanes as defined by Philippine maritime policies and charted by
577 NAMRIA shall be recognized and respected in the planning and operation of
578 OsWPPs. Designated shipping lanes include but are not limited to:
579
- 580 20.1.1. Archipelagic Sea Lanes (ASL) designated under Republic Act No.
581 12065, for which buffers shall apply to the lane boundaries as published
582 through presidential proclamation and NAMRIA charts or Notices to
583 Mariners;
584
 - 585 20.1.2. Traffic Separation Schemes (TSS) established by the Philippine Coast
586 Guard; and
587

588 20.1.3. Routes covered by the Philippine Nautical Highway System (PNHS) or
589 Road Roll-on/Roll-off Terminal System (RRTS) as identified by
590 MARINA.

591
592 20.2. In the absence of officially designated shipping lanes, developers shall, as part
593 of their NSRA, consult with the PCG, MARINA, NAMRIA, and relevant port
594 authorities, and review Automatic Identification System (AIS)-based traffic
595 density maps to identify existing navigational patterns within and around their
596 respective contract areas. Where traffic density and safety considerations
597 justify the establishment of navigation corridors, such corridors shall be
598 integrated into the project design. The final determination and approval of these
599 corridors and associated buffers shall rest with the PCG, in consultation with
600 the DOE.

601
602 20.3. Buffers around recognized shipping lanes shall be determined based on the
603 findings of the NSRA, taking into account traffic density, navigational risk levels,
604 environmental conditions, and operational safety. The specific buffer
605 dimensions shall be subject to evaluation and approval by the PCG, which shall
606 determine whether the proposed separation distances are adequate to maintain
607 safe navigation and avoid interference with maritime traffic.

608
609 20.4. The PCG may vary the applicable buffer requirements where the NSRA
610 demonstrates that navigational risks are broadly acceptable or tolerable with
611 the application of other mitigation measures. Such measures may include, but
612 are not limited to, traffic modelling, Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) systems, Aids
613 to Navigation (AtoN) in accordance with IALA Recommendation O-139, guard
614 zones, and emergency or VHF communication procedures.

615
616 **Section 21. Charting of OsWPP Infrastructure.**

617
618 21.1. After construction of the OsWPP, developers shall submit as-built plans and
619 coordinates of all offshore wind farm structures, array cables, and export cables
620 to the DOE. The same shall be endorsed by the DOE to the PCG and NAMRIA
621 for inclusion on nautical charts, navigational warnings and notice to mariners.

622
623 21.2. Other OsWPP Infrastructure including but not limited to, marking and lighting
624 requirements as defined by PCG policies must likewise be noted and included
625 in the submission.

626
627 21.3. Submitted plans and any derived data and publication shall be used exclusively
628 for Marine Safety purposes and shall be inaccessible to the public.

629
630 **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF GOVERNMENT AGENCIES**

631
632 **Section 22. Responsibilities of the DOE**

633
634 22.1. The DOE shall exercise overall supervision and coordination over the planning,
635 development, and regulation of offshore wind projects consistent with national
636 energy and marine spatial strategies.

637

- 638 22.2. The DOE shall oversee the establishment and verification of buffer zones,
639 review proposed modifications with supporting technical justification, and
640 ensure that no turbine installation occurs within designated buffer areas.
641
- 642 22.3. The DOE shall receive and assess indicative cable route data, conduct
643 proximity checks, and provide initial feedback within thirty (30) days. It shall
644 evaluate Cable Route Studies (CRS) in coordination with the DENR and
645 relevant agencies, and decide on shared-use or overlapping corridors based
646 on technical, environmental, economic and safety considerations.
647
- 648 22.4. The DOE shall formulate a long-term Offshore Transmission Infrastructure Plan
649 aligned with national policies, and convene a Technical Working Group (TWG)
650 with TRANSCO, NGCP, DENR, and relevant DOE bureaus for its
651 implementation.
652
- 653 22.5. The DOE shall maintain an updated list of OsWESCs within thirty (30)
654 kilometers of each Contract Area, designate Key Projects as priority
655 developments, receive and monitor Wake Loss Impact Assessments (WLIAs),
656 and issue technical guidance to standardize WLIA methodologies.
657
- 658 22.6. The DOE shall coordinate with the PCG, MARINA, NAMRIA, and other
659 authorities in the review of Navigational Safety Risk Assessments (NSRAs),
660 endorse approved safety zones for promulgation, provide input on buffer
661 distances from shipping lanes, and liaise with LGUs and port authorities on
662 safety and access concerns.
663
- 664 22.7. The DOE shall receive and endorse as-built plans and coordinates of all
665 offshore wind structures and cables to PCG and NAMRIA for charting, ensure
666 data confidentiality, and require prior approval for any post-installation
667 adjustments outside approved corridors.
668
- 669 22.8. The DOE, in coordination with competent authorities, shall monitor compliance
670 with safety and access restrictions and may recommend temporary or
671 permanent exclusion zones to safeguard public safety and the marine
672 environment.
673
- 674 22.9. The DOE may issue supplemental guidelines or circulars to implement, clarify,
675 or operationalize the provisions of this Circular, including those related to buffer
676 zones, cable corridors, wake management, navigational safety, and offshore
677 transmission planning.
678

679 **Section 23. Responsibilities of the DENR**

680

- 681 23.1. The DENR shall exercise environmental oversight over all Offshore Wind
682 Power Projects (OsWPPs) pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 1586 and
683 relevant environmental laws. It shall ensure that offshore and coastal activities
684 are consistent with national environmental standards and marine resource
685 protection objectives.
686

- 687 23.2. The DENR shall evaluate and issue Environmental Compliance Certificates
688 (ECCs) for OsWPPs and associated transmission facilities. The EIA process
689 shall consider cumulative and seasonal impacts, including those related to
690 marine biodiversity and sediment disturbance.
691
- 692 23.3. DENR shall review and provide technical input on Cable Route Studies
693 submitted to the DOE, focusing on seabed disturbance, benthic ecosystems,
694 and coastal habitat protection. Projects intersecting sensitive or protected
695 marine areas shall be subject to additional environmental safeguards or buffer
696 zones as determined by the DENR.
697
- 698 23.4. The DENR shall issue or endorse necessary environmental permits, including
699 foreshore use, water discharge, and hazardous waste management
700 clearances. It shall monitor OsWPP compliance with ECC conditions, including
701 water quality, waste management, and biodiversity protection measures.
702
- 703 23.5. The DENR shall coordinate with the DOE, PCG, MARINA, and NAMRIA in
704 marine spatial planning, environmental monitoring, and response to
705 environmental incidents. Environmental and habitat data generated from
706 OsWPP monitoring shall be shared with the DOE for cumulative impact
707 management and infrastructure planning.
708
- 709 23.6. The DENR may issue further guidelines, in coordination with the DOE, to
710 standardize environmental permitting, monitoring, and marine habitat
711 protection measures for offshore wind development.
712

713 **Section 24. Responsibilities of the Philippine Coast Guard**

- 714
- 715 24.1. The PCG shall ensure that all offshore wind projects comply with national and
716 international maritime safety standards, including those relating to vessel
717 navigation, maritime traffic, and sea lane protection.
718
- 719 24.2. The PCG shall evaluate NSRAs submitted by developers to determine
720 navigational risks, required mitigation measures, and the adequacy of proposed
721 buffers, in consultation with the DOE, MARINA, NAMRIA, and relevant port
722 authorities.
723
- 724 24.3. Based on NSRA findings, the PCG shall establish or approve buffer distances
725 from shipping lanes and designate navigation corridors to ensure safe vessel
726 passage and prevent interference with maritime operations.
727
- 728 24.4. The PCG shall review and approve applications for construction, maintenance,
729 and operational safety zones within offshore wind project areas, in consultation
730 with the DOE, MARINA, NAMRIA, and host coastal LGUs.
731
- 732 24.5. The PCG shall issue the Letter of No Objection (LONO) and Navigational Safety
733 Clearance Certificate (NSCC) upon satisfactory completion and review of the
734 NSRA and related documentation.
735

- 736 24.6. The PCG shall coordinate with NAMRIA and the DOE in promulgating approved
737 safety zones, navigation buffers, and offshore wind infrastructure through
738 Notices to Mariners, Navigational Warnings, and other maritime safety
739 publications.
740
- 741 24.7. The PCG shall monitor maritime activities within and around offshore wind
742 areas, enforce navigation and safety regulations, and lead emergency, search
743 and rescue, or pollution response operations when required.
744
- 745 24.8. The PCG shall maintain continuous coordination with the DOE, MARINA,
746 NAMRIA, DENR, LGUs, and other stakeholders to ensure maritime safety,
747 environmental protection, and efficient management of sea space.
748

749 **OTHER PROVISIONS**

750
751
752 **Section 26. Transitory Clause.** This Policy shall apply prospectively.
753

754 **Section 27. Repealing Clause.** All other rules and regulations, or any portion
755 thereof, that are inconsistent with this Circular are likewise repealed or modified
756 accordingly.
757

758 **Section 28. Separability Clause.** If any section of this Circular is declared
759 unconstitutional or invalid for any reason, the remaining provisions not affected shall
760 remain in full force and effect.
761

762 **Section 29. Effectivity Clause.** This Circular shall take effect fifteen (15) calendar
763 days upon its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation. A copy
764 of this Circular shall be filed with the University of the Philippines Law Center – Office
765 of National Administrative Register (UPLC-ONAR).
766

767 Issued this ___ day of ___ 2025 at the DOE, Energy Center, Rizal Drive cor. 34th St.,
768 Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City.
769

770
771
772 **SHARON S. GARIN**
773 Secretary