

Marine Geophysics Data Acquisition, Processing and Interpretation – the second edition

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Historic England has commissioned MSDS Marine and Spectrum Offshore to produce the second edition of *Marine Geophysics Data Acquisition, Processing and Interpretation*, first published in 2013.

The purpose of this guidance document is to describe geophysical surveying techniques that can reveal information about the historic environment as might be encountered on, within and beneath the seabed around England.

The UK is in a very active phase of marine planning and development and up-to-date information is required about the use of marine geophysical survey techniques and methodologies. In November 2020, the UK government published *The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution*, of which Point 1 is 'Advancing Offshore Wind'. There is therefore a pressing need to produce an updated edition of *Marine Geophysics Data Acquisition, Processing and Interpretation*, so that survey campaigns conducted to support maritime development projects can reveal or otherwise demonstrate the presence of historic and archaeological sites and places.

Prior to the commencement of offshore development projects, geophysical and hydrographic data is the primary dataset from which archaeologists can determine the presence, location and extents of material of potential archaeological interest and recommend appropriate mitigation strategies. Ensuring that geophysical and hydrographic data is collected, processed and interpreted to defined standards and specifications across the sector ensures that mitigation recommendations will be consistent and provide the highest level of protection for the historic environment.

The updated guidance will be aimed at all user groups including developers, surveyors, archaeologists, curators, early career professionals and students. It will provide guidance for the offshore development sector, and will serve as a useful reference for those conducting geophysical surveys directed at archaeological sites as well as for others conducting surveys to optimise the principle of 'collect once, use many times'. The guidance will present all aspects of the data collection, processing and interpretation process from survey planning through to reporting. Each section will be written with each user group in mind, with information being presented logically and coherently.

The project is a partnership between MSDS Marine and Spectrum Offshore. These organisations bring a wealth of skills to the project and represent an opportunity for knowledge and skills transfer in the heritage sector. This partnership will ensure that the guidance is suitable for use within the archaeological sector, as well as benefitting from input from a professional, experienced and respected survey contractor. This approach means that the guidance will consider the real-world implications and requirements of data collection for offshore developments and the synergy between all end users of the data. Thus, its implementation will be feasible, proportional and robust.

The guidance is being developed with input from the whole sector through a targeted programme of stakeholder workshops, consultation and webinars. In autumn 2021 the project team will be hosting an online workshop to gather information from the sector to feed into the guidance review. At present this is planned for 25 November 2021, so save the date! This will act as a focus group discussion to explore issues in depth and to seek the views of stakeholders, as well as to generate new ideas relevant to the guidance. Following the workshop an updated guidance document will be produced for sector consultation in early 2022.

The guidance will then be presented to the sector in spring 2022 through an online webinar that we are proposing to run as ClfA-approved CPD.

If you would like to be kept updated with the progress of the project, or to be added to the list of stakeholders for consultation, please email info@MSDSMarine.co.uk