

Marine Current Turbines™

Running with the tide of renewable energy

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MARINE CURRENT TURBINES OUTLINES PLANS FOR SEAGEN'S INSTALLATION IN STRANGFORD LOUGH

Thursday, 7th February 2008

New plans to install the world's first commercial scale tidal energy system in Northern Ireland's Strangford Lough have today been published by tidal energy company, Marine Current Turbines Ltd.

Marine Current Turbines Ltd (MCT) is targeting the installation of its 1.2MW SeaGen tidal system for the end of March, and when deployed in Strangford Lough and connected to the local grid it will generate clean electricity for 1000 homes.

The method of installing the 1.2MW SeaGen device in Strangford Lough has been adapted to enable it to be deployed by a crane barge rather than a larger jack-up vessel. SeaGen will be installed by the crane barge Rambiz, operated by the Belgium company Scaldis, and overseen by MCT's own in-house engineering team in partnership with SeaRoc Ltd, a leading firm of marine engineering consultants. The exercise, which will take up to 14 days, is scheduled to start on March 23rd when the Rambiz barge sails with SeaGen loaded on board from Belfast to Strangford Lough.

The additional fabrication engineering work on SeaGen has been carried out by Scottish firm Burntisland Fabrications Ltd and the final phase of the engineering assembly and mobilisation activity will be undertaken by Harland & Wolff in Belfast before being collected by the Rambiz barge. Once installed and during the 12 week commissioning phase, a team of environmental scientists from Royal Haskoning, Queen's University Belfast and St Andrew's Sea Mammal Research Unit will be in Strangford Lough to closely monitor SeaGen's operation and its interaction with marine life.

The UK Government's Department of Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform (BERR) has provided valuable support to the SeaGen project. Marine Current Turbines has received grant assistance from BERR for the main part of the project's development and has received a further £0.98million

investment from the government-funded Technology Strategy Board to cover the additional installation costs and independent performance validation.

Martin Wright, Managing Director of Marine Current Turbines said: "We have carried out extensive engineering and environmental studies to ensure the very best means of installation and operation. As long as the weather is good and there are no last minute operational issues to contend with, we should have SeaGen deployed by the end of March."

"There is global interest in SeaGen as it will be the first and largest commercial tidal stream device to be installed anywhere in the world, and so we can expect its installation to be a springboard for the further development of the marine energy industry in the UK and the island of Ireland. Looking ahead, MCT intends to manufacture and deploy a series of SeaGen devices in projects off Anglesey and on the Canadian seaboard within the next 2-4 years."

Photos of SeaGen at Harland & Wolff in Belfast are available from Taylor Keogh Communications.

Notes to Editors

1. Marine Current Turbines Ltd (www.marineturbines.com) is based in Bristol, England. The company was established in 2000 and its principal corporate shareholders include BankInvest, EDF Energy, Guernsey Electricity and Triodos Bank. With SeaFlow, the world's first offshore tidal stream device and SeaGen, the world's largest grid-connected tidal stream system, MCT is the "first mover" in the development of tidal turbines and has a significant global technical lead in this field.
2. At 1.2MW capacity, MCT's SeaGen is the world's largest tidal current device by a significant margin, with the unit able to generate clean and sustainable electricity for approximately 1000 homes. It is also a world first in being the prototype for commercial technology to be replicated on a large scale over the next few years.
3. In order to deploy SeaGen, Marine Current Turbines Ltd requires Northern Ireland's Environment & Heritage Service (EHS) to approve an amendment to its existing licence under the Food & Environmental Protection Act (FEPA). The amendment to the FEPA permission was open for public consultation until 28th January 2008.

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