

New radar systems to unlock offshore wind

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Upgrades to air defence radar systems will help unlock record breaking offshore wind capacity.

- New radar systems will help unlock 10 GW of offshore wind in UK waters, powering thousands of homes with clean, homegrown energy
- New technology secures coexistence of air defence and offshore wind – enabling government to deliver its clean power mission while protecting national security
- This comes as the government launches a consultation today to unlock up to 6 GW of onshore wind capacity near the Eskdalemuir seismic array in Scotland

Up to 10 GW of offshore wind capacity will be unlocked as a result of government upgrades to air defence radars.

Following close collaboration with industry, the government has bought specially designed air defence radars, which will mitigate against anomalies currently created by offshore wind farms.

These new radars, which will be installed from early 2029, will keep the British people safe by maintaining the UK's air defence capability. Radars like these are a crucial part of the UK's air defence, enabling the detection and identification of incursions and threats within UK airspace. They can also coexist with new offshore wind farms, without risk of interference – supporting both national and energy security.

This follows the biggest single procurement of offshore wind energy in British and European history, in which the government secured a record 8.4 GW of capacity – enough to power 12 million homes – at a price 40% lower than the cost of building and running a new gas power plant. By upgrading the radar systems, the government is ensuring that this record-breaking offshore capacity can move from contract to construction.

Energy Minister, Michael Shanks said:

This new radar technology will unlock a key barrier holding back offshore wind farms, so that we can deliver the clean homegrown power needed to protect families from volatile fossil fuel markets, while bolstering our national security.

Minister for Defence Readiness and Industry, Luke Pollard MP, said:

We're committed to investing in maintaining the UK's national security. These new air defence radars will enable the Royal Air Force to monitor for potential attacks from adversaries and help our Armed Forces protect the UK.

We're making defence an engine for growth across the country with the largest sustained defence spending increase since the Cold War, reaching 2.6% of GDP from 2027.

Benj Sykes, OWIC Board Sponsor for Aviation and Defence, and Vice President and UK Country Manager for Ørsted, said:

The Offshore Wind Industry Council welcomes the conclusion of procurement for a new air defence mitigation solution. This will ensure we are able to unlock over 10 gigawatts of wind energy by 2030, as well as billions of pounds of investment and thousands of jobs for the UK, without compromising our national defence. This is the culmination of a truly collaborative process over several years, with government and industry working in lockstep to deliver a solution that allows air defence and offshore wind to harmoniously co-exist.

This comes as the government today launches a consultation on unlocking up to 6 GW of onshore wind capacity near the Eskdalemuir seismic array in Scotland.

The proposals would block on onshore wind within 15km of the array, while easing planning rules in the surrounding area between 15km and 50km. This will enable Eskdalemuir seismic array to continue its operations, while supporting national and energy security.

Notes to editors

- Link to Eskdalemuir consultation: Eskdalemuir seismic array: revised approach to managing onshore wind turbine interference - GOV.UK

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-radar-systems-to-unlock-offshore-wind>