

New “robust, fair and transparent” regime of marine licensing fees

In consultation with industry and other partners, a Marine Licensing Fees Review has been undertaken for the first time since 2010 with the intention of developing an updated, suitable system for marine licensing fees and charges in Wales.

The new fees model introduces, for the first time, a tiered approach, with a mix of fixed fees and hourly charges, a change from the previous model of universal fixed fees. The new approach enables cost recovery to be achieved more accurately and fairly.

Application fees are set proportionately against the services being provided. Fixed fee bands of £600 (Band 1) and £1,920 (Band 2) will apply for what are considered small scale and routine activities, respectively. There will also be an hourly rate charge of £120 per hour (Band 3) for the most complex work packages. In these cases customers will be quoted costs upfront and kept regularly informed on costs.

The new fees have been set by the Welsh Government and will be charged by Natural Resources Wales (NRW), the marine licensing authority in Wales.

A wider provision of pre-application services will be provided by NRW, including dedicated and bespoke pre-application discussion and support, as well as the review of draft environmental statements. This is designed to achieve a better service to customers and realise efficiencies in the process.

NRW will implement a programme of continuous improvement for marine licensing and the fees will be reviewed regularly. The existing Marine Licensing Stakeholder Group will also hold regular meetings share information and get feedback from industry representatives.

The Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths said:

“I am pleased to confirm we are launching what we consider to be a robust, fair and transparent regime of marine licensing fees and associated charges.

“The marine industry is vitally important to Wales. We worked closely with them when reviewing the fees regime and I am sure they will join us and Natural Resources Wales in welcoming this new system.”