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**Extract of Document 1**

Notice to Mariners Vessels and General Safety Advice Barge Salvage - 05/08/2022

1. INTRODUCTION:

Mariners are advised that Bakkafrost Scotland (BFS) will be carrying out a barge salvage in the vicinity of the Portree fish farm, Isle of Skye. The proposed works are planned to start on 05/08/2022 and conclude by 15/09/2022, weather depending. The works will take place within the mooring area of the Portree and Portree Outer sites.

2. SAFETY:

Throughout operations, the vessels will be displaying the shapes and lights prescribed in the International Rules for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea (COLREGS) Rule 27 and will be displaying the prescribed shapes and lights when the vessels are restricted in their ability to manoeuvre. Furthermore, it is requested that anybody having knowledge of any potential objects submerged or moored on the seabed, within the survey areas, that could be damaged or form a hazard to the vessels and their equipment advises SSC of their position and nature. When operations commence a listening watch will be maintained when within the appropriate port authority area.

3. VESSELS:

Operations will be conducted by the following vessel. Contact can be made with the vessel using the details listed (redacted).

4. DISTRIBUTION LIST:

Contact Crown Estate Scotland, Kingfisher, United Kingdom Hydrographic Office, UKHO Navigation Warnings, Northern Lighthouse Board, Marine Scotland, Maritime and Coastguard Agency. Maritime and Coastguard Agency, RYA Scotland, RSPB, Highland Harbours Authority, Skye Harbour Master, The Scottish White Fish Producers Association Ltd, West Coast Regional Inshore Fisheries Group (RIFG), Mallaig and North-West Fishermen's Association & Scottish Creel Fishermen's Federation.

**Extract of Document 2**

Internal email – Police Scotland 17/08/2022

Text reads:

*1617 hours:*

*'ELG Meeting held today, 1500 hrs, chaired by Section 38(1)(b) from H&I council. Much more positive meeting today, generally a better set up having the partners chair the meeting.*

*Updates from various contractors was reassuring, and when combined with the risk assessment there was a much clearer picture of risk and worse case scenario.*

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*The good news is that even in that worse case scenario, risk outside the 500 m exclusion zone around the site is minimal. Furthermore, vast majority of that zone is water, not land.*

*Questions were asked by SFRS, NHS etc. to clarify risk to public and they were satisfied that risks are minimal and no action required at this stage.*

*However, work will continue and still time to raise issues or concerns as it is likely to be towards end of next week before venting starts. Diving work to connect pipes etc. likely to be Tuesday once equipment has arrived.*

*So, timescales have been pushed back and there is a proposal to have another ELG meeting on Tuesday next week as a final check for all before venting starts.*

*Comms was raised as well, but it was felt that there was no current requirement to make a "pro active" statement. The companies involved do however have "If asked" statements should there be questions about the activity.*

*Personally, this is perhaps the only aspect of the current plan which I would question, but at this stage the group didn't see a need for a public message, given the positive updates around risk and the reassurances provided by contractors.*

*Details re meeting next Tuesday will follow later this week.*

*Don't hesitate to give me a call to discuss further, but looking much more positive than it did on Monday.'*

*1648 hours:*

*'Very much appreciated, thank you again for your help with this today. Good to hear it was better structured and more reassuring this time.*

*I'll keep an ear out locally and if I start to hear any taking/ community concerns I'll contact Section 38(1)(b) and reassess comms.'*

### **Extract of Document 3**

Internal email – update to relevant officers of Police Scotland – Date 26/08/2022

Text reads:

*'You will have no doubt heard some rumblings on this however below is the details in relation to a fish food barge that sunk off the coast of Portree last November. No action required at this time.*

*'Background: 'The Seamate 450 fish feed barge supplying pellet food to the salmon farm in Portree Harbour, Isle of Skye sank during Storm Arwen in Q4 2021 with approximately 400t of feed on board. Briggs Marine Contractors (BMC) responded to a request from Scottish Salmon Company (SSC) shortly thereafter to secure the feed silos, of which there are six, with temporary hatch covers to control and prevent the emission of feed oils that are part of the feed pellets from being emitted to the environment.*

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*'In May 2022 BMC was awarded the contract to recover the barge. An ROV survey was conducted in June 2022 to aid the preparation of the salvage plan. Preliminary diving work started on site July 2022 with the aim of preparing the barge for recovery August 2022. During these works it was noticed that gas bubbles were escaping from the temporary hatch covers and from previously unidentified cracks in the concrete wall of the accommodation block on the starboard stern. These gas bubbles had not been identified during the ROV survey or during the early preparatory works.*

*'Hoses, pumps, and two IBCs were supplied to allow the relief of the unknown pressure within the silos as there was concern over the possibility of an uncontrolled release of the pent up gases and oils or structural harm to the barge as cracks were identified by the emission of the gases. During the relief of the gas and oils from the silos it became apparent that the gases were toxic in composition with Hydrogen Sulphide (H<sub>2</sub>S) and Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) detected by the onsite Draeger X-am 2500 4 gas. At the mouth of the IBC where the oil was being collected on the deck of the Dive Support Vessel (DSV) MV Forth Drummer concentrations of H<sub>2</sub>S were detected at 154ppm and away from the IBC on the back deck of Forth Drummer in concentrations between 30 and 80 ppm. Contact for the Professor in charge of overseeing the site currently is- (Redacted – Section 38(1)(b))*

*'There are detection alarms set up in and around Portree and any detection will be flagged to (Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)) who in turn if deems a major breakdown of the Silo's will contact 999. In this event SF&RS should be contacted and take lead as it will be deemed a chemical incident.*

*'(Section 38(1)(b)) shows if worst case scenario a 2km protect zone to be established. Depending on the way in which the wind is blowing at the time will depend on which sectors may be affected if at all and any action to be taken, i.e. wind is away from the harbour so no risk to public. Advice will come from SF&RS regarding stay indoors / evacuate any particular sector messaging highlighted in the attached however the likelihood would be for persons in any affected sectors to be told to stay indoors and close all windows and doors. Should we need to evacuate H.C will open Portree High School and establish a rest centre.*

*'Work to vent the Silo's is not due to take place until next week and there are divers at the barge daily to confirm no deterioration. The likelihood of any of the above occurring is extremely low however in the event it does you will have this email as guidance and for sharing with the duty Insp. Lochaber and Skye. ELG partners are all fully aware of this and if declared a major incident are aware of their responsibilities. Of note, the gas is denser than air so even in the event of a leak it is expected it would sit on the surface of the water and disperse eventually. Explosive element if all leaked at once would be a blast radius of around 55m so no risk to on land due to distance of salmon farm from Portree.'*

*Attachment - The map main sectors are set to 2km, with the second ring set at 200m, so that it matches the images provided by Scottish Salmon.*

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NB The tab in the excel spreadsheet for each sector which has property recorded as being within it was removed - Section 38(1)(b) applies.

**Extract of Document 4**

Internal email – media update from Police Scotland to Highland Council Date 31/08/2022

Text reads:

*1248 hours: From Police Scotland to Highland Council*

*For info, we have received a media request in relation to the barge off Portree and I am aware Highland Council received similar yesterday. We have replied with the following statement for your info:*

*Inspector Ross McCartney, of Portree Police Station, said: “We are aware of a leak of gas from a sunken vessel off Portree Harbour. Multi-agency discussions have taken place and plans are ongoing to safely recover the vessel. There is not considered to be any risk to the public as a result of the leak at this time.”*

*This is a slight tweak to the previous ‘If Asked’ statement.*

*1457 hours: From Highland Council to Police Scotland*

*‘(Section 38(1)(b)) was contacted yesterday afternoon for a response and I advised him of the holding response that Police Scotland had prepared – he notified our Comms and below is the statement they released: A Highland Council spokesperson said:*

*‘There is currently an exclusion zone in place in an area of Portree Harbour in connection with a salvage operation on a sunken salmon feed barge belonging to the Scottish Salmon Company. The owners of the barge are organising a salvage operation that includes the precaution of an exclusion zone to protect vessels and the public from the slight risk of toxic and explosive gases being emitted from the decomposing cargo in the barge in dangerous quantities. As the salvage operation progresses, monitoring of the atmosphere for gases in and around the exclusion zone will continue.’*

**Extract of Document 5**

Internal email –update from Bakkafröst to Police Scotland 15/09/2022

Text reads:

*0822 hours: From Bakkafröst to Police Scotland*

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*'I just wanted to send a quick update to you all regarding the barge recovery works. The divers and salvage teams expect to have the lifting arrangements attached to the barge and ready for the lift vessel by the end of the week. The dive vessel and teams will then demob from site. There has been an issue with the lifting vessel which has meant it cannot attend site as planned next week. We have therefore contracted a new vessel, the Taklift 4 which will be onsite 12<sup>th</sup> November with a view to being complete around 16<sup>th</sup> November (weather permitting). The lifting plan and RA for this hasn't changed as the 2 vessels are very similar. We are continuing to vent the barge to prevent high levels of h2s and will continue with this operation until the lift is completed.'*

1440 hours: From Bakkafröst to Police Scotland

*'Please see below statement from Bakkafröst Scotland.'*

*A Bakkafröst Scotland spokesperson said: "Bakkafröst Scotland can confirm the successful and safe completion of the initial recovery stage of venting gas from the submerged feeding barge at the Portree farm site, which was damaged during Storm 'Arwen' in November 2021.*

*'Throughout the recovery process we have been working closely with the relevant authorities including SEPA, Marine Coast Guards and Fire Brigade, alongside other experts, and we are now progressing to the next stage of the operation which will include lifting the barge.'*

*'An exclusion zone was in place as a precaution throughout the venting operation and a 'Notice to Mariners' was issued on 5 August to ensure all affected were advised of the incident.'*

*'The relevant authorities are being kept informed of progress and we will work with the recovery experts to ensure a safe conclusion to the operation.'*

*'Bakkafröst Scotland is fully committed to ensuring public safety in relation to all of its operations, vessels and equipment.'*

### **Extract of Document 6**

Email from Bakkafröst to Police Scotland - 03/12/2022

Text reads:

*'Just wanted to let you both know we have successfully recovered the barge intact. There are some operations to carry out removing the feed. I will let you know when we are clear of site.'*

### **Extract of Document 7**

Internal email – Bakkafröst to Police Scotland 12/12/2022

Text reads:

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*1211 hours: I'm sure you will be aware that we have successfully recovered the barge. We are now transporting the second load of contaminated water and feed to the AD plant in Fraserburgh. We had originally moved the barge to one of our old sites to moor her while we await the vessel returning to remove the last of the feed waste and had repositioned the matador for that operation. Unfortunately the remaining feed is in a more liquid form than we had originally thought and as such it was not safe to moor the vessel. The matador has repositioned near Kishorn with the barge still in the hooks. This was due to incoming weather. The swell predictions coming in now mean that she cannot safely hold onto the barge and remain safe herself. We have looked at the following options as the saga will not return before Friday due to the offloading.*

- 1. Moor the barge at anchorage - This is not an option due to the free surface effect the remaining waste has on the stability and the incoming weather.*
- 2. Put the barge quay side – Again this is not an option due to the stability*
- 3. Beach the barge and moor so she sits on seabed but does not re submerge – This is the option we are currently looking at and we are surveying an area close to Kishorn for this purpose.*

*Once beached she will remain there until the saga returns and removes the remaining waste once that is complete the barge will begin to refloat at high tide. Once stable we will move the barge of the area and prepare her for tow.*

*In terms of the H<sub>2</sub>s gas this has significantly reduced with the operations, our onsite marine chemist has advised me yesterday that full BA gear is no longer required on the deck of the barge itself only if anyone is entering the confined space. Where the remaining waste is present once all of this is removed the h<sub>2</sub>s should dissipate completely.*

*Our priority is the safety of the people and the environment.*

*Internal email – Bakkafröst to Police Scotland 13/12/2022*

*Text reads:*

*0849 hours: I'm pleased to say that the weather forecast has improved for the area and the swell has greatly reduced. The barge will remain in the Matador 3 Hooks in Loch Carron for the time being. We are will put the plan to beach her as a contingency for now. I will keep you updated if the situation changes.*

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