



**Strategic Environmental Assessment for Further Onshore Oil and Gas Licensing**

DECC

Water UK response

Date of submission: 28 March 2014

Water UK is the industry association that represents UK statutory water supply and wastewater companies at national and European level. We are funded by our members to influence public policy and opinion to ensure a strong water industry in the interests of all stakeholders. The focus on policy means: identifying gaps or inadequacies; working with members and stakeholders to develop alternatives; and helping deliver the benefits as new approaches are implemented.

**Question 1**

*Do you think that the Environmental Report has identified the significant environmental effects of the activities that could follow the licensing round? If not, what other significant effects do you think we have missed, and why?*

Yes, the Environmental report rightly considers water and waste water issues as major topics within the assessment and gives adequate consideration to these in the remaining sections.

**Question 2**

*Do you agree with the conclusions of the Environmental Report and the recommendations for avoiding, reducing or off-setting the significant effects of the activities that could follow the licensing round? If not, what do you think should be the key recommendations and why?*

Yes, the focus on water use on encouraging operators to promote water recycling will reduce the overall burden of shale gas extraction on water resources.

On waste water and removal and treatment of flowback and produced water we consider that this is the largest challenge being faced at the moment and support the commitment to reduce the need for offsite treatment.

### Question 3

*Do you agree with the proposed arrangements for monitoring the significant effects of the activities that could follow the licensing round, as detailed in the Environmental Report? If not, what measures do you propose?*

The need for baseline monitoring is a key part of the Memorandum of Understanding between Water UK and UKOOG. This will inform risk assessments and allow decisions to be made based on accurate information. On-going monitoring once operations are underway is critical and thresholds should be adopted indicating where actions should be taken. Monitoring should be risk based rather than all inclusive but should include an agreed set of water quality parameters as well as seismic and gas measures.