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MORAY EAST OFFSHORE WINDFARM OFFSHORE EXPORT CABLES SECTION 1 TRAWL SWEEP WITHDRAWN FOUL CERTIFICATE

In September 2021 MV "Sardonyx II" BF206 carried out overtrawlability trials at designated areas along the Moray East Offshore Windfarm Offshore Export Cable Route. During a crossing at the inshore section of the route using squid fishing gear, a peak tension of 7956kg was encountered and there was a reduction in gear spread with the vessel at position **57° 41.962'N 002° 33.078'W**. On recovering the gear a small section of netting was found to be damaged with a wire rope broken.

Moray East have conducted investigations into the cause of the issue including a side scan sonar and bathymetric survey of the below area, carried out in September 2022.

Vertex	lat_dmm	lon_dmm
North	57° 42.033'N	002° 33.188'W
East	57° 42.083'N	002° 32.871'W
South	57° 41.905'N	002° 32.773'W
West	57° 41.855'N	002° 33.089'W

Several boulders were found to be in the vicinity with the closest 50 metres SE of the trawled area. No other obstructions were identified. The high tension and reduction in fishing gear spread experienced during the overtrawlability trials is therefore presumed to have been caused by a natural obstruction.

The area is therefore considered safe to allow normal fishing operations to proceed. Caution should always be exercised when trawling in the vicinity of cables.

Signed for on behalf of SFF Services Limited

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Andrew Innes, Industry Advisor