

Technical Guidance for MAC Applications in the Maritime Area under the Maritime Area Planning Act (MAPA)

This guidance is issued to support an applicant in preparing a valid MAC application for a Maritime Usage. It is important to note that the content of the application and supporting documentation is for the applicant to determine in conjunction with their own suitably qualified expert advisers and, where necessary, following consultation with the relevant responsible government department and agencies.

1. Mapping

Maritime Area. The limit of the Maritime Area at its landward extent is defined by the High Water line of ordinary or medium tides which is the High Water Mark (HWM) as defined by the Chief Boundary Surveyor (CBS). This is normally the HWM as shown on the OSI Historic 1888-1913 25 Inch mapping, or occasionally as shown on the 6 Inch mapping with modern updates defined by the CBS through Maritime Boundary Orders. A digitised representation of the HWM as defined by the CBS is available at <https://arcg.is/1reSbv> but this is always subject to confirmation from the original source. The limit of the Maritime Area to seaward is the outer limit of the Continental Shelf and the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is available at <https://data.gov.ie/dataset/national-marine-planning-framework-area>

Proposed MAC Map. The MAC map should be clearly titled “Proposed MAC Map” and numbered sequentially if more than one map is required. The MAC area should be outlined red and labelled “Area A, XXha”, XX being the area in hectares (m² or km² if more appropriate). If more than one area is shown they should be labelled similarly and in alphabetic order. For geo-referencing purposes labelled coordinate intersects should be shown **in all four corners** of the map. The map should preferably be at A3 size at an appropriate and suitable scale to accurately describe the area. The map must include at least one townland or place name to enable the location to be reasonably determined by a person viewing the map. The map should be prepared by a suitably qualified person and should have standard details such as name and qualification of the person who prepared it, drawing number, revision, date, projection and MARA file reference if available.

Projection for Mapping. For applications entirely within the nearshore (up to 3NM from the HWM) applicants have the option of submitting the map(s) in Irish Transvers Mercator (ITM) or ETRS1989 UTM Zone 28N, 29N or 30N as relevant. For all applications in the Outer Maritime Area (beyond 3NM) the map(s) shall be in ETRS1989 UTM Zone 28N, 29N, 30N etc. as relevant. For ITM the coordinate intersects shall be Easting and Northing in Meters (whole numbers) and for ETRS 1989 the Grid Coordinate Intersects shall be in the relevant coordinate system Easting and Northing in Meters (whole numbers).

Background Mapping.

For applications entirely within the nearshore applicants can use an OSI map where the HWM shown is confirmed by the applicant to be the same as the HWM as defined by the CBS or where the HWM is not contiguous, adjacent or relevant to MAC area. For all applications in the Outer Maritime Area the appropriate navigation chart should be used as the background mapping.

Where a navigation chart or similar is used as the background mapping due to the scale of the map the boundary adjoining or abutting the HWM is not clearly defined the following note should be clearly displayed on the MAC map “Where the MAC area adjoins or abuts the land the High Water Mark as defined by the Chief Boundary Surveyor is the boundary of the MAC area.”

The coordinates of the vertices of the MAC area should not be shown on the MAC map. The proposed structures, activity or development should not be shown on the MAC map.

GIS data files with Maritime Usage Licence applications.

Please submit the following with all Maritime Area Consent (MAC) applications. MAC Area polygon in Shapefile format. For applications entirely within the Nearshore (up to 3NM from the HWM) the coordinate reference system can Irish Transverse Mercator (ITM) (EPSG:2157) or ETRS 1989 (EPSG:4258). For applications in the Outer Maritime Area the coordinate reference system shall be ETRS 1989 (EPSG:4258) or ETRS1989 UTM Zone 28N (EPSG:25828), 29N (EPSG:25829) or 30N (EPSG:25830) as relevant. The Shapefile's filename shall be the File Reference Number as assigned by MARA i.e. MAC#####. The polygon shall have an attribute with same the File Reference Number (Attribute Field: File_R_N). MACs are for areas only i.e. MAC areas for linear or point features must be buffered to create a polygon to match the Maritime Usages footprint. For MAC applications with multiple areas a single shapefile with a polygon for each area should be submitted.

Vector Check List

File Name: MAC##### as assigned by MARA.

File Format: Shapefile format please submit .shp, .shx, .dbf and .prj

Feature Type: polygons

Coordinate System: ITM, ETRS 1989 or Relevant ETRS1989 UTM Zone projection for nearshore and ETRS 1989 or Relevant ETRS1989 UTM Zone projection for Outer Maritime Area

Attribute Field: "File_R_N" e.g. MAC##### as assigned by MARA.

Attribute Field: "Site_R_N" e.g. A, B, C etc.

Submission Format

The MAC area(s) shapefile and associated files should be submitted in a single zip file named GIS_File_MAC#####.zip again MAC##### being the File Reference Number as assigned by MARA.

2. Statement of Scope and Nature of the Maritime Usage

The Scope and Nature of the Maritime Usage to be undertaken must be fully, unambiguously and accurately described at Part 2 of the application form and should detail any works or activities in the Maritime Area required or necessary, as relevant, to undertake, construct, complete, commission, operate and maintain the proposed usage.

3. Preliminary Programme of Works

A preliminary programme of works for the usage which details as a minimum the start dates, end dates and duration of each of the significant element of the usage should be included.

4. Statement of Consistency - National Marine Planning Framework

The application should be accompanied by a statement demonstrating how the project is consistent with the National Marine Planning Framework. A copy of the framework can be download here. <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/60e57-national-marine-planning-framework/>

5. Public Interest

In determining a MAC application Mara shall have regard to whether the maritime usage proposed is in the public interest. The Maritime Area is a finite and valuable resource and amenity, it is important that each usage is fully assessed to ensure, that if consented to, it is a sustainable and proper use of that resource. Part 3 of the application form is available to the applicant to describe how the proposed project may serve, or may otherwise impact, areas of public interest. In Part 3 the applicant should demonstrate how and if significant public use or benefit to the public is resultant from the proposed usage.