

Common Data Access Ltd (CDAL) under the Digital Energy Atlas and Library (DEAL) project has subsequently addressed this deficiency.

DEAL promotes and facilitates access to data and information relevant to the offshore exploration and production of hydrocarbons on the UKCS. DEAL is owned by CDAL, a subsidiary of the United Kingdom Offshore Operators Association (UKOOA). DEAL has taken the seismic survey information provided by DTI and has updated and verified the data by contacting the operators of past seismic surveys. DEAL has therefore compiled as full a record as possible of past seismic survey activity on the UKCS from 1964.

The JNCC holds records taken by Marine Mammal Observers (MMO) on board seismic vessels, and plans to compare a sample of the MMO data with the DTI/DEAL data to determine whether the DEAL dataset has significant omissions.

Developing a Monitoring System

The JNCC is currently working with CDAL to determine the best way to evaluate the data. CDAL has agreed to review the seismic attributes used by DEAL for 2D and 3D seismic surveys, and to provide advice on the best way to compile a report of seismic activity per quadrant per month since January 1997. It is proposed that the report will include all seismic surveys undertaken using airguns with a capacity of greater than 200 cu inches, and it is hoped that the report will be completed by the end of July 2002.

The report will include both a numerical and a cumulative assessment of the extent of seismic survey activity. For example there were 6 km shot in quadrant 20 in January 1997 and 60km shot in quadrant 20 in the whole of 1997. CDA hopes that it will be possible for the user to interrogate the data for different areas and different time periods. It is also hoped that the data can be displayed graphically on a map of the UKCS, to provide a clear pictorial representation of where seismic activity has taken place during a specified time period, and that the information will be freely available through a 'front end' on the DEAL web-site. The type of information that is of interest to ASCOBANS will also be useful to the DTI and oil and gas operators. Under the new consenting procedure, operators are required to assess the cumulative impacts of their planned surveys and it is envisaged that the information will be useful when preparing such assessments.

The JNCC will use the information provided by DEAL, plus existing MMO data, to produce a report for ASCOBANS by the autumn of 2002.

Recommendations to other ASCOBANS members

- The JNCC would recommend that, as soon as possible, parties and range states should encourage the use of a 'close out' form after every seismic survey, which should include the information given in Table 1.
- The JNCC would recommend that parties and range states should attempt to collate past seismic survey data, using the format given in Table 1.

For further background information on the above please visit:

JNCC - <http://www.jncc.gov.uk> (includes Marine Mammal Observers reports 1996 - 1999)

DEAL & CDA - <http://www.ukdeal.co.uk/>

DTI - <http://www.og.dti.gov.uk>