What goes into a design notification?

A design notification must contain certain details of the proposed licence infrastructure, and the design process as specified in the Offshore Electricity Infrastructure Regulations 2022.

The design notification provided to the OIR must include or describe:

- a plan of the licence area showing the intended locations and layout of the licence infrastructure
- the seabed and subsoil conditions at the intended locations of the licence infrastructure
- the meteorological and oceanographic conditions to which the licence infrastructure may foreseeably be subject
- the operation and maintenance strategy for the planned licence infrastructure
- how the licence infrastructure will be decommissioned and removed at the end of its operational life
- any significant risks or hazards that may arise from the locations, design, construction, operation, maintenance, decommissioning, or removal of the licence infrastructure and the proposed control measures to deal with those hazards and risks
- the process used to select the design of the licence infrastructure, including design philosophy and standards that are to be used during the design process and a summary of any other design options that were considered and why they were rejected.

Interactions with primary environmental approvals under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*

The intention is not to duplicate the EPBC Act approvals process through the design notification process.

Potential environmental impacts will inform design and concept selection, and options analysis processes must remain consistent and compatible with outcomes of environmental assessment and approvals processes.

Consultation when preparing a design notification

Project design and layout should be informed through consultation with existing marine users and workers or workforce representative bodies, and with government agencies who have roles and responsibilities in the Commonwealth offshore area.

In making design decisions, licence holders should consider factors including but not limited to search and rescue, fisheries access, nature inclusive design and risks to the safety of workers and fishing vessel operators.



Offshore Infrastructure Regulator

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Offshore Infrastructure Regulator

Design notifications for offshore renewables



The Offshore Infrastructure Regulator has responsibility for overseeing work health and safety, infrastructure integrity and environmental management for offshore infrastructure activities in the Commonwealth offshore area.

What is a design notification?

The intent of the design notification process under the Offshore Electricity Infrastructure framework is to allow a licence holder to receive feedback from the Offshore Infrastructure Regulator (OIR) at the preliminary stages of project design, prior to the detailed engineering phase for an offshore infrastructure project.

A design notification must demonstrate that the design of the infrastructure will incorporate measures to:

- Eliminate or reduce risks to the health and safety of workers so far as is reasonably practicable during construction, operation, maintenance, decommissioning, and removal.
- Reflect the specific environmental conditions into which the infrastructure is proposed to be placed and provide necessary environmental protections.
- Ensure the integrity of the infrastructure across the entire project life, from construction to removal.

As illustrated in Figure 1, identification and mitigation of risks during the early planning and design stages is easier to incorporate and will often have a lower cost impact.

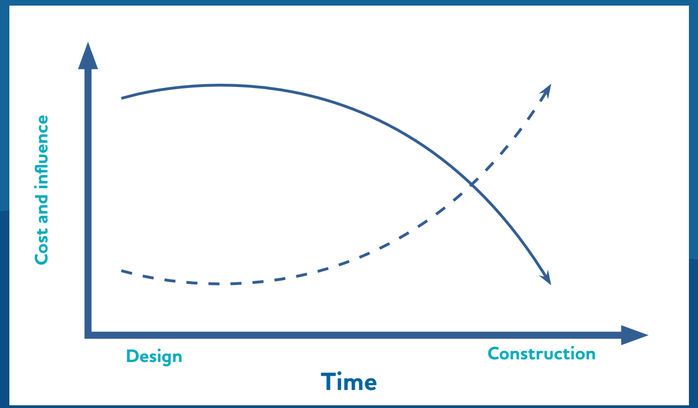


Figure 1– Effect of early identification and mitigation of risks



Requirements for licence holders

There are some differences between licence types as to when a design notification must be provided to the OIR:

For a commercial licence	For a transmission and infrastructure licence – feasibility activities	For a transmission and infrastructure licence – construction and operations activities
A design notification must be provided to the OIR for review before applying for approval of a management plan.	No design notification is required before applying for approval of a management plan.	A design notification must be provided to the OIR before applying for approval of a management plan.

A design notification can also be voluntarily provided by a holder of a feasibility licence or research and demonstration licence to obtain feedback from the OIR on project design.

How is a design notification provided to the OIR?

Licence holders can provide a design notification to the OIR for review via the online application portal on the OIR website **oir.gov.au**

What does the OIR do with a design notification?

It is important to note that the OIR does not approve or refuse to approve the design notification.

The OIR instead provides written feedback to the licence holder on the design notification.

Only after feedback from the OIR is received can a licence holder make their initial application for management plan approval for a proposed commercial licence or a transmission and infrastructure licence that involves construction or installation of licence infrastructure.

Licence holders should consider the OIR's feedback throughout the subsequent design stages of the offshore infrastructure project.

The licence holder must describe in the management plan how the OIR's feedback on the design notification has been addressed. If the way the project is being carried out is not broadly consistent with what was described in the design notification, the management plan must contain a description of how and why the project has changed.

Licence holders may develop an offshore infrastructure project across multiple licences or licence types. In this circumstance the licence holder may wish to submit a single design notification to cover multiple management plans and licences.

Refer to Figure 2 for a simplified overview of the design notification regulatory process.

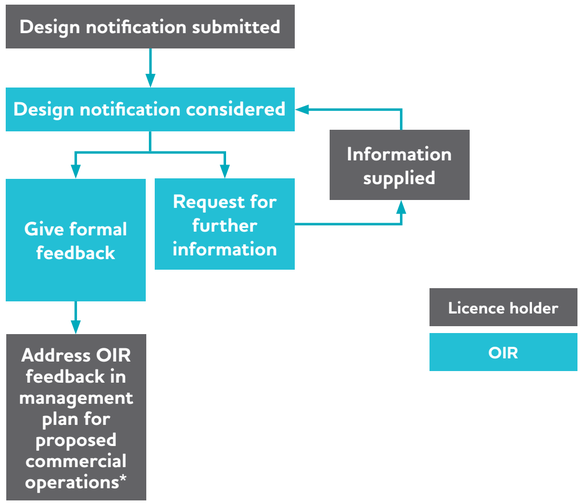


Figure 2 – Simplified overview of the design notification regulatory process
**applies to commercial and transmission and infrastructure licences*