

Licensing Changes For Navigational Dredging Highlighted

The Marine Management Organisation is encouraging people and organisations carrying out navigational dredging to prepare for legislative changes affecting the activity from April 2014.

Under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCAA) anyone wanting to carry out navigational dredging activities in English seas and the tidal areas of rivers from 6 April 2014 may be required to apply in advance for consent from the Marine Management Organisation (MMO).

Navigational dredging was made a licensable activity by the Government as part of the MCAA, however when the Act came into effect in 2011 it allowed a period of transition during which low-risk dredging operations did not require a marine licence. This ends on 6 April 2014 when the activity will become regulated by the MMO.

In preparation of the changes the MMO has been working with its advisors and industry representatives to streamline the application process and reduce the financial and administrative burden as far as possible. An accelerated application process is being put in place, on which a decision may be made within 20 working days. Applications are however encouraged in advance of the deadline and can be made now.

While many larger businesses and organisations may already be aware of the licence requirement through the MMO's early work with the industry consultation group, there may be many smaller berth and marina owners who are not. It is anticipated up to 400 navigational dredging projects across England may be affected by the changes.

Further information has been added to the [dredging page](#) in the marine licensing section of the MMO's website.