
Earraghail Renewable Energy Development
on behalf of ScottishPower Renewables
Appendix 9.3: Collision Risk Modelling Analysis



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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 This Technical Appendix has been prepared to accompany **Chapter 9** of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report for ScottishPower Renewables' (SPR) Earraghail Renewable Energy Development (hereafter 'the proposed Development').
- 1.1.2 It presents the details and result of Collision Risk Modelling (CRM) Analysis, completed to inform the assessment of the proposed Development.
- 1.1.3 This Technical Appendix is supplementary to **Appendix 9.1** in Volume 4 of the EIA Report. Only common bird species names are referred to within this Appendix. **Appendix 9.1** of the EIAR provides a summary of all bird species referred to herein. Both common and species names, together with a summary of their conservation status as relevant is provided.

2 OVERVIEW OF FLIGHT ACTIVITY DATA

2.1.1 The following data has been used for the purposes of CRM Analysis:

- Vantage Point (VP) Flight Activity Survey Data:
 - December 2020 to November 2021 (Year 2).

2.1.2 Given the shortcomings of the VP viewshed coverage in Year 1 as discussed during consultation with NatureScot (see **Chapter 9** for further details) CRM Analysis was not undertaken on Year 1 survey data.

2.2 VP Flight Activity Data

2.2.1 Target species flight activity data has been obtained from a total of four VP locations between December 2020 and November 2021 and for which estimated viewshed visible areas are illustrated on **Figure 9.3b** and summarised in **Table 2.1**. Visible areas have been calculated using an observer height of 1 m and a 20 m vertical offset above the ground.

2.2.2 **Table 2.1** also presents the location of the VPs and visible area of each viewshed, which falls within the "wind farm area" constructed using a 290 m turbine buffer for the purposes of collision risk analysis. The total within the wind farm area is 335.33 ha.

2.2.3 It should be noted that VP surveys were undertaken on the basis of a preliminary development area, in the absence of known turbine locations. As such for the purposes of CRM Analysis, VP2 does not provide visual coverage of the wind farm area and therefore flight activity recorded from this VP location has been omitted.

2.2.4 VP7 and VP11 were typically surveyed simultaneously, and given there was slight overlap between the two VP viewsheds, the overlap area was included in the VP11 visible area and not VP7, to avoid a replicated surveyed area being regarded in two viewshed's visible area. No target species were recorded in the overlap area during these surveys from VP7.

Table 2.1: VP locations and viewshed visible areas

VP	Grid Reference	Visible Area (ha) – 290 m
2	NR 87592 65315	0
3b	NR 90045 61699	141.7
7	NR 89175 61367	117.58

11	NR 87863 63288	80.2
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2.2.5 Survey effort completed at each VP location between December 2020 and November 2021 is summarised in **Table 2.2**. Further details of VP flight activity surveys are provided in **Appendix 9.1**.

Table 3.2: VP flight activity survey effort summary

VP	2020	2021											Year 2 Total
	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	
2	6	6	12	6	9	12	6	9	6	6	9	6	93
3b	6	6	12	6	12	9	9	6	6	6	9	6	93
7	6	6	12	6	12	9	9	6	6	6	9	6	93
11	6	6	6	12	12	12	6	6	6	6	9	6	93

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1.1 Where sufficient “at collision risk” flight activity has allowed, collision risk mortality as a result of birds colliding with rotor blades has been assessed using CRM as detailed in Band *et al.* (2007¹).

3.1.2 As defined within guidance (SNH, 2000²) the Collision Risk Window (CRW) is 'equal to the width of the wind farm across the general flight direction of the birds, and of height equal to the maximum height of the highest turbine'. In accordance with this guidance the turbine specification for the proposed Development i.e. up to 180 m tip height and up to 155 m blade diameter, would require a minimum CRW of 155 m diameter and 25-180 m height.

3.1.3 For the purposes of a precautionary assessment and in line with general industry standards, "at collision risk" flight activity (i.e. that within the CRW) is defined as that recorded at collision risk height (between 25-180 m) and within 290 m of proposed turbine locations for all target species. As such this adopts a precautionary approach in relation to the identification of "at collision risk" flights and is considered to be in line with good practice.

3.1.4 Band *et al.* (2007) details two CRMs; one model for directional flights, and another for non-directional (or space-filling) flights. The former model is based upon the total number of birds passing through the CRW, whereas the non-directional model is based upon the total time a bird is recorded within the CRW volume. Target species have therefore been assigned to a single model based on the nature of flight activity data obtained during VP surveys.

3.1.5 Collision risk mortality has subsequently been calculated in three stages:

- Directional: calculating the total number of birds recorded to pass through the CRW. Non-directional: estimating the time an individual bird spent passing through the CRW volume.
- Estimating the probability that a bird will be struck by a rotor blade when passing through the area swept by the rotors.
- Applying an 'avoidance rate', whereby it is assumed that most birds will take action to avoid collision.

¹ Band, W., Madders, M. and Whitfield, D.P. (2007) Developing field and analytical methods to assess avian collision risk at windfarms. In De Lucas, M., Janss, G. and Ferrer, M. (eds) 'Birds and Wind Power'.

² SNH (2000) Windfarms and Birds: Calculating a theoretical collision risk assuming no avoiding action. SNH, Inverness.

3.2 “At Collision Risk” Flight Activity

3.2.1 “At collision risk” flight activity recorded during VP flight activity surveys is summarised in **Tables 3.1** (Year 2). The total number of flights, total number of birds and total time spent at collision risk height is presented.

3.2.2 **Annex 1** provides further details of target species “at collision risk” flight activity.

Table 3.1: “At collision risk” flight activity – Year 2 (December 2020 – November 2021)

Species	Total No. of Flights	Total No. of Birds	Total Time at Collision Risk Height (s)
Greylag goose	1	2	19
Hen harrier	7	7	866
Golden eagle	44	46	11,421
White-tailed eagle	1	1	180
Merlin	1	1	30
Honey buzzard	2	2	358

3.3 CRM Parameters

3.3.1 CRM parameters for the purposes of CRM Analysis are presented in **Tables 3.3** and **3.4**.

3.3.2 CRM Analysis has only been undertaken for golden eagle and hen harrier. No other species had more than two “at collision risk” flights and/or comprised large flocks. In addition, overall flight activity for these species was considered to be very infrequent. As such, annual collision risk mortality can reasonably be predicted to be very small and inconsequential at any population level.

Table 3.3: Turbine parameters

Parameter	Value	Unit
No. of rotors	13	meters
No. of blades	3	meters
Height to tip	180	meters
Hub height	102.5	meters
Rotor diameter	155	meters
Rotor radius	77.5	meters
Max cord	4	meters
Pitch	15	degrees
Rotation period	6.43 ³	Seconds
Downtime	15	%

³ Based upon a maximum rotational speed of 11.20 r.p.m taken from a Siemens SWT-DD-142 3.5-4.1MW, with a conservative operating speed estimate derived as 20% of the maximum. <https://www.siemensgamesa.com/en-int/-/media/siemensgamesa/downloads/en/products-and-services/archive/swt-dd-142.pdf> (Accessed 17th December 2021).

Table 3.4: Target species parameters

As per Proven & Whitfield (2007⁴) and Robinson (2005⁵), unless where otherwise specified.

Species	Length	Wingspan	Flight Speed	Collision Probability ⁶	Avoidance Rate ⁷	Occupancy
Golden eagle	0.82	2.12	15.0	6.2	99%	All year
Hen harrier	0.48	1.10	11.5	5.5	99%	All year

3.4 Other Model Input

3.4.1 Other inputs used for CRM Analysis were:

- Wind farm area (290 m): 335.33 ha
- Assumed daylight flying hours (potential): 4473.8⁸ (Year Round Occupancy)
- Down-time: 15 %

3.5 Collision Probability Analysis

3.5.1 Annex 2 presents collision probability calculations for species listed within Table 3.4.

4 RESULTS

4.1.1 Table 3.5 summarises the results of CRM Analysis for golden eagle and hen harrier for Year 2, with the full results shown in Annex 3.

Table 3.5: CRM Analysis results

Species	Annual Mortality	40 Year Mortality	Year for 1 Death
Golden eagle	0.393	15.72	2.54
Hen harrier	0.057	2.27	17.66

⁴ Provan, S. & Whitfield, S. (2007) Avian flight speeds and biometrics for use in collision risk modelling. Report to SNH from Natural Research.

⁵ Robinson, R.A. (2005) BirdFacts: profiles of birds occurring in Britain & Ireland. BTO, Thetford (<http://www.bto.org/birdfacts>, Accessed 1st December 2021)

⁶ See Annex 2.

⁷ SNH (2018). Avoidance rates for the onshore SNH wind farm collision risk model. September 2018, v2.

⁸ Potentially active hours for golden eagle and hen harrier has been calculated using a latitude of 55.808517 as per Forsythe, W. C., Rykiel, Jr., E. J., Stahl, R. S., Wu, H and Schoolfield, R. M. (1995). A Model Comparison for Daylength as a Function of Latitude and Day of the Year. *Ecological modelling*, **80**, pp. 87-95. Hours exclude 29th February as field surveys were not undertaken over a leap year.

ANNEX 1 – “AT COLLISION RISK” FLIGHT ACTIVITY

Table A1-1 present “at collision risk” flight activity for target species recorded between December 2020 and November 2021 (Year 2); the number of birds, flight duration (secs) and time spent (secs) below (HT1), at (HT2 & HT3) and above (HT4) collision risk height is presented.

Table A1-1: Target species “at collision risk” flight activity (Wind Farm Area: 290 m).

HT1 (0 - 20 m); HT2 (20 - 150 m); HT3 (150 - 200 m) & HT4 (>200 m).

Date	VP	Species	No. of Birds	Start Time	Flight Duration (s)	Time Spent (s)			
						HT1	HT2	HT3	HT4
10/02/2021	7	Golden eagle	1	09:41	33	0	33	0	0
21/02/2021	3	Golden eagle	1	10:38	174	0	174	0	0
22/02/2021	11	Hen harrier	1	14:12	45	15	30	0	0
25/02/2021	7	Golden eagle	1	12:06	143	8	135	0	0
25/02/2021	7	Golden eagle	1	13:49	490	45	280	165	0
25/02/2021	7	Golden eagle	1	11:49	418	0	328	90	0
25/02/2021	7	Golden eagle	1	12:08	1942	0	817	555	570
25/02/2021	7	Golden eagle	1	12:08	1693	0	523	495	675
25/02/2021	7	Golden eagle	1	13:51	386	0	161	225	0
01/03/2021	11	Hen harrier	1	13:01	120	45	75	0	0
01/03/2021	11	Hen harrier	1	13:42	90	60	30	0	0
10/03/2021	3	Golden eagle	1	10:35	216	45	156	15	0
10/03/2021	3	Hen harrier	1	11:09	372	90	282	0	0
10/03/2021	3	Golden eagle	1	11:16	305	0	305	0	0
12/03/2021	7	Golden eagle	1	10:58	76	45	31	0	0
12/03/2021	7	Golden eagle	1	12:46	365	0	140	120	105
12/03/2021	7	Golden eagle	1	09:02	374	0	254	120	0

Date	VP	Species	No. of Birds	Start Time	Flight Duration (s)	Time Spent (s)			
						HT1	HT2	HT3	HT4
12/03/2021	7	Golden eagle	1	10:54	735	30	255	375	75
12/03/2021	7	Golden eagle	1	12:16	186	45	141	0	0
12/03/2021	7	Golden eagle	1	13:03	515	0	20	45	450
12/03/2021	7	Golden eagle	1	12:23	190	15	145	30	0
07/04/2021	3	Golden eagle	1	13:45	330	0	90	150	90
19/04/2021	3	Golden eagle	1	08:26	181	31	150	0	0
21/04/2021	7	Merlin	1	17:20	94	64	30	0	0
28/04/2021	7	Hen harrier	1	20:08	211	45	166	0	0
28/04/2021	7	Hen harrier	1	20:08	223	45	178	0	0
25/05/2021	11	Golden eagle	1	11:31	35	0	35	0	0
30/05/2021	11	Golden eagle	1	16:14	214	0	124	90	0
30/05/2021	11	Greylag goose	2	20:44	19	0	19	0	0
08/06/2021	7	Golden eagle	1	15:08	294	30	264	0	0
16/06/2021	3	Golden eagle	1	14:51	65	0	65	0	0
16/06/2021	3	Golden eagle	1	14:51	1560	0	510	120	840
17/06/2021	7	Golden eagle	1	13:36	278	0	135	60	83
20/07/2021	3	Golden eagle	1	16:11	468	0	105	75	288
10/08/2021	2	Honey buzzard	1	15:14	235	45	190	0	0
10/08/2021	3	Golden eagle	1	14:37	174	0	174	0	0
10/08/2021	3	Golden eagle	1	14:59	510	0	120	120	270
10/08/2021	3	Golden eagle	1	12:29	211	0	46	105	60
10/08/2021	3	Golden eagle	1	13:55	307	0	112	150	45

Date	VP	Species	No. of Birds	Start Time	Flight Duration (s)	Time Spent (s)			
						HT1	HT2	HT3	HT4
10/08/2021	3	Honey buzzard	1	15:08	168	0	168	0	0
11/08/2021	7	Golden eagle	1	16:16	400	45	120	205	30
27/09/2021	7	Golden eagle	1	18:31	130	40	90	0	0
28/09/2021	3	Golden eagle	1	10:32	40	15	25	0	0
04/10/2021	7	White-tailed eagle	1	14:42	204	24	150	30	0
05/10/2021	3	Golden eagle	1	11:36	192	27	165	0	0
05/10/2021	3	Golden eagle	1	14:36	149	0	149	0	0
05/10/2021	3	Golden eagle	1	10:46	377	2	195	90	90
05/10/2021	3	Golden eagle	1	15:49	73	15	58	0	0
05/10/2021	3	Golden eagle	1	16:12	347	2	75	90	180
05/10/2021	3	Golden eagle	2	15:50	1124	7	120	210	225
05/10/2021	3	Golden eagle	1	16:27	333	33	300	0	0
09/11/2021	3	Hen harrier	1	11:40	128	23	105	0	0
09/11/2021	3	Golden eagle	2	10:29	183	0	123	60	0
09/11/2021	3	Golden eagle	1	10:36	284	0	104	120	60
10/11/2021	7	Golden eagle	1	13:00	153	78	75	0	0
10/11/2021	11	Golden eagle	1	13:03	114	0	114	0	0

ANNEX 2 – COLLISION PROBABILITY CALCULATIONS

Golden eagle

CALCULATION OF COLLISION RISK FOR BIRD PASSING THROUGH ROTOR AREA												
K: [1D or [3D] (0 or 1)	1		Calculation of alpha and p(collision) as a function of radius									
No. Blades	3						Upwind:			Downwind:		
Max Chord	4	m	r/R	c/C	a	collide		contribution	collide		contribution	
Pitch (degrees)	15		radius	chord	alpha	length	p (collision)	from radius r	length	p (collision)	from radius r	
Bird Length	0.82	m	0.025	0.575	7.92	34.99	1.00	0.00125	33.80	1.00	0.00125	
Wingspan	2.12	m	0.075	0.575	2.64	12.06	0.38	0.00281	10.87	0.34	0.00254	
F: Flapping (0) or gliding (+1)	0		0.125	0.702	1.58	8.38	0.26	0.00326	6.93	0.22	0.00269	
			0.175	0.860	1.13	7.05	0.22	0.00384	5.27	0.16	0.00287	
Bird speed	15	m/sec	0.225	0.994	0.88	6.28	0.20	0.00439	4.22	0.13	0.00295	
Rotor Diam	155	m	0.275	0.947	0.72	5.14	0.16	0.00440	3.18	0.10	0.00272	
Rotation Period	6.43	sec	0.325	0.899	0.61	4.34	0.13	0.00439	2.48	0.08	0.00251	
			0.375	0.851	0.53	3.74	0.12	0.00436	1.98	0.06	0.00230	
			0.425	0.804	0.47	3.27	0.10	0.00432	1.60	0.05	0.00212	
			0.475	0.756	0.42	2.88	0.09	0.00426	1.32	0.04	0.00195	
Bird aspect ratio: b	0.39		0.525	0.708	0.38	2.59	0.08	0.00422	1.12	0.03	0.00183	
			0.575	0.660	0.34	2.38	0.07	0.00426	1.02	0.03	0.00182	
			0.625	0.613	0.32	2.20	0.07	0.00429	0.94	0.03	0.00182	
			0.675	0.565	0.29	2.05	0.06	0.00429	0.88	0.03	0.00184	
			0.725	0.517	0.27	1.90	0.06	0.00429	0.83	0.03	0.00187	
			0.775	0.470	0.26	1.77	0.06	0.00427	0.84	0.03	0.00203	
			0.825	0.422	0.24	1.65	0.05	0.00423	0.87	0.03	0.00222	
			0.875	0.374	0.23	1.53	0.05	0.00418	0.88	0.03	0.00240	
			0.925	0.327	0.21	1.43	0.04	0.00411	0.89	0.03	0.00255	
			0.975	0.279	0.20	1.33	0.04	0.00403	0.89	0.03	0.00270	
							Overall p(collision) =		Upwind	7.9 %	Downwind	4.5 %
								Average	6.2 %			

Hen harrier

CALCULATION OF COLLISION RISK FOR BIRD PASSING THROUGH ROTOR AREA												
K: [1D or [3D] (0 or 1)	1		Calculation of alpha and p(collision) as a function of radius									
No. Blades	3					Upwind:			Downwind:			
Max Chord	4	m	r/R	c/C	a	collide		contribution	collide		contribution	
Pitch (degrees)	15		radius	chord	alpha	length	p (collision)	from radius r	length	p (collision)	from radius r	
Bird Length	0.48	m	0.025	0.575	6.07	20.77	0.84	0.00105	19.58	0.79	0.00099	
Wingspan	1.1	m	0.075	0.575	2.02	7.32	0.30	0.00223	6.13	0.25	0.00187	
F: Flapping (0) or gliding (+1)	0		0.125	0.702	1.21	5.36	0.22	0.00272	3.90	0.16	0.00198	
			0.175	0.860	0.87	4.73	0.19	0.00336	2.95	0.12	0.00209	
Bird speed	11.5	m/sec	0.225	0.994	0.67	4.36	0.18	0.00398	2.31	0.09	0.00210	
Rotor Diam	155	m	0.275	0.947	0.55	3.61	0.15	0.00402	1.65	0.07	0.00184	
Rotation Period	6.43	sec	0.325	0.899	0.47	3.07	0.12	0.00404	1.21	0.05	0.00159	
			0.375	0.851	0.40	2.69	0.11	0.00410	0.93	0.04	0.00142	
			0.425	0.804	0.36	2.42	0.10	0.00417	0.76	0.03	0.00131	
			0.475	0.756	0.32	2.20	0.09	0.00423	0.63	0.03	0.00122	
Bird aspect ratio: b	0.44		0.525	0.708	0.29	2.00	0.08	0.00427	0.54	0.02	0.00115	
			0.575	0.660	0.26	1.84	0.07	0.00429	0.49	0.02	0.00114	
			0.625	0.613	0.24	1.69	0.07	0.00428	0.54	0.02	0.00137	
			0.675	0.565	0.22	1.56	0.06	0.00426	0.57	0.02	0.00157	
			0.725	0.517	0.21	1.43	0.06	0.00422	0.60	0.02	0.00176	
			0.775	0.470	0.20	1.32	0.05	0.00416	0.61	0.02	0.00192	
			0.825	0.422	0.18	1.22	0.05	0.00407	0.62	0.03	0.00206	
			0.875	0.374	0.17	1.12	0.05	0.00397	0.62	0.03	0.00219	
			0.925	0.327	0.16	1.03	0.04	0.00385	0.61	0.02	0.00229	
			0.975	0.279	0.16	0.94	0.04	0.00370	0.60	0.02	0.00238	
				Overall p(collision) =				Upwind	7.5 %		Downwind	3.4 %
								Average	5.5 %			

ANNEX 3 – CRM ANALYSIS RESULTS

Golden eagle - Year 2 (December 2020 – November 2021)

VP	Watch data			Flying time (s)	Flying time hahr-1	Weighted flying time ha hr ⁻¹	
	Area (ha)	Time (hrs)	HaHr	Risk height	Risk height	Weighting	Risk height
3b	141.70	93.0	13178.10	798.52	0.0000168317	0.417403087	0.0000070256
7	117.58	93.0	10934.94	1260.39	0.0000320174	0.346353246	0.0000110893
11	80.20	93.0	7458.60	159.38	0.0000059357	0.236243667	0.0000014023
Totals	339.48	279.0	31571.64	2218.28	0.0000547848	1.0000000000	0.0000195172
Mean activity hr⁻¹ in wind farm				WIND FARM DATA			
Risk height	0.00654	0.6545 %		Wind farm area (ha)	335.33		
Daylight hours	4473.8						
Downtime	15			0.85		D	155.0
Vw =	519761500					L + d	4.82
Vr =	1181744			No. of turbines	13	R	77.5
Vr/Vw =	0.0022736						
Speed	15						
Vw Occupancy =	29.280			105406.9			
Vr Occupancy =	0.067			239.7			
Transit time =	0.321						
Transits =	745.818						
Collision probability from NatureScot sheet	0.062						
Collisions with no avoidance	46.241						
Collisions with 99% avoidance	0.462						
Collisions with 99% avoidance & downtime	0.393						
40 year mortality	18.496						
40 year mortality with 15% downtime etc	15.722						
Years for 1 death	2.544						

Hen harrier - Year 2 (December 2020 – November 2021)

VP	Watch data			Flying time (s)	Flying time hahr-1	Weighted flying time ha hr ⁻¹	
	Area (ha)	Time (hrs)	HaHr	Risk height	Risk height	Weighting	Risk height
3b	141.70	93.0	13178.10	246.62	0.0000051984	0.417403087	0.0000021698
7	117.58	93.0	10934.94	105.35	0.0000026761	0.346353246	0.0000009269
11	80.20	93.0	7458.60	117.92	0.0000043915	0.236243667	0.0000010375
Totals	339.48	279.0	31571.64	469.88	0.0000122660	1.0000000000	0.0000041342
Mean activity hr⁻¹ in wind farm			WIND FARM DATA				
Risk height	0.00139	0.1386 %	Wind farm area (ha)		335.33		
Daylight hours			4473.8				
Downtime			15	0.85		D	155.0
Vw =			519761500			L + d	4.48
Vr =			1098385	No. of turbines	13	R	77.5
Vr/Vw =			0.0021132				
Speed			11.5				
Vw Occupancy =			6.202	22327.5			
Vr Occupancy =			0.013	47.2			
Transit time =			0.390				
Transits =			121.119				
Collision probability from SNH sheet			0.055				
Collisions with no avoidance			6.662				
Collisions with 99% avoidance			0.067				
Collisions with 99% avoidance & downtime			0.057				
40 year mortality			2.665				
40 year mortality with 15% downtime etc			2.265				
Years for 1 death			17.661				