



**Opening Statement for Briefing the  
Joint Committee on Enterprise, Trade and Employment  
On the Topic of**

**Powering Prosperity –  
Ireland's Offshore Wind Industrial Strategy**

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Assistant Secretary  
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment**

**Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

Cathaoirleach, Members of the Committee,

I welcome the opportunity to discuss with you today ‘Powering Prosperity – Ireland’s Offshore Wind Industrial Strategy’.

I am joined today by two colleagues from the Offshore Wind Strategy Unit: Helena Quilty, Principal Officer and Jack McDermot, Assistant Principal.

### **Background: The need for an industrial strategy**

As the Committee is aware, the ‘Programme for Government’ and the ‘White Paper on Enterprise 2022 – 2030’ both have a focus on the twin green and digital transition. The White Paper also identifies offshore wind as a key opportunity for Ireland.

Furthermore, the Department of the Environment, Climate, and Communications’ (DECC) ‘Policy Statement on the Framework for Phase Two Offshore Wind’ also includes a commitment to work with industry to develop an industrial strategy.

To build on those foundational documents, a Memo for Government Decision proposing the development of an industrial strategy for offshore wind was brought forward on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023 and Powering Prosperity has been developed in line with that Decision.

Within weeks of that Government decision, the new Offshore Wind Strategy Unit was created, and work commenced on the stakeholder engagement and fact finding phase of the Strategy, which concluded in November. Powering Prosperity was then approved by Government on 5<sup>th</sup> March and published on 8<sup>th</sup> March.

In developing the Strategy, we noted this Committee’s ‘Report on Offshore Renewable Energy’, published March 2023, specifically its recommendations:

- 1. on supports needed for the ORE industry;
- 2. on the opportunity of both fixed and floating wind;
- 7. on development of an offshore delivery taskforce; and
- 9. on greater focus on domestic job growth in R&D roles, and development of offshore wind technologies within Ireland.

We believe the intent of these recommendations is well reflected in the final Strategy.

### **Vision and ambitions**

The vision at the core of Powering Prosperity is, by the end of this decade, to build a successful, vibrant and impactful offshore wind industry, and to ensure the industry creates value for the people of Ireland. We will target four core areas:

- Supply chain – both domestic and international;
- Research, development and innovation;
- Future demand and end uses for renewable energy; and finally
- Balanced regional economic development.

Powering Prosperity also clearly sets out ten ambitions that Ireland will aim to achieve by 2030:

1. Develop an innovative enterprise ecosystem, with indigenous and multinational companies, that will provide world-leading service to the offshore wind sector.
2. Dramatically scale up the enterprise base that will service the offshore wind sectors in Ireland and around the world.

3. Deliver up to 5,000 jobs in the offshore wind and related industries.
4. Maximise opportunities for companies and investors to develop a vibrant and successful supply chain.
5. Proactively assist enterprise, workers, and the RD&I ecosystem in availing of these opportunities through targeted funding and supports.
6. Seek to establish an Offshore Wind Centre of Excellence and a new Floating Offshore Wind Demonstrator to support growth and innovation.
7. Pursue strategic partnerships with like-minded countries in Europe and beyond.
8. Work with stakeholders to develop world-class property solutions powered by renewable energy.
9. In collaboration with other Departments, develop major industrial hubs around key deployment and operations and maintenance ports.
10. Transform Ireland's regional capability, and deliver opportunity for the people of Ireland, throughout Ireland, by developing industrial hubs and balanced regional economic growth.

These ambitions are supported by 40 actions for implementation in 2024 and 2025.

### **How we produced the Strategy**

Powering Prosperity is the result of a strong collaboration between the Department, Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland. Both Agencies also provided us with industry contacts, who were extremely generous with their observations and technical input.

We also collaborated intensively with other Government Departments and Agencies, particularly via the Offshore Wind Delivery Taskforce chaired by DECC. Indeed, the actions of Powering Prosperity effectively function as the actions for Workstream 7 of that Taskforce.

I would like to put on record my thanks to all the colleagues and stakeholders who assisted us in developing the Strategy.

### **Reception of Strategy – and implementation phase**

Overall, the reception of Powering Prosperity has been positive. For example, Wind Energy Ireland ‘warmly welcomed’ the Strategy and committed to working with us ‘to ensure the benefits from our offshore wind revolution stay in Ireland’.

We now turn to implementation of Powering Prosperity, with an ambitious programme of work already underway for 2024 and 2025. Our Department and its Agencies will continue to collaborate with colleagues across Government, with industry, and with other national and international stakeholders to achieve our vision.

We will drive implementation by reporting to the Offshore Wind Delivery Taskforce and working closely with DETE’s Offshore Wind Industry Forum, comprised of industry representatives and the enterprise Agencies.

We will publish periodic progress reports on this first iteration of Powering Prosperity, starting in 2025.

Cathaoirleach, I will conclude at this point. We look forward to assisting the Committee with its deliberations.