

From Sean wynne
Re EPA terms of reference
and 1958 AGREEMENT RE LICENSE
Sean

Tony McLoughlin <Tony.McLoughlin@Oireachtas.ie> wrote:
Sean,

Replies to your 2 PQS.
Regards,

Enda

Marianna Little
Secretarila Assistant
Tony McLoughlin TD

48 John Street
Sligo
Phone : 0719110011

----- Forwarded by Enda

McGloin/Oireachtas on 23/11/2011 11:37 -----

From: PQ Replies
To: Tony McLoughlin/Oireachtas@HOUSESES

Date: 22/11/2011 18:10

Subject: eReplies to
your Parliamentary Questions for 22/11/2011
Sent by:William Phela

DÁIL QUESTION

For WRITTEN answer on Tuesday, 22nd November, 2011Ref No: 35893/11

Proof: 481

REPLY

**Minister for Communications, Energy and
Natural Resources (Mr. P. Rabbitte)**

I indicated recently that I had requested the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to conduct research and advise on the environmental implications of hydraulic fracturing as a means of extracting natural gas from underground reserves. The EPA is currently funding preliminary background research in the form of a study being carried out by Aberdeen University. The EPA had consulted with my Department before finalising the terms of reference for this study and my Department will continue to liaise with the EPA in relation to the commissioning of a further and more extensive study in 2012. The final scope of this further more detailed study, which will be informed in part by the findings of the Aberdeen University study, will be determined by the EPA, which is an independent statutory body.

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION No. 328

Dail Eireann

To ask the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources his views on the fact that the legal ownership rights to 27,000 square miles of oil and gas were sold in 1958 for €500 by the then Minister for Commerce and that this legal arrangements still stands resulting in any potential gas or oil extraction being of little impact to the Irish taxpayer..

Tony McLoughlin.

For WRITTEN answer on Tuesday,

Ref No: 35892/11

REPLY

**Minister for Communications, Energy and
Natural Resources (Mr. P. Rabbitte)**

The Agreement of 13th January, 1959 between the Minister for Industry and Commerce and Ambassador Irish Oil Ltd gave that company an Exploration Licence for 20 years from 29 March 1960. The

area licensed to the company was the whole onshore area of the Republic of Ireland and any seas under Irish jurisdiction, subject to the surrender of 25% of the original area every five years. The extensive exploration rights conferred by that agreement have long since expired, with the only areas remaining under licence being the producing fields in the Kinsale area.

As can be seen from the acreage update reports regularly published on my Department's website, while a broad range of companies currently hold exploration authorisations in the Irish offshore and onshore, the majority of the area in fact remains unlicensed to any exploration company. In the event that commercial discoveries are made in the future by the exploration companies that now hold licences, or by companies that are granted licences in the future, then the tax provisions in the Finance Acts relating to petroleum production would apply resulting in a tax take of between 25% and 40%.