

Government revised response

This response was given on 15 January 2026

We are committed to ending fracking for good. We are aware of local concerns regarding low volume hydraulic fracturing and are keeping this policy under internal review.

Read the response in full

This Government is committed to ending new onshore oil and gas licensing in England. This will help make Britain a clean energy superpower to protect current and future generations.

On 1 October the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero announced legislation to end new onshore oil and gas licensing in England, including new licences that could be used for high volume hydraulic fracturing for shale gas (commonly known as “fracking”).

There is an effective moratorium on high volume hydraulic fracturing for shale gas (“associated hydraulic fracturing” as defined by the Petroleum Act 1998) in England, and this will continue to apply to existing licences. This is in place because of concerns around prediction and management of induced seismicity from this type of hydraulic fracturing. There are similar restrictions in place across other parts of the UK.

Low volume hydraulic fracturing includes activities such as “proppant squeezes”, which take place at lower volumes than the thresholds for “associated hydraulic fracturing” and in a variety of geological contexts. The small number of these activities are not currently in scope of the effective moratorium in England, which only targeted high volume hydraulic fracturing for shale gas extraction.

However, the government recognises concerns from local communities regarding low volume fracturing and the fact that it is currently treated differently, and is therefore currently reviewing the position with regard to low volume hydraulic fracturing.

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

This is a revised response. The Petitions Committee requested a response which more directly addressed the request of the petition. You can find the original response towards the bottom of the petition page (<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/728912>)

Related activity

1. Petitions Committee requests a revised response from the Government

The Petitions Committee (the group of MPs who oversee the petitions system) has considered the Government’s response to this petition. They felt the response did not respond directly to the request of the petition. They have therefore asked the Government to provide a revised response.

When the Committee receives a revised response from the Government, we will publish this and share it with you.

2. Original Government Response

This Government is committed to ending new onshore oil and gas licensing in England. We are aware of local concerns around low volume hydraulic fracturing and are keeping regulation under review.

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Low volume hydraulic fracturing activities, including for example “proppant squeezes”, take place at lower volumes than the thresholds for “associated hydraulic fracturing” and in a variety of geological contexts. These activities are therefore not currently in scope of the effective moratorium in England.

Low volume hydraulic fracturing activities take place in the context of conventional oil and gas operations and can be used for a variety of purposes. They require a range of permissions and consents before they can be undertaken. This includes planning permission from the relevant local planning authority, and other necessary permits and consents from the North Sea Transition Authority, Environment Agency, and the Health and Safety Executive. This system ensures operations meet the safety and environmental standards and obligations set out in law – and activities will only be approved on that basis.

We are aware of local concerns raised by the petition around low volume hydraulic fracturing and are keeping regulation under review.

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

This response was given on 11 November 2025. The Petitions Committee then requested a revised response, that more directly addressed the request of the petition.

- Date closed **4 January 2026**