ION will follow the accepted industry practice of using Passive Acoustic Monitoring (PAM) to detect marine mammals during seismic surveys during periods of darkness, low visibility, or when the sea state is not conducive to visual mitigation. The PAM system used will be the MSeis Night Hawk III System, or a similar towed array. This system consists of two pairs of broadband (4 Hz to 180 kHz) hydrophones separated by six meters along a 250-m array towed behind the source vessel. Detected sounds will be processed in real-time using PAMGuard software. A trained PAM operator will interpret the detected sounds and initiate any request for a shutdown procedure if a marine mammal is deemed to be within the exclusion zone during seismic operations.

The PAM system will also be used for at least 30 minutes prior to ramp up in darkness or low visibility conditions to ensure the exclusion zone is free from marine mammals. Using the PAMGuard software, the PAM operator will be responsible for determining if there are likely to be any marine mammals within the exclusion zone and for requesting any delays in the ramp-up procedure.