



10 October 2013

Christine Bonnell-Eisnor
Director, Rights Management & Finance
Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board
18th Floor TD Centre
1791 Barrington Street
Halifax N.S. B3J 3K9

Re: Call for Bids NS13-1

Dear Ms. Bonnell-Eisnor

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the latest Call for Bids for the offshore Nova Scotia area. The Maritimes Energy Association supports the exploration and development of Nova Scotia's offshore petroleum potential through the robust regulatory regime represented by the Canada – Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board (CNSOPB).

The Maritimes Energy Association is a not for profit industry association representing businesses that provide goods and services to the energy industry in eastern Canada – offshore & onshore, renewable & non-renewable. Our membership primarily consists of local businesses that are part of the energy supply chain and employ thousands of people, injecting millions of dollars into our regional economy

The Atlantic region has a long and successful history of offshore exploration and development. Exploration has been conducted for more than four decades with steady offshore production from a number of projects beginning more than 20 years ago. The industry has a right to be proud of its record on safety and environmental stewardship.

The success of the industry can also be attributed to a culture of safety instilled in the region's energy supply chain. The companies that provide supplies and services to offshore projects in this region have a record highlighting their dedication to ensuring worker safety and minimal environmental impact. A strong and developed safety culture is important to ensuring the successful development of projects.

Nova Scotia's offshore regulatory regime is a significant contributor to ensuring safety in the province's offshore region. The *Offshore Accord Acts* require that strict protocols are followed to operate offshore. Work authorizations are required for each activity, and such applications must include documents such as a safety plan, an environmental assessment, and an environmental protection plan.

We need to stress the rigorous application process for all work authorizations offshore Nova Scotia. Some would imply that issuing an exploration licence means all activity is approved. We understand that it is just one step in a robust regulatory regime that demands work authorizations for each activity offshore. The CNSOPB has proven itself a watchful and diligent administrator of strict offshore regulations demanding detailed review of work authorization applications for each step of the exploration and development phase of a project.

The offshore industry is a significant contributor to Nova Scotia's economic prosperity and can become an even greater contributor if future development is allowed to proceed. The two most recent Calls for Bids, NS11-1 and NS12-1, saw combined total exploration work expenditure bids of over \$2 billion. It is obvious that there is increased interest from around the globe to do work offshore of Nova Scotia. The required submission of a Benefits Plan for all work authorization applications ensures that the region's world-class supply chain is utilized. This requirement maximizes the economic benefit realized in the region.

The Maritimes Energy Association supports the latest Call for Bids as it enables the continued development of the region's offshore resources. We recognize that there are many steps that must be taken prior to exploration proceeding in the province and are supportive of the established regulatory regime. We support the continued Call for Bids process and expect the CNSOPB to continue to exercise its regulatory authority in issuing Calls for Bids, not as a promoter for the industry, but as a regulator ensuring the safe and sustainable exploration and development of Nova Scotia's offshore resources.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to comment.

Kindest regards,



Barbara B. Pike
Chief Executive Officer