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File: NL-091

Kim Coady
Environmental Assessment Officer
Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board

Subject: Hibernia Drill Centre Construction and Operations Program

Ms. Coady,

Upon request by the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board (C-NLOPB) on December 18th, 2008 Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) conducted a review of the *Environmental Impact Statement/Screening Report for the Hibernia Drill Centre Construction and Operations Program*.

To complete this review one of NRCan's experts with the Geological Survey of Canada-Atlantic office has provided the comments found below.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me by phone (613) 992-8791 or by e-mail at tlemay@nrcan.gc.ca

Sincerely,

Teresa LeMay
Environmental Assessment Officer
NRCan - Ottawa

Document reviewed: *Environmental Impact Statement/Screening Report for the Hibernia Drill Centre Construction and Operations Program.*

NRCan anticipated that information on seabed scour density, scour severity and scour frequency would have been presented in support of the decision to excavate to 10 m, or to bury /or not bury flowlines, but NRCan did not locate that information within the EIS document. The EIS refers to detailed information in Appendix B, but NRCan did not find any information on seabed scour in Appendix B. Thus, NRCan could not comment on those issues.

It was not clear what geological information was used to quantify the amount of fines that will be excavated from the glory holes. On page 153 (EIS), it states approximately 90 percent of the spoils at the HSE glory hole location consist of fine- to coarse-grained sand with minor gravel. These sediments are expected to disperse and settle in an asymmetric, elliptical pattern within the designated disposal area (see Figure 6.1). NRCan would have anticipated more slits and clays in the upper 10 m. There are many geotechnical boreholes in the Hibernia area (several Jacques Whitford reports), but it was not clear how that information was used.

Please note that NRCan would be happy to conduct another review when more detailed information, as indicated above, can be provided.