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Deputy Minister

Sous-ministre

Ottawa, Canada
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Scott Tessier

Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board
STessier@cnlopb.ca

Dear Scott Tessier:

It was a pleasure to meet you virtually during the January 13, 2022, Portfolio Agency Heads meeting. As you are aware, my officials and your team at the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board (C-NLOPB) have been working jointly on an approach to respond to the Federal Commissioner of Official Languages' April 2020 recommendations. The approach will be to ensure the Board's website is equally available to the public in both of Canada's official languages and the C-NLOPB is well set up to successfully provide bilingual communication and service delivery into the future.

The strong collaboration between our two organizations has resulted in significant progress on this project over the past year, particularly on the development of the French webpages and the translation of the C-NLOPB's website content. I understand that you are undergoing final preparations for a launch by the end of March 2022. The launch of this web content will represent a significant milestone toward addressing the Commissioner's April 2020 recommendations.

In anticipation of the upcoming launch of your French website, our organizations have developed the enclosed Steady State Plan to help ensure that the C-NLOPB can be prepared to field inquiries from the public in both official languages. In addition to outlining the measures that will be in place for the delivery of bilingual services, the plan also describes the proposed evolution of Natural Resources Canada's and C-NLOPB's roles and the transition of responsibilities so that the C-NLOPB is effectively supported to independently manage the provision of these bilingual services over the long term. With this in mind, you will note that the Steady State Plan clearly asserts Natural Resources Canada's commitment to assume responsibility for the incremental costs incurred by the C-NLOPB associated with complying with the Commissioner of Official Languages' recommendations.

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Lastly, I wanted to inform you that we have consulted with the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador on the Steady State Plan and they are supportive of this approach. During these discussions, we also opened up a dialogue on exploring longer-term, more sustainable approaches to funding the ongoing incremental costs of the C-NLOPB bilingual service delivery within the joint budget process.

I hope this has all been to your satisfaction. I am looking forward to the launch of the C-NLOPB French website and our ongoing interaction in the future, as we work together to strengthen Canada's offshore oil and gas sector through thoughtful management and collaboration between our two organizations.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JH', written over a faint circular stamp or watermark.

John Hannaford
(he/him/il)
Deputy Minister
Natural Resources Canada

Enclosure: (1)

Steady State Plan for French Website Development and Establishment of Bilingual Services for the C-NLOPB

Objective

- This plan outlines the transition process for the establishment and maintenance of C-NLOPB bilingual service provision. It also describes the evolution of roles and responsibilities for NRCan and the Board in order for the C-NLOPB to manage the provision of its bilingual services independently.

Funding and Incremental Costs

- NRCan is committed to complying with the recommendations of the Commissioner for Official Languages (COL) in their April 2020 report and intends to provide financial support to the C-NLOPB on an ongoing basis to meet these requirements.
- NRCan will work to establish long-term sustainable funding in collaboration with the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- NRCan will assume incremental costs incurred by the Board associated with providing bilingual services. These include:
 - Website - French site maintenance and translation of content;
 - Email Information Requests - translation of French email correspondence (both any incoming requests in French, and translating English responses into French);
 - Phone Information Requests - additional French language operability in the C-NLOPB's existing phone answering service, and translation of requests (French to English) and responses (English to French);
 - Public Consultations and News Conferences - as required, simultaneous translation to ensure equal access in both languages;
 - Media Inquiries and Requests for Interviews - translation of correspondence; and
 - Any other additional costs associated with the provision of bilingual services to meet the COL's recommendations.

Website Materials

- NRCan will translate existing website HTML material (including updated material) until the French website is launched and will support ongoing translation until the C-NLOPB can establish agreements with translation service providers.
- NRCan will continue to translate existing C-NLOPB-generated PDF website materials, and will support ongoing translation until the C-NLOPB can establish agreements with translation service providers.
- NRCan will complete technical work to establish the French website as "launch-ready," including coding and quality assurance. After the site launch, NRCan will provide support to the C-NLOPB as the C-NLOPB moves to assume sole responsibility for the maintenance of the site during the 2022-23 fiscal year.

Email Information Requests

- The C-NLOPB will establish a process to filter written French correspondence through designated channels. NRCan will support the translation of this correspondence during the transition period, until the C-NLOPB can establish agreements with translation service providers.
- If individual C-NLOPB staff receive any French language requests for information (RFIs), these will be forwarded to Information Resources Centre (IRC) in keeping with the current practice for English RFIs.
- French language inquiries will receive an immediate written response in French from the C-NLOPB's IRC to acknowledge receipt and advise that the email is being processed.

Telephone/Verbal Requests

- The C-NLOPB will augment its existing Telelink Service (709-778-1400) to include the French service option (initial greeting in both English and French, followed by English/French option) and provide a script to the French Telelink staff;
- The Telelink service will take a message, translate and relay the message in English to IRC staff, who will then follow up internally to develop a response. This response will need to be translated;
- NRCan will support the translation of these responses during the transition period, until the C-NLOPB can establish agreements with translation service providers;
- On the French website, the C-NLOPB will direct French requests to either the IRC or the Telelink service (709 778-1400); and
- The C-NLOPB will provide C-NLOPB staff with a script to respond to calls in French. The script will refer callers to the Telelink service (709-778-1400) or IRC.

Media

- The C-NLOPB Communications Department will coordinate written responses to French media inquiries; and
- For verbal media inquiries, the C-NLOPB will request the interview be conducted in English, or a written request be submitted so that the correspondence can be translated.

Out of Scope Content

- Third-party prepared website content
- Translation that is legislatively required (C-NLOPB will continue to cover these translations under the Board's existing translation budget.) These include:
 - Annual Reports;
 - Info Source (Sources of Federal Government and Employee Information – C-NLOPB);
 - Annual Reports on the Administration of the Access to Information and Privacy Acts; and
 - Travel and Hospitality Expense Reports.
- Social Media posts
- Verbal Media interviews (recorded or live)
- The ArcGIS Data and Information Hub

Review Period

- NRCan and the C-NLOPB will undertake a review of the status of the transition process every two months following the launch of the website, up to March 31, 2023.
- This review will identify any existing gaps to the provision of bilingual services and additional supports the Board may require, to ensure that it can transition to the independent management of bilingual service provision.
- NRCan will provide updates to the OCOL to ensure this project fulfils all recommendations and will amend plans in consultation with the C-NLOPB should it be deemed necessary.

Next Steps

- Completion of PDF website document translation by NRCan, over Fiscal Year 2022-23 (targeting August 31, 2022)

C-NLOPB Go Forward Plan

