

National Energy
Board



Office national
de l'énergie

File OF-EP-GeopOp-M711-5554587 0101
13 July 2011

Ms. Darlene Davis
Project Manager
RPS Energy
Liberty Place, 2nd Floor, 1545 Birmingham Street
Halifax, NS B3L 4T8
Facsimile 902-425-0703

Dear Ms. Davis:

**TGS-NOPEC Geophysical Company ASA, Petroleum GeoServices and MultiKlient
Invest AS (MultiKlient) 2011 NorthEastern Canada 2D Seismic Survey (the Project)**

On 24 May 2011, the National Energy Board received an application under paragraph 5(1)(b) of the *Canada Oil and Gas Operations Act* from MultiKlient for a 2D offshore seismic survey program Baffin Bay/Davis Strait. On 23 June 2011, the Board withdrew the Chief Conservation Officer's delegation to consider the Project application. The Board subsequently authorized Board Member David Hamilton to report and make recommendations to the Board on the Project application under section 15 of the *National Energy Board Act*. However, the full Board will decide whether to approve the Project application.

Mr. Hamilton has all the powers of the Board for the purpose of acquiring the necessary information to make recommendations on the Project application and report to the Board. Mr. Hamilton may also make procedural decisions relating to his exercise of the authority granted to him. The attached document outlines the process to be followed in the assessment of this Project application.

The Board directs MultiKlient to serve a copy of this letter and its attachment, including the translation on all interested parties (including everyone that has filed comments on the Environmental Impact Assessment) by 20 July 2011.

For information on the process for the Project application, please contact Danielle Comte, Regulatory Officer at 403-299-2731. You may also call toll-free at 1-800-899-1265.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Anne-Marie Erickson".

Anne-Marie Erickson
Secretary of the Board

Attachment

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Calgary, Alberta T2P 0X8

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Process for TGS-NOPEC Geophysical Company ASA (TGS), Petroleum GeoServices (PGS) and MultiKlient Invest AS (MultiKlient) 2011 NorthEastern Canada 2D Seismic Survey (the Project)

The Application

MultiKlient proposes to conduct an offshore marine 2D seismic survey in Baffin Bay/Davis Strait. The proposed Project is expected to be carried out over five years during the open water season beginning in 2011.

The Project is a regional survey designed to provide a better understanding of the offshore geology of Baffin Bay/Davis Strait. This information will be used to determine the regional extent of geological formations.

Environmental Assessment Process

On 8 January 2011, a preliminary project description was filed with the Board. The Project is subject to an environmental assessment under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEA Act). The NEB is the Federal Environmental Assessment Coordinator for this project. Pursuant to section 18(3) of the CEA Act, the NEB has determined that public participation is appropriate in the circumstances of this project.

The NEB has received initial comments from parties interested in the environmental assessment. The public registry for the Project, which includes these comments, can be found on the NEB website: <http://www.neb-one.gc.ca/clf-nsi/rthnb/pblcrgrstr/tgspgs2011nrthstrncnd/tgspgs2011nrthstrncnd-eng.html>.

Geophysical Operations Authorization (GOA) Process

On 17 May 2011, TGS/PGS and MultiKlient applied for a GOA for the Project under paragraph 5(1)(b) of the *Canada Oil and Gas Operations Act* (COGOA). Before issuing a GOA, the Board must also ensure that the applicant has provided satisfactory proof of financial responsibility in accordance with subsection 27(1) of the COGOA.

The technical review of the Project is underway. In addition to proof of financial responsibility, a completed environmental assessment and benefits plans are required before a GOA could be issued.

Next Steps

The environmental assessment will proceed with information requests, which will inform the draft environmental screening report (ESR). The draft ESR will then be released to the public for comment. Mr. Hamilton will accept written comments and may conduct community meetings to gather oral comments about the ESR. After the public comment period is over, the final ESR will be completed and considered by Mr. Hamilton in preparing his report and recommendations on the GOA application for the Project to the Board.

Further Information

For information on the process for the Project application, please contact Danielle Comte, Regulatory Officer at 403-299-2731. You may also call toll-free at 1-800-899-1265.