

ONE OCEAN

GUIDE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF FISHERIES COMMUNICATION PLANS FOR EXPLORATION DRILLING PROGRAMS

*Created by One Ocean for the Newfoundland and
Labrador Offshore Petroleum and Fishing Industries*

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ABOUT ONE OCEAN

In 2001, industry representatives from the fishing and petroleum sectors participated in a series of meetings to discuss establishing a liaison organization to enhance working relationships between the two industries. Both industries recognized the need for enhanced communication and information exchange as part of developing a cooperative working relationship, leading to the creation of One Ocean.

In May 2002, One Ocean was launched and in 2006, was formally incorporated in Newfoundland and Labrador.

An objective of One Ocean is to assist the fishing and petroleum industries understand each sector's operational activities. An important element of this objective is the timing and location of offshore operations as fishing and petroleum activities may overlap. Effective communication and joint planning helps to ensure both sectors are aware of proposed activities and provide the opportunity to identify and address specific industry concerns and develop mutually beneficial practices and protocols.

One Ocean does not represent the fishing and petroleum industries in Newfoundland and Labrador – it represents the mutual interests of both.

The One Ocean model is unique to the world. It is a proactive entity that enhances the opportunity for information dissemination and progressive joint initiatives for two industries operating in one ocean.

The Guide for the Development of Fisheries Communication Plans for Exploration Drilling Programs (the "Guide"), formerly titled, "One Ocean Protocol for Exploratory Drilling Projects in the NL Offshore," recommends opportunities for engagement and content for inclusion in a Fisheries Communication Plan. This guidance will help ensure parties are aware of, and understand, timing and location details of planned operational activities outside of a existing installation safety zone.

The Guide references exploration drilling regulations but is not intended to replace them and it should not be interpreted as a legal document. One Ocean does not guarantee the accuracy or totality of information provided and as such, One Ocean and its members assume no liability for its use or application.

The Guide for the Development of Fisheries Communications Plans for Exploration Drilling Programs is property of One Ocean. One Ocean reserves the right to make changes to the Guide without notice.

I. INTRODUCTION

Exploration drilling programs in the Newfoundland and Labrador offshore are subject to one the following processes:

- **Environmental Assessment (EA)** under the **Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC)**, (previously the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency)
- **Regulations Respecting Excluded Physical Activities (Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Exploratory Wells).**

Both processes include a variety of conditions that must be met/demonstrated before an exploration-drilling program can proceed, such as the development and implementation of a **Fisheries Communication Plan (the “Plan”)**. The Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board (C-NLOPB) is responsible for verifying compliance with the conditions, which are incorporated into the C-NLOPB issued Operations Authorization.

The objective of the **Guide for the Development of Fisheries Communications Plans for Exploration Drilling Programs (the “Guide”)** is to aid operators in drafting their Fisheries Communication Plan by recommending opportunities and timelines for engagement with fisheries and content for inclusion in the Plan.

II. PROPONENT ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION WITH THE FISHING INDUSTRY IN NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR IN ADVANCE OF AN EXPLORATION DRILLING PROGRAM

Fishing Industry Contacts

For new operators/companies planning exploration activities, the C-NLOPB has agreed to provide One Ocean contact information to allow proponents the opportunity to be introduced to One Ocean fishing industry contacts and avail of One Ocean engagement and consultation on the Fisheries Communication Plan. Fishing industry contacts include representatives from:

- Association of Seafood Producers
- Atlantic Groundfish Council
- Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union-Unifor (FFAW-Unifor)
- Ocean Choice International (OCI)

Operators seeking to verify their fishing industry contact list can contact One Ocean.

Engagement and Communication with Fishing Industry Contacts

It is recommended that Operators make first contact with fishing industry representatives at least six months prior to the start of the exploration drilling program. For the purpose of this document, start date is defined as the date the project receives Operations Authorization from the C-NLOPB.

The initial contact should include the name and contact information of the representative leading the development of the Fisheries Communication Plan and an overview of the planned exploration drilling project. A further in-person or virtual meeting is encouraged to further introduce the project and to discuss the Fisheries Communication Plan.

It is noted that details provided six-months in advance of the start of a program may be subject to change as field operations approach.

At least two months prior to the start of the exploration drilling program fisheries contacts should be further informed of planned drilling activity and installation movements.

Regular program updates should be emailed to fishing industry contacts monthly, or at agreed upon intervals.

Project communications should also include a two-week notification of the conclusion of the drilling program.

Operators should request contacts to confirm receipt of email communications and updates as related to their exploration drilling program and Fisheries Communication Plan.

One Ocean and/or fishing industry members may request a meeting to further discuss the updates leading up to and throughout the life of the program. Updates should be inclusive of but not exclusive to all factors outlined in this guidance.

Early notification and engagement, regular updates and sustained communication between the operator and fishing industry contacts through the life of the exploration drilling program is an important mitigation practice in preventing conflicts in areas of competing interests. A Notice to Shipping and/or Notice to Mariners (NAVWARN) does not replace early and ongoing communication. The fishing industry should not become aware of a program on short notice or via a Notice to Shipping/Mariners.

Further guidance on engaging with the fishing industry in Newfoundland and Labrador can be found in the One Ocean document, *Two Industries, One Ocean – Effective Engagement for Proponents and Participants* ([link when posted to web](#)).

III. RECOMMENDED INFORMATION TO INCLUDE IN A FISHERIES COMMUNICATION PLAN

i. EXPLORATION DRILLING LOCATIONAL INFORMATION/MAPS AND COORDINATES

Maps and coordinates are an essential tool for the fishing industry and should be included in the Fisheries Communication Plan and in communications and updates to the fishing industry.

Detailed locational information and program map(s) and coordinates should be available at least two months prior to the program start date. Should there be updates or changes, operators should provide revised map(s) to fishing industry contacts as soon as possible.

To provide meaningful context to potential fisheries interactions, maps should include:

Locational information:

- ✓ Exploration License (EL) number, well name, basin name.
- ✓ Specific location of the drill site(s) within the EL, with accompanying latitudinal and longitudinal coordinates. Identification of the project area, program area.
- ✓ Distance from shore to the drill site(s).
- ✓ Depth of water at the drill site(s).
- ✓ 200nm limit (EEZ) boundary.
- ✓ Marine refuges or closures.
- ✓ Bathymetry details illustrating slopes and shelf break.

Fisheries Information:

- ✓ Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) divisions to identify the fishing area of the program location.
- ✓ Crab Management Areas.
- ✓ Fisheries data at the drill site and along the drilling unit route to site.
 - Fisheries catch data for domestic vessels should include areas inside and outside the 200 nautical mile limit. Engagement with the fishing industry on this data should occur at least six months prior to the planned start date. This will provide an opportunity for better understanding and insight on fishing industry spatial and temporal details that could be impacted by the exploratory drilling program including displacement. It will also assist both industries in operational planning and the Fisheries Communication Plan.
 - As applicable, Operators should avail of foreign fishing industry data through appropriate Canadian agencies to determine potential temporal and/or spatial conflicts and coordinate communication exchange as required.

Safety Zone Information

A critical piece of information for the fishing industry is awareness of the program safety zone. The Fisheries Communication Plan should provide information on the location and size (maps and coordinates) of the program safety zones.

Anchors

The method of which the drilling unit will be held in position at the drill site, by dynamic positioning system or anchored to the seafloor, is an important distinction.

If the drilling unit will be utilizing anchors, program maps should include an illustration of the anchor pattern with accompanying latitudinal and longitudinal coordinates.

This information is relevant to the fishing industry in relation to the size of the safety zone maintained through the course of the project. If the drilling unit will be utilizing anchors, it is important to bring awareness to the total scope and radius of the program safety zone.

Transit Routes

A map and coordinates of the transit route should be shared early in the engagement process and re-circulated if changes are made. Transit information should include the route plan for supply vessels and for the drilling unit to first drill site and subsequent drill sites.

Anticipated Wellhead Locations and Wellhead Abandonment

The Plan should identify the location of wellheads and information on wellhead abandonment or suspension specific to the program. The fishing industry should be informed and consulted on plans for leaving wellheads above the seafloor, temporarily or permanently. The fishing industry purports that if wellheads are left in place, these locations will need to be avoided in the future and will impact fishing activity beyond the temporal scope of the exploration drilling activity.

ii. OTHER INFORMATION RECOMMENDED FOR INCLUSION IN THE FISHERIES COMMUNICATION PLAN

- ✓ Name and photos of the drilling unit being utilized for the program.
- ✓ Name and number of supply vessels being utilized for the program.

- ✓ An assessment for the deployment of a Fisheries Liaison Officer or Fisheries Guide Vessel.
- ✓ Communication plan that will be activated in the event of an oil spill.
- ✓ Company contact information for oil spill and gear damage compensation claims.
- ✓ Agreed timeline for notification of drilling unit moves between well locations outside the exploration licence (EL) and if applicable, notification of drilling unit moves within the EL.
- ✓ Expected date of information sharing related to follow-up programs. Reports on drilling follow-up programs should be sent to One Ocean and fishing industry members upon completion.
- ✓ The agreed upon timeframes/schedule for email updates from the operator to fishing industry contacts.