

## **Board Releases Decision Report on Cohasset Decommissioning**

January 26, 2005

**Halifax, NS** - The Canada - Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board (the Board) has published its Decision Report on an application from EnCana Corporation to amend the Cohasset Development Plan for the abandonment of the project.

Subject to the specific work authorizations, EnCana will be allowed to abandon its interfield pipeline on the seafloor, but it must remove parts of other subsea equipment that may pose a snagging hazard to the commercial fisheries.

The Board has imposed the following conditions on the approval of the amendment to the Development Plan:

- 1.** The applicant shall comply with all requirements, mitigation, and follow-up measures identified in the Environmental Screening Report – Cohasset Phase II Decommissioning.
- 2.** The applicant shall remove the topsides from the Pipeline End Manifolds (PLEMs), including lifting shackles, sacrificial anodes, and any other material that extends beyond the PLEM base.
- 3.** Prior to the Board issuing a work authorization for Phase II decommissioning work, the Applicant shall submit to the Board a plan, satisfactory to the Board, which addresses post abandonment ongoing liability.

The Board reached this decision after a thorough regulatory process, which included a review of safety matters, best international practices, the environmental assessment, regulatory responsibilities, and comments from interested parties. The Decision Report provides details of the issues that the Board reviewed and analyzed to reach its decision.

An environmental assessment, conducted in accordance with the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, showed that neither the partial nor total removal options are likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects. A risk assessment of both options indicated that the total removal of all subsea material posed more risk to the health and safety of workers than the partial removal option.

Under the Accord Acts, the amendment of a development plan is a fundamental decision. The Board is required to give the federal and provincial ministers responsible for the Accord Acts 30 days notice before implementing such a decision. The ministers can approve the decision, set it aside, or extend their review period for an additional 30 days. In this case, the notice was provided and the ministers have extended the time limit on their review another 30 days. Therefore this decision will not be implemented until this time period expires on February 23rd, 2005, or the Board has been notified of the ministers' decision, whichever comes first.

The Cohasset Offshore Oil Project was approved in 1990 and was Canada's first offshore oil project when production began in 1992. It was operated by EnCana Corporation and stopped production in December of 1999 after producing 7.1 million cubic metres (44.5 million barrels) of oil. There were a number of amendments made to the original Cohasset Development Plan over the seven year life of the project.

The Board's Decision Report is available on-line on its website ([www.cnsopb.ns.ca](http://www.cnsopb.ns.ca)); by contacting the Board's office at CNSOPB, 6th Floor – TD Centre, 1791 Barrington Street, Halifax, NS, B3J 3K9; or by calling 902-422-5588.

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