

# Regulatory Enhancement Project

## Background

The Regulatory Enhancement Task Force was established in March 2010 to review the province's upstream oil and gas regulatory system.

The review looked at the system with an eye to ensuring our province has a modern, efficient, outcomes-based system that maintains our strong commitment to the environment.

After extensive engagement, the Task Force, chaired by MLA Diana McQueen, made six recommendations to government:

- Establish a Policy Management Office;
- Establish a single oil, gas, oil sands and coal regulator;
- Provide a clear public engagement process;
- Establish a common risk assessment and management approach;
- Establish a performance measurement framework and public reporting mechanism;
- Develop an effective mechanism to address landowner concerns.

Together, all six recommendations will ensure Alberta has a regulatory system that benefits Alberta's and Canada's economy.

### Alberta Energy Regulator

The most visible component of the recommendations is to establish the single regulator.

The Government of Alberta passed legislation to create the regulator in December 2012. The *Responsible Energy*

*Development Act* creates a new regulatory body for upstream oil, gas, oil sands and coal.

This is a one-stop approach that will make it easier for Albertans and industry to navigate the system.

The single regulator will be more effective and efficient.

This new system will benefit not only Alberta's economy, but Canada's economy. It will help ensure we remain an attractive place to do business while also ensuring that the environment is protected and landowners are respected.

It is expected to begin a phased approach to operations this June.

### Landowner Improvements

The new system will allow landowners to be heard earlier on in the development process, before decisions are made.

The new regulator will provide notice to Albertans about project applications across the province. This is an improvement over the current system that sometimes allows the regulator to make decisions without providing notice.

The legislation allows all Albertans who believe they are directly and adversely affected by an application the ability to provide a statement of concern to the regulator. This happens before decisions are made, which is important to note. The regulator will have the best information possible before any decisions are made and before hearings are held.

Standing will be granted to people who are directly and adversely affected by a decision.

The single regulator will have authority over all decision and review processes, and there are provisions for applying to the Court of Appeal.

Under this new system, the decision-making process will be streamlined. It will create a better opportunity for stakeholders to have input into the process before decisions are made, rather than having to challenge a decision after it's made.

If you were missed during the notification process and a decision has been made and if you are directly and adversely affected you can request a regulatory appeal.

The legislation gives the single regulator the authority to require that both parties participate in an alternative dispute resolution process when appropriate to do so.

### **Landowner Registry**

Landowners may register private agreements with the single regulator. Simply put, landowners can ask the regulator to determine if a company is complying with the terms and conditions of the agreement. If the regulator finds that company is not complying, it may issue an order directing the company to comply.

### **Integrated Resource Management System**

The Alberta Energy Regulator is one component of the work the province is doing to integrate its resource management system.

Other key elements of integrating the resource management system are a new environmental monitoring system and land-use planning.

### **More information**

For more information, visit <http://www.energy.alberta.ca/Initiatives/RegulatoryEnhancement.asp>