

New AER Standards for In Situ Oil Sands Project Applications and Their Potential Effect on Geoscientists

Brad S. Gilmour¹ and Neil W. Stalport²

¹Bennett Jones LLP, Calgary, Alberta, Canada

²Statoil Canada Ltd., Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Abstract

The new Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) is in the process of finalizing a new version of Directive 023: *Oil Sands Project Applications* for scheduled release in 2014. Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development (ESRD) had issued in August 2013 a new version of the *Guide to Content for Industrial Approval Applications*, which also applies to oil sands project applications. This presentation will look at the implications of these new standards for obtaining approval of oil sands scheme applications, and how consolidating the mandates of the former Alberta Energy Resources Conservation Board (“ERCB”) with those of ESRD as they relate to the approval of in-situ oil sands projects could potentially affect that process. Important geological issues, such as those relating to caprock and wellbore integrity, will also be discussed in the context of the new requirements.