



**OTC 20240**

## **What's New Offshore Nova Scotia**

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This paper was prepared for presentation at the 2009 Offshore Technology Conference held in Houston, Texas, USA, 4–7 May 2009.

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### **Abstract**

Nova Scotia's large offshore area of ~250,000 square kilometers has been explored since the late 1960s. On the continental shelf, two oil fields have been produced and abandoned, five gas fields are under production and a Jurassic carbonate bank gas project is scheduled to begin production in 2010. With the exception of the successful carbonate bank play, recent shelf exploration drilling efforts ending in 2004 failed to identify any new commercially viable fields.

A six well drilling effort on the deep water slope ending in 2004 mainly targeted Cretaceous turbidite sands in water depths up to 2091 m. Gas was discovered in the deep water, but not in economic quantities. Well results indicated that the geology of this area is poorly understood.

The Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board (CNSOPB) has undertaken numerous initiatives in order to encourage further exploration both on the shelf and slope. These include:

- improving the terms and conditions for exploration licences,
- increasing the CNSOPB's geoscience staff and increasing the publication of G&G evaluations,
- providing online access to digital geoscience data via the web.

The first CNSOPB nominated "Call for Bids" parcels offshore Nova Scotia implementing these new licence terms and conditions, closed in June 2008 with total work expenditure bids of \$216,800,000. These results also led to a new company becoming active in Nova Scotia's offshore. New Call for Bids interpretation packages have advanced the public geological knowledge of the offshore and will allow companies to enter the area with an advanced understanding of the geology.

With almost half a billion cubic feet of gas a day flowing from offshore Nova Scotia to the eastern portions of Canada and the United States, Nova Scotia represents an important region for present and future gas supply. Providing advanced geological interpretations and the improving the terms and conditions for new exploration licences will make it more attractive for companies to explore in this area.

### **Introduction**

Nova Scotia's offshore area is 850 km long with a shelf extending over 200 km to the continental slope break as shown in Figure 1. The slope extends for another 100 km to 4000 m of water depth and a further 200 to 300 km to the jurisdictional limit. Out of the total 204 wells drilled to date, 127 have been exploration wells. This drilling has resulted in 23 Significant Discoveries.

The Canada Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board (CNSOPB) is an independent joint agency of the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia responsible for the regulation of petroleum activities in the Nova Scotia Offshore Area, including:

- Health & safety for offshore workers