

Statement

GREENPEACE

Oil regulator's claims to have imposed strict conditions on Shell drilling "complete sham": Greenpeace

21 October 2015 (Toronto) – Responding to the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board's (CNSOPB) decision to allow Shell to drill off the coast of Nova Scotia and keep a critical piece of oil spill response equipment in Norway, from where it would take 12 days to transport it to the wellsite in the event of a blowout, Greenpeace Canada Arctic campaigner Alex Speers-Roesch said:

"The CNSOPB's claim that they have imposed stricter conditions on Shell's drilling is a complete sham. They say [they have required Shell](#) to reduce the time to cap a blowout from 12-21 days to 12-13 days. This supposed improvement is an illusion, and was achieved not through any substantive change in Shell's plans, but by simply revising their guess for how long it would take to cap a blowout once the capping stack was onsite."

"This is a disturbing example of a public regulator putting the interests of an oil company ahead of public safety. Given the board is made up mostly of people from the oil industry, including the person who actually opened Shell's offshore exploration office in Nova Scotia, this decision comes as no shock."

"The only way to reliably reduce the oil spill response time is to keep the capping stack in Halifax, not an ocean away in Norway. If Shell can have a 24 hour response time when drilling in remote Alaska, it can certainly do the same in Nova Scotia."

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Note to editors:

Shell has estimated it would take 12 days to transport the capping stack from Norway, and they estimated up to nine days more to actually cap the well, leading to the 12-21 day estimate. However, capping stacks are not always reliable and the nine day estimate was just a guess. Capping a blowout can take days or even weeks, and in some cases, such as the catastrophic 2010 BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, a capping stack may fail completely to stop a spill without additional response measures, such as the drilling of a relief well. More details available at the [Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency](#) website (Table 8.1.1 on page 8.14).