

# AER Bulletin 2013-05

November 22, 2013

## **AER Implementation, Phase 2, Information Technology Implications**

As the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) continues to implement sections of the *Responsible Energy Development Act (REDA)*, industry is advised of the following implications related to information systems that will occur on proclamation on November 30, 2013. On this date, certain responsibilities for energy resource regulation under the *Public Lands Act (PLA)* and the *Mines and Minerals Act (MMA)* will transition to the AER, including responsibility for applications and related approvals.

### **Legislation, Regulations, and Rules**

Regulations and rules have been developed and passed by the Government of Alberta and the AER to provide further details as to the legal framework of the AER. These include the following:

- *Responsible Energy Development Act General Regulation*
- *Responsible Energy Development Act General Amendment Regulation*
- *Specified Enactments (Jurisdiction) Regulation*
- *Alberta Energy Regulator Rules of Practice*
- *Alberta Energy Regulator Rules of Practice Amendment Regulation*
- *Enforcement of Private Surface Agreement Rules*

### **Systems That Will be Utilized by the AER in Connection with Phase 2**

In order to support AER regulation of *PLA* and *MMA* matters, the AER has arranged continued use of information systems developed by Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development (ESRD). These systems have been modified to segregate energy resource transactions that will become the responsibility of AER (e.g., applications processing) from those that will remain the responsibility of ESRD. The system modification impacts will be minimal to end-users and will continue to function in the same manner as prior to proclamation with the exception that these systems will now also be accessible from the AER System and Tools Portal.

The AER System and Tools Portal was deployed in June 2013, enabling industry to access former ERCB systems and to provide improved public access to information such as regulations, acts, reports, and news releases. With the transfer of parts of the *PLA* and the *MMA* to the AER, the System & Tools Portal will enable industry to access and submit information to systems used for *PLA* and *MMA* authorizations and reporting. The System and Tools Portal will provide hyperlinks and short descriptions of the relevant systems, listed in table 1.

Table 1: List of systems accessible from the AER System & Tools Portal

System/tool	Description	Classification
Application Disposition Processing and Tracking (ADEPT)	The objective of ADEPT is to automate the application, referral, approval, and mapping processes for geophysical clients. Using ADEPT, users can submit geophysical plans and have them validated in real-time. Clients with successful submissions will receive a geophysical number while unsuccessful submissions will showcase errors that require attention prior to resubmission.	Inquiry tool
Disposition Spatial Processing Tool (DSPT)	DSPT lets users access maps showing proposed surface activities in real time. Users can now view dispositions using the digital integrated dispositions (DIDs) function as well as access provisional and other background data layers using the DSPT.  Using the DSPT, members of the public are able to navigate to an area of interest and create, view, and print PDF maps. Activities of interest can also be located using search tools and specifying the associated land areas.	Inquiry tool
Electronic Assignments Program (ETS)	The Electronic Assignments Program is part of the broader Electronic Transfer System (ETS) and facilitates the assignment of surface dispositions issued under the <i>Public Lands Act</i> within the province of Alberta, where over 15 000 oil and gas dispositions are approved annually. Electronic assignments encompass all transactions, documents, and data exchanges associated with the assignment of the disposition holder's interest in a surface disposition to another party.  Under the ETS umbrella, the electronic assignments program can be used for accessing and conveying information for a number of different applications such as land searches or e-transfers. Oil and gas agreement transfers include dispositions for easements, licenses of occupation, mineral surface leases, pipeline installations leases, pipeline agreements, and vegetation control easements.	Inquiry tool

inquiries 1-855-297-8311  
 24-hour  
 emergency 1-800-222-6514

System/tool	Description	Classification
Electronic Disposition System (EDS)	The Electronic Disposition System (EDS) is an online tool that allows users to electronically submit specified applications, amendments, and associated documents for surface dispositions to the AER. In addition, clients can use the EDS to check on the status of previously filed applications and amendments, request site entry numbers or submit and No Entry cancellation request. Access is available through SecureXNET	Application
Landscape Analysis Tool (LAT)	Landscape Analysis Tool (LAT) is a web-enabled mapping tool that allows users access to GIS-based landscape information and constraints to support planning of activities on Crown lands. Access is provided through SecureXNET	Application
Plan Confirmation Services system (PCS)	The AER manages energy-related surface dispositions on public land in accordance with the <i>Public Lands Act</i> and its related legislation and policies. In accordance with the act, each application or amendment for a surface activity on public land requires the inclusion of a plan (sketch or survey) indicating the activity to be conducted and its proximity to existing dispositions.  Before submitting activity plans to the Electronic Disposition System, they must first be submitted to the secure PCS system for metadata input, virus and level checking, zipping, and encryption. Plan packages that are approved by the system will be processed and sent back to the applicant with a confirmation number. All surface disposition plans identified for digital submission MUST be processed by the PCS system.  Access is provided through SecureXNET	Application
SecureXNET	This tool enables parties to obtain user ID and password (sign-on) capabilities to a number of systems used for <i>PLA</i> and <i>MMA</i> regulatory matters, including EDS, LAT, and PCS.	

### Systems Support Single Point of Contact

Applicants should contact the AER customer contact centre for system-related questions (Calgary area: 403-297-8311, Toll-free: 1-855-297-8311). The AER will coordinate systems support matters to ensure that applicant issues are addressed promptly and effectively.

## Technical Issues Stakeholders May Need to Address

Certain changes implemented to enable the AER's use of ESRD systems may impact users depending on their e-mail and network security settings.

Systems used for *PLA* and *MMA* regulation are configured to issue e-mail communications, and these systems-generated communications will continue. The systems will issue e-mail from a gov.ab.ca server; however, the return address will be set to an AER server (aer.ca). This difference in sending and return address may result in security systems identifying the e-mail as spam, with a result that users may not receive notices and approvals they are expecting. The AER recommends that security systems settings be reviewed and that users ensure that e-mail filter whitelists include both the gov.ab.ca and aer.ca domains.

## Systems Outage Information

In order to implement the systems changes that support transition of *PLA* and *MMA* responsibilities to the AER, certain ESRD systems will be unavailable from November 28, 2013, at 14:00 hours until December 2, 2013, at 08:00 hours. During this outage, industry will not be able to submit applications under the *PLA* or *MMA*. The AER will assume its *PLA* and *MMA* responsibilities once services are restored on December 2, 2013.

Work is already underway to ensure that any applications in progress are either completed by ESRD prior to November 28, 2013, or are transferred to the AER for processing in an orderly manner. This effort is being directed at ensuring continuity and timely processing of pending applications so that the transition is as seamless as possible for applicants.

Systems currently operated by the AER will not be affected by the outage.

## Transition Management

The AER is committed to ensuring a smooth transition during the transfer of new regulatory functions from ESRD. If delays are experienced during the processing and dispositioning of *PLA* and *MMA* applications the AER will implement contingency plans to reduce the impact of any delays and to ensure priority submissions (e.g., 2014 winter drilling programs) are immediately addressed.

*<original signed by>*

Tom Heywood  
Acting Executive Vice President  
Corporate Services

inquiries 1-855-297-8311  
24-hour  
emergency 1-800-222-6514