



**CNSOER**  
CANADA - NOVA SCOTIA OFFSHORE ENERGY REGULATOR

## **PRIVACY ACT 2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT TO PARLIAMENT**

### **Introduction**

The *Privacy Act* gives Canadian citizens & foreign nationals the right to access personal information held by the government and protection of that information against unauthorized use and disclosure. Ministers and heads of agencies are responsible to ensure that their organizations comply with privacy legislation.

This is the annual report to Parliament on the administration of the *Privacy Act* within the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Energy Regulator (CNSOER) during the CNSOER's financial year ending March 31, 2025, prepared in accordance with Section 72 of the *Privacy Act* and is tabled in Parliament as required by Section 72 of the Act.

The CNSOER does not have any non-operational subsidiaries.

### **The CNSOER**

Established in 1990, the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Energy Regulator (CNSOER), formerly the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board, is an independent joint agency created by the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia pursuant to the *Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation and Offshore Renewable Energy Management Act, S.C. 1988, c.28*, and the *Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Resources Accord Implementation and Offshore Renewable Energy Management (Nova Scotia) Act, S.N.S. 1987, c.3 (Accord Acts)*. On January 31, 2025 the *Accord Acts* were expanded to include offshore renewable energy.

The CNSOER is the lead and lifecycle offshore energy regulator, responsible for regulating renewable energy and petroleum exploration and development activities that take place in the Canada-Nova Scotia offshore area. We apply our extensive expertise to ensure that operators take all reasonable precautions to protect the health and safety of workers and the environment. Our regulatory responsibilities include:

- Health and safety of offshore workers
- Protection of the environment
- Administration of land tenure processes and management of licences
- Geoscience evaluation, data collection, curation and distribution
- Management and conservation of offshore petroleum resources and
- Canada-Nova Scotia employment and industrial benefits for petroleum related activities.

The CNSOER reports to the federal Minister of Energy and Natural Resources in Ottawa, Ontario, and the provincial Minister of Natural Resources in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The Board of Directors is composed of five members and two alternate members; the Chair is appointed jointly by the federal and provincial governments; two

members and an alternate member are appointed by the federal government and two members, and an alternate member are appointed by the Nova Scotia provincial government. There are no vacancies on the Board of Directors.

### **CNSOER Organizational Structure**

At the end of the 2024-25 reporting period, the CNSOER had a staff of 23 employees. Our staff is comprised of health and safety, environment, geoscience and conservation specialists that provide direction and regulation to offshore energy companies in the Canada-Nova Scotia offshore area. The remainder of the staff provide technical and administrative support. The Information Services staff handles archived data submitted by offshore operators as required by the authorization process and samples submitted from offshore exploration.

The Chair of the Board was designated as the “head” of the Board of Directors within the meaning of Section 3.2(2) of the *Access to Information Act* by an amendment dated August 12, 2021 (SI/2021-52) of the *Access to Information Act Heads of Government Institutions Designation Order, P.C. 1983-1835*. The Chair of the Board has designated the CNSOER’s Chief Executive Officer; Analyst, Regulatory Policy; General Counsel; and Director, Information Services to exercise or perform any of the powers, duties, or functions of the Chair of the Board under the *Access to Information Act* in accordance with Section 95(2) of the *Access to Information Act*. (A copy of the Delegation Order is attached).

The Analyst, Regulatory Policy acts as Coordinator with assistance of the General Counsel, Director, Information Services and the CEO as needed. The CNSOER does not have any services agreements under Section 73.1 of the *Privacy Act*.

### **Performance 2024-2025**

One formal privacy request was received and closed within 15 days of receipt during the reporting period of 2024-25. This is consistent with the 2021-22 and 2022-23 reporting periods and a decline from 2023-24 where two formal requests were received. No records or personal information regarding the individual existed within the institution. One hundred percent of requests have been closed during the reporting period. No complaints have been received during this period, and the CNSOER has no open complaints with the Privacy Commissioner. No consultation requests from other institutions were received.

A total of \$945 in salaries was allocated to responding to one request and time spent on the 2023-24 Annual Report under the Privacy Act.

### **Training and Awareness**

The Access to Information & Privacy Coordinator provided an overview of the *Privacy Act* and the CNSOER’s responsibilities under the Act to all staff during a lunch and learn event in person in September 2024.

An orientation to information management and the *Access to Information & Privacy Acts* are provided to new hires at the CNSOER. During this period two new employees received such training.

The Access to Information coordinator attends ATI Coordinator meetings virtually as well as information sessions provided by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat to keep up to date on changes in the Act and processes. The coordinator updates staff to any changes in the Acts as required.

### **Initiatives & Projects to Improve Privacy**

All staff have been individually briefed on Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA), including how it protects their CNSOER accounts and devices. To further enhance cybersecurity, CNSOER uses SonicWall Cloud Security to monitor OneDrive, SharePoint, and Exchange. Malwarebytes antivirus software is installed on all CNSOER workstations and servers to provide protection against viruses, malware, and malicious websites.

To strengthen its security posture, CNSOER has created a new position: Advisor, Information Technology Security and Continuity. This role is dedicated to safeguarding the organization's digital assets and ensuring the continuous operation of its IT systems. Responsibilities include managing and implementing security policies, procedures, and controls to defend against cyber threats and data breaches. The Advisor also leads business continuity and disaster recovery planning to minimize downtime and data loss during unforeseen events.

In addition, CNSOER has implemented several infrastructure upgrades to improve security. These include enhanced wireless services and content filtering systems designed to support both onsite and remote staff. A comprehensive maintenance plan—covering weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual cycles—has also been introduced to ensure timely application of patches and system updates.

### **Policies, Guidelines and Procedures**

Considering the small staff size and minimal formal request, the CNSOER has not found it necessary to develop individual formal policies and procedures for responding to requests under the Privacy Act. Instead, CNSOER policies and procedures for Privacy requests have been combined with CNSOER Access to Information policies and procedures. Formal requests for private information are referred to the CNSOER's ATIP Coordinator.

Information Technology and Management policies and procedures are maintained to educate staff on privacy and cyber security. No new policies, guidelines or procedures have been created during this reporting period.

### **Monitoring**

The ATIP Coordinator self monitors timelines of processing requests. Contracts are stored in our Electronic Records Management System with restricted access.

### **Material Privacy Breaches**

There were no privacy breaches during this period.

### **Privacy Impact Assessments**

There were no privacy impact assessments during this period.

### **Public Interest Disclosures**

There were no disclosures made under paragraph 8(2)(m) of the *Privacy Act* during this period.



## Delegation Under the Access to Information Act & Privacy Act

The Chairperson, Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Energy Regulator (CNSOER), pursuant to section 95(1) of the *Access to Information Act* and section 73(1) of the *Privacy Act*, hereby designates the persons holding the positions set out in the schedule hereto, or the persons occupying on an acting basis those positions, to exercise the powers, duties and functions of Chairperson as the head of CNSOER under the provisions of the Act and related regulations set out in the schedule opposite each position. This designation replaces all previous delegation orders.

Schedule		
Position	<i>Access to Information Act</i> and Regulations	<i>Privacy Act</i> and Regulations
Chief Executive Officer	Full authority	Full authority
General Counsel	Full authority	Full authority
Director, Information Services	Full authority	Full authority
Access to Information & Privacy Coordinator	Full authority	Full authority

September 4, 2025

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Barbara B. Pike, Chair of the Board  
Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Energy Regulator

Date