



Atlantic PIRI Annual Reporting Summary 2020

Forward

Atlantic PIRI (**P**artners in **R**isk Based Corrective Action Implementation) is in its 23rd year of regional cooperation among the four Atlantic Provincial Departments of Environment and industry stakeholders. This unique partnership has harmonized risk-based management of impacted sites in the Atlantic region and created conditions for regulatory certainty related to remediation and redevelopment in the Atlantic Provinces. Atlantic PIRI has been recognized as a regional success, benefitting human health, the environment, and the economy across the region.

The purpose of Atlantic PIRI is to facilitate the ongoing usage of a harmonized, risk-based approach for managing impacted sites in the Atlantic region using an (American Society for Testing and Materials) ASTM tool known as Risk Based Corrective Action (RBCA). Atlantic RBCA is specific to Atlantic Canada's needs and is equal to, or better than, Canada-Wide Standards (CWS) developed by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME).

The Atlantic PIRI partnership maintains Atlantic RBCA and creates a forum for identification and discussion of issues, developing standards and processes, and providing recommendations for continued technical and regulatory harmonization across the four Atlantic Provinces.

We are grateful for continued provincial and industry support through our existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that guides how we operate. The MOU has been periodically renewed to establish PIRI's continuing mandate to support regional brownfield and impacted site management, harmonization efforts, and maintaining the Atlantic RBCA technical and scientific tools. PIRI meets the objectives set out by the MOU in accordance with its core strengths and areas of expertise, principally related to scientific, technical and related regulatory issues.

We are pleased to provide a summary of Atlantic PIRI's 2020 activities and accomplishments.

Summary of 2020 Activities

The Partnership, like many organizations across the world in 2020, made some notable changes to its operational practices in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Although Atlantic PIRI held one regional face-to-face meeting (pre COVID-19 pandemic), all subsequent meetings were held virtually, along with regular teleconferences as part of advancing our work plan.

These meetings assist Atlantic PIRI in fulfilling its mandate and overall objectives as set out in the Memorandum of Understanding. Concurrent with these meetings, Atlantic PIRI regulator and industry co-chairs continued to discuss strategic initiatives and general administration of the committee from their remote work settings.

The year was marked by some notable milestones as the partnership continues to be guided by four core values:

- **Science-Based Decision Making**
- **Continuous Improvement**
- **Collaboration Among Stakeholders**
- **Regional Harmonization**

Science-Based Decision Making:

Successfully closed another 350 impacted site files in our region.

Atlantic PIRI provides regulators and regional stakeholders with the harmonized science-based tools needed to address issues, navigate regulatory processes, and ultimately provide the confidence needed to make sound decisions for managing impacted sites. This has the net effect of providing social, economic and environmental value for our communities.

Since 1997, the Atlantic RBCA toolkit has been successfully used to assess or remediate petroleum impacted sites and facilitate regulatory file closures for more than **9400** sites in Atlantic Canada. The Atlantic RBCA toolkit works by readying these properties for potential redevelopment opportunities.

Continuous Improvement:

Keeping up with changes in science by improving technical guidance.

Deeply rooted in Atlantic PIRI, is its desire to continuously improve the Atlantic RBCA process. In 2020, Atlantic PIRI undertook a significant Atlantic RBCA Toolkit update to ensure it provides equivalent, or better protection than CCME Canada Wide Standards for soil and incorporates appropriate advances in risk assessment for impacted sites.

Expected to be released mid-2021, Atlantic RBCA Toolkit Version 4 will include expanded subsurface volatilization modelling options including biodegradation which will allow stakeholders to assess potential exposure risks from petroleum hydrocarbons for a broader range of scenarios common to our region.

Atlantic PIRI was pleased to complete the *User Guidance* for chlorinated solvent contaminants and it is being incorporated into a new Atlantic RBCA Technical User Guidance for Impacted Sites to be released with the updated toolkit software.

Collaboration Among Stakeholders: *Fostering relationships to better serve Atlantic Canadians.*

Atlantic Regulators, having established a strong relationship over the years, carried on with regular virtual meetings (as needed), sharing regulatory experience, seeking jurisdictional insight and making progress on important project milestones.

Regional Harmonization: *Publishing a more comprehensive set of environmental standards.*

In 2020, Atlantic PIRI finalized a key harmonization opportunity which will drive the Atlantic RBCA Technical User Guidance to meet the needs of a wider range of stakeholders throughout the region. Rebranded, the Tier I Environmental Quality Standards (EQS) and Tier II Pathway Specific Standards (PSS) for soil, groundwater, surface water and sediment for use in the Atlantic Provinces will showcase another significant harmonization achievement.

Given the linkages of this project to the progress being made on an updated version of the Atlantic RBCA User Guidance, Atlantic PIRI will publish this comprehensive set of environmental standards on the Atlantic RBCA website, timed with the release of Atlantic RBCA Toolkit Version 4 in mid-2021.

Establishing a forum for discussion, collaboration, and harmonization.

The Atlantic PIRI forum enables regulators, industry, and environmental consultants to work together to identify barriers and issues that arise due to jurisdictional processes. The forum also enables provincial jurisdictions to agree on harmonized guiding principles and approaches, while policy requirements can be underpinned through regulatory discretion.

The Year Ahead

In the coming year, Atlantic PIRI will continue to strive toward goal achievement in the core value areas. Some noteworthy initiatives for the coming year include:

- Releasing Atlantic RBCA toolkit (Version 4)
- Publishing harmonized Tier I Environmental Quality Standards and Tier II Pathway Specific Standards for various contaminants
- Implementing Updated Technical User Guidance
- Strategic planning for the next five years

Atlantic PIRI

Atlantic PIRI wishes to thank Susan Barfoot (Wood PLC) and Justin Ly (Imperial) for their commitment to Atlantic PIRI throughout the years and welcomes its newest member Jessica Sherrard (Imperial)

The Atlantic PIRI team:

Government Representatives:

- Brent Cox (Nova Scotia, Co-Chair)
- Jonathan Kay (Nova Scotia)
- Jennifer Strickland (Newfoundland and Labrador)
- Barry Jackson (Prince Edward Island)
- Michel Poirier (New Brunswick)
- Rita Mroz (Environment & Climate Change Canada)

Industry Representatives:

- Bill Simpkins (Canadian Fuels Association, Co-Chair)
- Jessica Sherrard (Imperial Oil)
- Steve Little and Michelle Paul-Elias (Irving Oil)
- Holly Losignore (Suncor)

Regional Consulting Representatives:

- Kelly Johnson (Stantec)
- Jeff Earle (Dillon Consulting)
- Jamie O'Neill (GHD)
- Annick St-Amand (Stantec Consulting)

Communications/IT Representatives:

- Mary-lou Rossiter (Atlantic Resources Company Inc.)
- Joe Oliver (Inspiration Design)

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