# The ERF Connection

## The Electronic Regulatory Filing Newsletter

I'd like to welcome you to the second issue of *ERF Connection* and share with you some thoughts from two ERF-related sessions I recently attended.

At the recent ERF Joint External Advisory Committee (JEAC) session in Toronto I had the opportunity to meet some of the ERF community. It was an excellent session, with many joint presentations demonstrating the strength of the partnership between the OEB, the NEB and our stakeholders. As a *"new guy on the block"*, I was impressed with the enthusiasm and commitment which has been demonstrated by everyone involved to shape and drive this important and valuable project.

The importance of ERF became even more apparent one week later when I attended an internal workshop on Electronic Service Delivery (ESD) attended by managers from several Ontario regulatory agencies. The Ontario Government, like many other jurisdictions (e.g. the federal Government Online (GOL) initiative), has committed to improving its service quality by implementing client-focussed cost-effective ESD. The government's target is: "By 2003, to increase Ontarians' satisfaction with government services - by becoming a world leader in delivering services on-line". I was struck by how much ERF has provided the NEB and OEB with a headstart towards meeting our GOL and ESD service targets. While many other agencies are only now beginning to examine their business requirements in this area, we are now approaching the end of the technological challenges and beginning the work of implementing ERF in our agencies.

Of course there is still much to be done. I am particularly aware of the need for training, support and other change management initiatives. Based upon what I saw at the JEAC session, I am confident that we can work through these issues successfully and I expect we will see a dramatically different regulatory filing environment beginning April 2001. By that time, both Boards intend to have basic ERF repository and submission services available. As well, both Boards are planning to produce many ERF documents, both new and historical. I hope to see ERF documents coming in from your organizations as well so that we can all begin to reap the benefits of ERF.

*Jay Young*

OEB General Manager

## Message from the Project Managers

It was a real pleasure to get such positive response to the first edition of *ERF Connections*. Feedback ranged from "excellent format and content" to "what - you mean ERF is really going to happen?". We plan to keep the newsletter on the same current, practical and informative basis from now on. Do you have any thoughts to share about your experiences and tips for others as you plan for ERF within your company? Any questions that we haven't answered yet? Let us know (email: erf@neb.gc.ca), and we will make sure to include them in a future edition.

If you would like to be put on our distribution list, please e-mail erf@neb.gc.ca
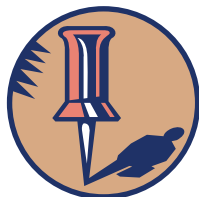
*Continued from Cover*

## *Message from the Project Managers*

Hot items since we last Connected with you:

- Our Joint External Advisory Committee (JEAC) meeting in Toronto at the end of September was well attended, and the next meeting is scheduled for April in Calgary. Two highlights were: initiating newcomers with the *Introduction to ERF/SGML* presentations and providing industry representatives with a "Dear President" letter proposed by Gaétan Caron (COO for the NEB).

- Training services and delivery of training materials are being tendered out. In the next issue of *The Connection*, we will update you on the training.

- The OEB core repository is currently being moved from the vendor's computers to the OEB network in preparation for system acceptance testing.

- The NEB has awarded a contract for evaluating the technological differences between the OEB and the NEB in preparation for *adopting and adapting* the OEB repository.

- We now have a diagram (see page 5) showing details of the personal computer configuration recommended for accessing the various features of the ERF system.

- JEAC has approved the Boards' plans for a phased roll-out of the ERF technology and agreed that the functionality planned for Phase 1 is acceptable.

For more information about these and other developments, read on, enjoy...

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*Dear President*,

Our regulators will be ready on April 1, 2001 to begin e-regulation.

This will mean that we will have electronic access to past regulatory documents and the ability to begin interacting with the NEB and/or OEB electronically, for some submissions.

This ability will reduce costs and improve the efficiency of regulatory proceedings. As an organization, we have invested a lot during the last several years. The time has come to start to reap the benefits of our investment.

Electronic Regulatory Filing (ERF) is not a technology issue. It is a business issue and a business opportunity. I believe that this is a question that will greatly interest you, our executive team and our entire regulatory group.

Our organization must develop a clear internal vision and plan as to how we will proceed in an electronic environment with our regulators. Clearly, not everything will be filed electronically at the start. This process has yet to be defined. Full electronic processing will increase over time. Once we have a clear strategy, we must let our regulators know.

The changes about to begin are important. They will require careful change management, including training and management of cultural changes. To prepare for the beginning of e-regulation, we will need to gather a cross-section of key people from legal services, regulatory experts and witnesses, document production (e.g., graphics, printing, etc.), Human Resources, etc.

The people in our organization accountable for regulatory affairs will play a key role in ensuring an effective implementation of Electronic Regulatory Filing (ERF) and communicating with our regulators.

If you agree with my recommendation, I am prepared to facilitate our implementation of Electronic Regulatory Filing (ERF).

Yours sincerely,

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ERF Co-ordinator
XYZ Organization

# Hearing Room @ OEB

Electronic Regulatory Filing is coming.....and soon! To fully reap the benefits of ERF, significant changes for both stakeholders and their respective regulators will be necessary. In order to facilitate the use of ERF, the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) is remodeling and moving its hearing rooms.

In designing their two new hearing rooms, the OEB had two objectives:

1. to design the rooms to maximize their use; and

2. to leverage the technological changes required for ERF.

In both instances, care had to be taken to ensure that the new hearing rooms did not impede the hearing process. Natural justice cannot be compromised by ERF. The Board then had to ensure that the needs of all participants were met, from Board members, staff, applicants, intervenors to the general public.

## Hearing Room Features

The hearing rooms are designed to be:

### Accessible

To allow simultaneous French translation and full wheelchair accessibility.

### Flexible

To maximize their use, the hearing rooms were designed to be set up to meet various needs: from the formal hearing layout, to a meeting room layout for work sessions and Alternative Dispute Resolution, to a theatre layout for presentations or quarterly general office meetings.

The flexible layout is made possible with new custom-designed collapsible folding tables. The tables fold up and can be moved or stored as needed, and will allow the Board to maximize the use of the rooms. New stacking chairs, some with either left or right tablets, will also be used.

### Technological

To facilitate the use of ERF, significant technological changes are required.

The hearing room tables are now designed for laptops and will contain all the electrical and computer connections required for their use, including modem connections. All participants (Board members, staff, applicants, intervenors) will be expected to use their own laptop computers to access the ERF repository and search documents or to check their e-mail.

For the general public who do not have laptops and wish to follow the proceedings of the public hearing, two walk-up computer stations are available in each hearing room and projection screens will be positioned throughout the room to view materials as they are displayed on the flat screen monitors. Any referenced material will be automatically displayed on all the monitors, including recessed flat screen monitors on each table.

## NEB Repository Implementation - Step by Step

The National Energy Board has begun its five-step approach to implement the OEB's Core Document Repository (CDR). **Step One**, the Gap Analysis, began in October and will determine the technical architecture and the changes required to meet NEB requirements. **Step Two**, Site Preparation, begins in November and involves setting up the technical architecture to support the CDR.

When the OEB finalizes its CDR development in Toronto, **Step Three**, Customization, will begin in Calgary. During this step, the CDR will be installed and modified to meet NEB requirements. Prior to its release, the CDR will be tested by NEB staff and selected clients from the user community. This activity is the focus of **Step Four**, Acceptance Testing. It is anticipated that acceptance testing will wrap up in February leaving enough time for revisions and **Step Five**, Rollout, in April.

For more information on the NEB implementation strategy contact James Obrigewitch (jobrigewitch@neb.gc.ca)

# Preparing for ERF - Part 2 Implementation

In Part 1 of *Preparing for ERF* (see the Summer 2000 issue) four steps were identified to assist organisations in adopting ERF.

1.  Appoint an ERF co-ordinator (e-mail information to erf@neb.gc.ca);

2.  Establish an authoring strategy (Downstream, Upstream, or Funnel);

3.  Select an SGML authoring tool (Corel WordPerfect +SGML or SoftQuad XmetaL); and

4.  Prepare for implementation.

This article expands on this last point with a focus on general change management initiatives such as identifying stakeholders, changing processes, as well as preparing for the technology.

## What does ERF mean to me?

The answer is ... it depends. ERF will have a major impact on the way that your company interacts with regulatory Boards. Although a date for mandatory filing has not been set, organisations will be able to start filing electronically April 1, 2001 and possibly sooner for the OEB. People will need to adapt to the use of electronic copies and reduce or eliminate their reliance on paper copies to access, distribute, and submit documents.

If you wish to search and browse public documents, you will now have another point of access, a Web site. ERF is based on a pull versus push concept: instead of distributing (push) multiple paper copies, people would be advised that a document is available and they are to access it via ERF (pull). This ERF function is called **Research**.

If you wish to submit documents to the Board, you will be required at some point to provide these in SGML and submit them electronically. These Electronic Regulatory Filing (ERF) functions are called **Authoring** and **Submission**.

## Identify All ERF Stakeholders in your Organisation

To identify people that may be impacted or concerned with the implementation of ERF think about the whole process of creating and filing. Who is involved? Consider EVERYONE who may be impacted, even if only marginally, from the start of an application to final submission e.g. Who uses regulatory documents? Who creates, validates or approves content? Who packages and distributes documents? Who is the ERF co-ordinator and are several needed for different locations?

Once you have identified your stakeholders think about:

*   What is the **impact** of ERF on them: High, Med, Low? Will they need to learn new processes and skills? How do they use ERF: research, author and/or submit?

    Note: Authors must understand the content of the documents to properly "tag" them in SGML.

*   What is their level of **commitment** to this project: High, Med, Low? Who could make implementation easier or more difficult? Every company has natural leaders whose opinions matter.

*   What will be their role or level of **involvement** in implementing ERF? Are they informed of, involved in, or responsible for ERF activities? Inform your senior management, get their support.

Discover what the stakeholders know, what they want to know, and what the change means to them. Focus your attention especially on low-commitment, high-impact groups. These are the stakeholders who are most important to success. The high-commitment, high-impact groups are your firm allies, and you should enlist their help in the change process, perhaps to help the low-commitment groups get on board. The low-commitment, low-impact groups need to be kept abreast of change, but not involved. Support from a wide group within your company is important to successful change.

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## Change Processes, build new habits

By talking to stakeholders about ERF you will be able to assess its impact on your organisation's processes. Once you have determined your authoring strategy (see Part 1 of *Preparing for ERF*) and the impact of ERF on your corporate landscape, get key stakeholders to work with your organisation's ERF co-ordinator on defining which processes need to be changed and how.

Think about **People** and **Workflow** e.g. Will job descriptions change? Are new positions required? Will existing processes work electronically? Have decision and approval points changed? How can new habits be adopted (e.g. go to Web site instead of the library)?

To reduce resistance to change, involve all impacted individuals and properly document and communicate the new processes.

## Install and Support Technology

Work with IT and other specialist staff to make sure all software is ordered and installed in time for e-regulation. Involve your help desk staff, as your organisation is responsible for supporting the applications you purchase and install.

## What is Next?

Do effective change management. Identify and involve your stakeholders. Develop and initiate process changes as required. Do not underestimate the effort this requires. The next issue of the newsletter will focus on rollout activities with a focus on testing the authoring tools and training.

**Can the Boards help?**
Yes, to some extent

- *What do your stakeholders need to know?* We will continue to publish the joint newsletter and update our Web sites.

- *Is there a need for ERF briefings?* We can present to groups of companies and key players or ask Board executives to talk to your senior management.

- *What do you think of the "Introduction to ERF/SGML" training presentations?* Give us your feedback so we can improve them.

## ERF Workstation Configurations

| Workstation | Hardware[1] | Software | ERF Software |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | **You Buy** | **ERF Provided** |
| **Research** | | Adobe Acrobat Reader (free) | Access to ERF web site |
| **Authoring** | Windows 9x/NT 64MB RAM+ 233MHz CPU+ 4GB HDD+ Internet connection | Local Office Suite **Browser** IE/Netscape v3+ Supports: frames, Java, RealAudio[2] | **Authoring Tools[3]** / **Authoring Environment[3]** |
| | | - Softquad XmetaL v1.2+ (requires IE5) (≈ $495) | -XMAE |
| | | **or** | **or** |
| | | - WordPerfect v8+ (≈ $187) | -WPAE |
| | | **Utilities** • Omnimark v5.1 (free) • Java JRE v1.2 (free) • Graphics software e.g. SnagIt, PhotoShop, etc. | **Author Assist** |
| **Submission** | | **TBD -** Submission in currently under development. | |

1 PC sizing specifications are approximate and may vary in local environments based upon other considerations e.g. network
2 RealAudio required for Internet broadcasts from OEB Automated Hearing Room
3 To select the authoring tool and environment refer to table on page 5 of the Summer 2000 issue

# What's up in ERF?

## Updates to the ERF Prototype

The NEB launched its prototype of the ERF Repository on May 1, 1999. Since the launch, several clients have taken the time to provide us with some valuable feedback.
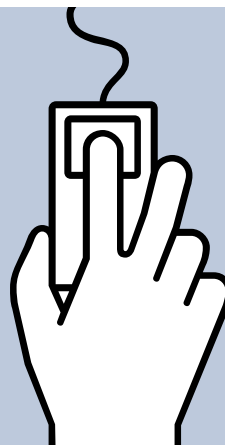
The majority of the comments have been positive. Clients are pleased to see historical Reasons for Decisions and Hearing Transcripts available over the Web. The documents are available in PDF format only. Although this format has some search limitations, it has been ideal for distributing "print ready" information.

In response to the feedback, we made a few modifications to the prototype repository in October that should make it more user friendly. Changes include: total hit count added to search results page, number of documents on search results page increased from 10 to 25, search result page no longer shows document summaries, guest login button added to login screen, and other minor interface changes.

To access the prototype repository and background information, point your browser to http://www.neb.gc.ca/erf/prottype.
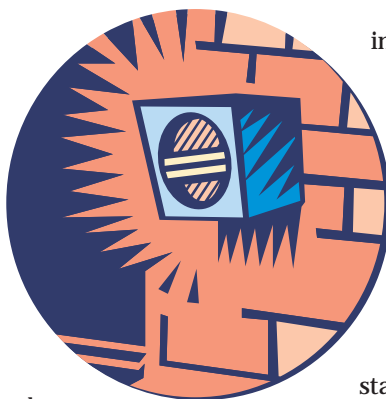
## Quick reference mouse pads

The NEB is developing flip-top mouse pads to serve as quick reference support tools for ERF trainees. The mouse pads will provide instructions, shortcuts, etc. at the user's fingertips. The special see-through plastic cover lifts up for easy changing of inserts. A variety of inserts will be developed in conjunction with the training and will be available on-line. This tool is a low cost method for distributing tailored quick reference tips and updates quickly and easily.

## Rollout Communications

Rollouts go more smoothly if everyone feels involved, so spread the information net widely. Use existing vehicles (such as newsletters, e-mail, Intranet, etc.) and word of mouth (ERF stakeholders) to communicate your company's ERF plan and progress. Identify your ERF co-ordinator and key ERF stakeholders to everyone, so people know where to go to ask questions.

Refer people to the ERF Web site (http://www.neb.gc.ca/erf) where they can access background information, newsletters, and other documentation. Use the *"Introduction to ERF/SGML"* presentations as a workshop for stakeholders or as a "lunch and learn".

Remember: stay positive, but don't oversell. For example: "Will authoring be easy?" No. Learning to author in SGML is not simple, but the customised tools and an understanding of regulatory documents will make it easier.

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# What's up around the World?

## Voluntary Internet filing of protests and comments to FERC

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's *Electronic Filing Initiative* (EFI) will start accepting protests and comments via the Internet on a voluntary basis. Documents will be stored in PDF and TIFF file formats and posted on the *Records and Information Management System* (RIMS). To account for inconsistencies in formatting, parties to a proceeding must cite document page numbers found in the PDF image.

**For more information:**
*EFI* http://www.ferc.fed.us/efi/efi.htm
*RIMS* http://rimsweb1.ferc.fed.us
*Order 619* http://cips.ferc.fed.us/Q/CIPS/RULES/RM/RM00-12.000.TXT

Note: ERF has addressed a number of similar issues during its design. For example: ERF documents use reference points to number paragraphs not pages. This ensures, regardless of the file format, that everyone can easily find a cited reference.

## E-business reporting interface between industry and government in the works

The *Volumetric and Infrastructure Petroleum Information Registry* (VIPIR) will facilitate the electronic exchange of data between upstream oil and gas industry partners and between industry and the Alberta Ministry of Resource Development and the Energy and Utilities Board (EUB).

**For more information**
http://www.resdev.gov.ab.ca/vipir

## Tasmania's EnAct: Managing legislation in SGML

The Tasmanian Government initiated the *Legislation System Project* (LSP) in early 1994 to address a number of issues associated with the production and availability of Tasmanian legislation. New technology and processes were developed for the drafting and maintenance of legislation. The main component of this is the EnAct system, which was implemented in the Office of Parliamentary Counsel in December 1997. The Legislation Publication Act 1996 established the legislation in EnAct as the authorised version.

EnAct is an intelligent legislation management system and a web-based electronic repository. At the core of the EnAct system is an SGML database, which underpins every part of the EnAct system. All of the legislation stored on the Tasmanian Legislation Database is captured in SGML. The system has attracted a great deal of interest both interstate and overseas.

**For more information:**
http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au

## XML standards consortium established for Web-based energy trading industry

The energy trading industry's leading exchanges and technology companies have announced the formation of the *Energy Trading Standards Group* (ETSG), an open consortium that will develop open standards based upon XML technology standards to automate the sale of wholesale energy and improve information sharing between energy trading companies. Initially, the focus will be to create standards for exchanging data between online trading platforms and transaction/risk management systems used by wholesale electricity and natural gas trading companies.

The consortium, initiated by Caminus and HoustonStreet, is open to all interested industry participants. For more information about joining the ETSG consortium, contact:
**David Markowitz** at Caminus Corporation at (212) 515-3600,
**Rob Armstrong** at HoustonStreet Exchange at (603) 766-8613, or http://home.houstonstreet.com/us/news/9-18-00ETSG.htm

## Calendar of events

## October

### ERF

- October 9-13 was ERF Week at the NEB

- ERF's Regulatory Advisory Team (RAT) met in Calgary on October 26-27 to discuss how the Boards plan to start opening up ERF to their industry partners.

### Other

- XML and its Application in Government – Washington, DC – Oct 19-20 (http://www.performanceweb.org/pdf/t102fax.pdf)

## November

### ERF

- Introduction to ERF and Introduction to SGML presentations online at http://www.neb.gc.ca/erf/

- PDF Rendition tool finalized

### Other

- XML Asia Pacific – Sydney, Australia – Oct 31 - Nov 3 (http://www.allette.com.au/xml)

- Documation 2000 – Toronto, ON – Nov 5-6 (http://www.interdoc.ca/conference/documation/doctor2000)

## December

### ERF

- ERF DTD Committee meeting in Calgary, December 7-8

### Other

- XML 2000 – Washington, DC – Dec 3-8 (http://www.gca.org/attend/2000_conferences/XML_2000)

*Next issue of The ERF Connection in February*

Canada

## Season's Greetings

On behalf of the Ontario Energy Board and the National Energy Board we wish to thank you for your effort and patience in making ERF a success.

We look forward to the Winter 2001 edition of The ERF Connection to make millennial announcements.

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