

"Graduating" the Social License to Operate

Why government and industry need to set
new standards for collaboration

Today's discussion...

- **Social licensing**
 - Problems with the present construct
- **Graduated licensing**
 - Levelling the balance?
- **Government-industry collaboration critical**
 - With particular focus on “neutrality alignment”
- **The “Unconventionals” sector**
 - Caught in the crosshairs – and at a crossroads

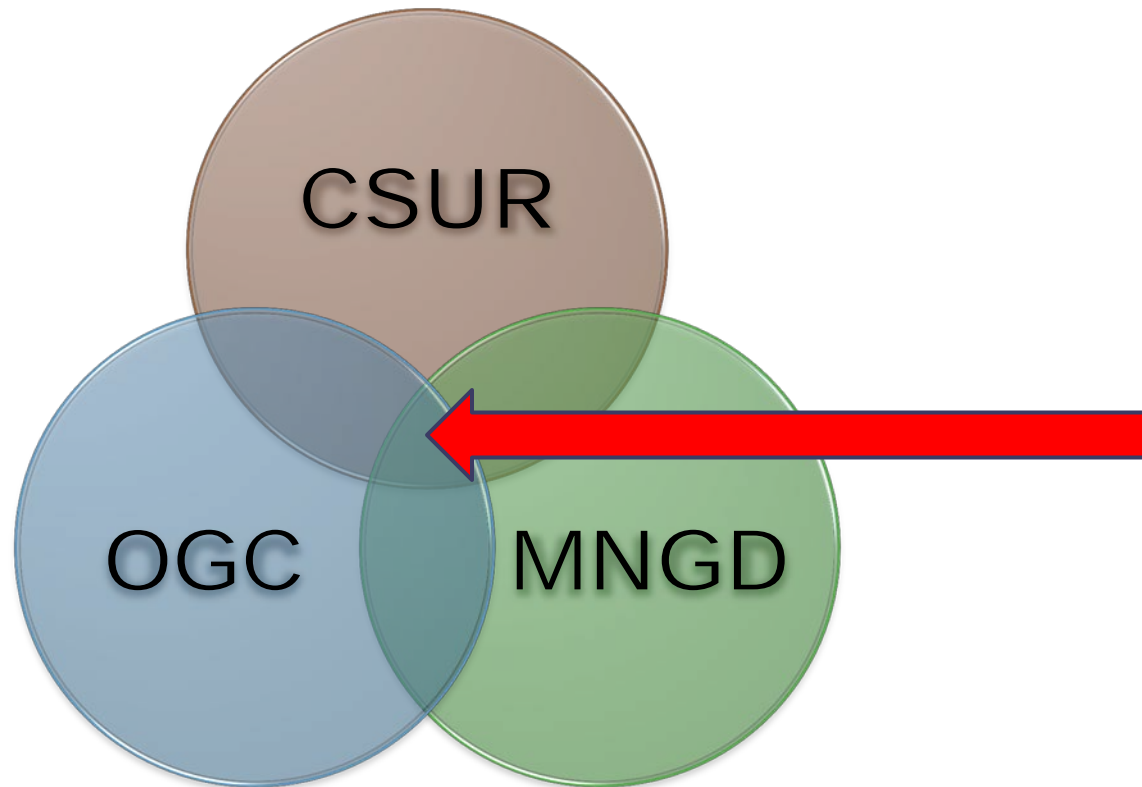
Today's context...

- **Industry-government relations**
 - **Problems with the present construct**
- **Not all “industry groups” are created equal in terms of “public trust”**
- **How do governments and industry collaborate**
 - **On technology evolution?**
 - **On economic impacts?**
 - **On environmental protection standards**

“Disinterestedly interested”

- **BC Day: a shared perspective:**
 - “Disinterested” = *not influenced by considerations of personal advantage*
 - But also: distant/interest = neutrality
 - CSUR’s role:
 - No vested corporate interest to protect
 - No compulsion to contemplate shareholder value
 - Broad spectrum of stakeholders’ interest
 - Clear advocate for science-based insights

This afternoon's workshops...



Here's how we define it now:

- **Our Petroleum Challenge:**

“The approval or acceptance that companies must continually obtain from local communities and landowners for their operations or project plans. This concept argues that companies are accountable to different stakeholders and that they can lose their ability to operate if they do not respond to key stakeholder concerns and priorities.”

What's so “*social*” about the licence?

- Platitudes and put-ons...still often distant from underpinning principles...almost *anti-social*
 - For many companies, concept still embedded in a regulatory context; thus a “letter-of-the-reg” versus “spirit-of-the-reg” dynamic prevails
 - Regulatory contexts outpaced by social expectations, realities – and ***entitlements***
 - Compromise often stands in for consensus
- *How do regulators and industry collaborate around social licence?*

Thinking about licensing....

- Not a static state-of-being, but an iterative process:
 - Knowledge standards
 - Passive, active & shifting
 - Convention standards
 - Normative social consensus
 - Legal enforcement
 - “Failure” requirements and standards
 - Example: rules of the road a compact between drivers, society and government – involving responsibility for ***both sides to the licence***

Problems with the social licence

- Typically an imbalance of expectations
 - Often a “victim’s/martyr’s” onus (by companies)
 - Often an “ignorance” onus (by stakeholders)
 - Often a failure to invest adequately (by either side)
- Regulators can “get it wrong” (typically timing)
- Typically also an imbalance of “*knowledges*”
- Media “ignorance” can fan flames of antagonism
- Such imbalances lead to the Triple-A “whammy”
 - Adversity, acrimony and animus...hardly “social”

Think about our major “debates”

- Analyse them based on knowledge differences and deficiencies – and a lack of licencing:
 - TransMountain (“local” project)
 - Multistage hydraulic fracturing (tech debate?)
 - Oilsands impact (environmental dynamic)
- Duelling “facts” & duelling “perspectives”
- Without literacy “balances”, we cannot hope to have dialogue that advances consensus

Polarization of perspectives

*Prophets without honour
(Us)*

or

*Profits without honour
(Them)*

But what if there was a process?

- That ***neutrally*** taught, tested and re-tested and prepared stakeholders for engagement?
- That defined new baselines of knowledge for energy producers, governments ***and*** energy consumers?
- That had ***as explicit principles*** a balanced non-polarized approach to discussion?
- ...that was the pre-cursor to major projects, policy development, technology innovations and economic discussions?

Communicative license to collaborate

- **Concept of a graduated system prevails**
 - Process-driven in terms of goals, timelines
 - All “parties” agree to baseline knowledge and awareness conventions
 - Third-party roles key as neutral facilitators & testers (regulators, industry groups and NGOs)
- **Result is:**
 - Consensus-orientation
 - More balanced, rational and respectful discourse
 - More *dialectic* than *debate*

Dialectic versus debate...

- **Dialectic**
 - Any systematic **reasoning**, exposition, or argument that juxtaposes opposed or contradictory ideas and usually seeks to **resolve** their conflict.
 - Premise of “win-win”
- **Debate**
 - A formal **contest** in which the affirmative and negative sides of a proposition are advocated by **opposing** speakers.
 - Premise of a winner...and a loser

Imagine being locked in a room...

- ...with a regulator, a ministry and an industry group...and perhaps an NGO or two.
- ...no one could leave until consensus was developed around a communicative & collaborative roadmap.
- ...imagine the learnings and perspectives that would result.
- ...imagine getting consensus in front of something instead of attempting to build it post.

Three Rs = Three Es

- Three pillars to the learner's permit
- Energy systems mix, economics and environment
- Addresses key aspects of both:
 - Misinformation
 - Disinformation
- Applying for:
 - Local projects
 - Policy debates
 - Technology discussions

The learner's permit to drive

- ***“The GDL program ensures new drivers, regardless of age, get the support, skills and experience they need to handle the complex task of driving.”***

The energy learner's communicative licence to collaborate

- ***“The communicative learner’s program ensures energy dialogue participants, regardless of interest or background, get the support, skills and experience they need to handle the complex task of engaging in rationale and reasoned energy discussions”***

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