



## AUDIT COMMITTEE MANDATE

The Audit Committee (the “Committee”) is a committee of the Board of Directors (the “Board”) of Cenovus Energy Inc. (“Cenovus” or the “Corporation”) appointed to act in an advisory capacity to the Board and assist the Board in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities.

The Committee’s primary duties and responsibilities are to:

- Oversee and monitor the effectiveness and integrity of the Corporation’s accounting and financial reporting processes, financial statements and system of internal controls regarding accounting and financial reporting compliance.
- Oversee audits of the Corporation’s financial statements.
- Oversee and monitor the Corporation’s market risk management framework, including supporting guidelines and policies, related to the management of commodity price, currency (foreign exchange), and interest rate market risk.
- Oversee and monitor management’s identification of principal financial risks and monitor the process to manage such risks.
- Oversee and monitor the Corporation’s compliance with legal and regulatory requirements related to financial reporting and disclosures.
- Oversee and monitor the qualifications, independence and performance of the Corporation’s external auditors and internal auditing group.
- Provide an avenue of communication among the external auditors, management, the internal auditing group and the Board.

The Committee has the authority to conduct any review or investigation appropriate to fulfilling its responsibilities. The Committee shall have unrestricted access to personnel and information, and any resources necessary to carry out its responsibility. In this regard, the Committee may direct internal audit personnel to particular areas of examination.

### **CONSTITUTION, COMPOSITION AND DEFINITIONS**

#### **1. Reporting**

The Committee shall report to the Board.

#### **2. Composition of Committee**

The Committee shall consist of not less than three and not more than eight directors, all of whom shall qualify as independent directors pursuant to National Instrument 52-110 *Audit Committees* (as implemented by the Canadian Securities Administrators (“CSA”) and as amended from time to time) (“NI 52-110”).

All members of the Committee shall be financially literate, as defined in NI 52-110, and at least one member shall have accounting or related financial managerial expertise.

At least one member shall have experience in the oil and gas industry.

Committee members shall not simultaneously serve on the audit committees of more than two other public companies, unless the Board first determines that such simultaneous service shall not impair the ability of the relevant members to effectively serve on the Committee, and required public disclosure is made.

The non-executive Board Chair shall be a non-voting member of the Committee. See “Quorum” for further details.

**3. Appointment of Committee Members**

Committee members shall be appointed by the Board, effective after the election of directors at the annual meeting of shareholders, provided that any member may be removed or replaced, subject to any requirements under the heading “Composition of Committee” above, at any time by the Board and shall, in any event, cease to be a Committee member upon ceasing to be a Board member.

**4. Vacancies**

Where a vacancy occurs at any time in the membership of the Committee, it may be filled by the Board.

**5. Chair**

The Governance Committee shall recommend for approval to the Board an independent Director to act as Chair of the Committee (the “Chair”). The Board shall appoint the Chair.

If unavailable or unable to attend a meeting of the Committee, the Chair shall ask another member to chair the meeting, failing which a member of the Committee present at the meeting shall be chosen to preside over the meeting by a majority of the members of the Committee present at such meeting.

The Chair presiding at any meeting of the Committee shall not have a casting vote.

The items pertaining to the Chair in this section should be read in conjunction with the Committee Chair section of the *Chair of the Board of Directors and Committee Chair General Guidelines*.

**6. Secretary**

The Committee shall appoint a Secretary who need not be a member of the Committee. The Secretary shall keep minutes of the meetings of the Committee.

**7. Committee Meetings**

The Committee shall meet at least quarterly. The Chair may call additional meetings as required. In addition, a meeting may be called by the non-executive Board Chair, the President & Chief Executive Officer, or any member of the Committee or by the external auditors.

Committee meetings may, by agreement of the Chair, be held in person, by video conference, by means of telephone, by other electronic or communication facility or by a combination of any of the foregoing.

At every Committee meeting the Committee shall meet without the presence of management.

**8. Notice of Meeting**

Notice of the time and place of each meeting may be given orally, or in writing, or by facsimile, or by electronic means to each member of the Committee at least 24 hours prior to the time fixed for such meeting. Notice of each meeting shall also be given to the external auditors of the Corporation.

A member and the external auditors may, in any manner, waive notice of the Committee meeting. Attendance of a member at a meeting shall constitute waiver of notice of the meeting except where a member attends a meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business on the grounds that the meeting was not lawfully called.

**9. Quorum**

A majority of Committee members, present in accordance with section 7, shall constitute a quorum. In addition, if an *ex officio*, non-voting member's presence is required to attain a quorum of the Committee, then the said member shall be allowed to cast a vote at the meeting.

**10. Attendance at Meetings**

The President & Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Financial Officer, the Comptroller and the head of internal audit are expected to be available to attend the Committee's meetings or portions thereof.

The Committee may, by specific invitation, have other resource persons in attendance.

The Committee shall have the right to determine who shall, and who shall not, be present at any time during a meeting of the Committee.

Directors who are not members of the Committee may attend Committee meetings, on an *ad hoc* basis, upon prior consultation and approval by the Chair or by a majority of the members of the Committee.

**11. Minutes**

Minutes of Committee meetings shall be sent to all Committee members. The Committee shall report its activities to the full Board at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting or more frequently as determined appropriate by the Chair.

**SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES**

In carrying out its oversight responsibilities and its mandate, the Committee is expected to:

**12. Review Procedures**

- (a) Review the summary of the Committee's composition and responsibilities in the Corporation's annual report, annual information form or other public disclosure documentation.
- (b) Review the summary of all approvals by the Committee of the provision of audit, audit related, tax and other services by the external auditors for inclusion in the Corporation's annual report and annual information form, or other publicly filed disclosure documentation.

**13. Annual Financial Statements**

- (a) Discuss and review with management and the external auditors the Corporation's and any subsidiary with public securities' annual audited financial statements and related documents prior to their filing or distribution. Such review shall include:
  - (i) The annual financial statements and related notes including significant issues regarding accounting principles, practices and significant management estimates and judgments, including any significant changes in the Corporation's selection or application of accounting principles, any major issues as to the adequacy of the Corporation's internal controls and any special steps adopted in light of material control deficiencies.
  - (ii) Management's Discussion and Analysis.
  - (iii) The use of off-balance sheet financing, including management's risk assessment and adequacy of disclosure.
  - (iv) The external auditors' audit examination of the financial statements and their report thereon.
  - (v) Any significant changes required in the external auditors' audit plan.
  - (vi) Any serious difficulties or disputes with management encountered during the course of the audit, including any restrictions on the scope of the external auditors' work or access to required information.
  - (vii) Other matters related to the conduct of the audit, which are to be communicated to the Committee under generally accepted auditing standards.
- (b) Review and formally recommend approval to the Board of the Corporation's:
  - (i) Year-end audited financial statements. Such review shall include discussions with management and the external auditors as to:
    - i. The accounting policies of the Corporation and any changes thereto.
    - ii. The effect of significant judgments, accruals and estimates.
    - iii. The manner of presentation of significant accounting items.
    - iv. The consistency of disclosure.
  - (ii) Management's Discussion and Analysis.
  - (iii) Annual Information Form as to financial information.
  - (iv) All prospectuses and information circulars, as to financial information.

The review shall include a report from the external auditors about the quality of the most critical accounting principles upon which the Corporation's financial status depends, and which involve the most complex, subjective or significant judgmental decisions or assessments.

**14. Quarterly Financial Statements**

- (a) Review with management and the external auditors and either approve (such approval to include the authorization for public release) or formally recommend for approval to the Board the Corporation's:

- (i) Quarterly unaudited financial statements and related documents, including Management's Discussion and Analysis.
- (ii) Any significant changes to the Corporation's accounting principles.
- (b) Review quarterly unaudited financial statements prior to their distribution of any subsidiary of the Corporation with public securities.

**15. Other Financial Filings and Public Documents**

Review and discuss with management financial information, including earnings press releases, the use of "pro forma" or non-GAAP financial information and earnings guidance, contained in any filings with the CSA or U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") or press releases related thereto, and consider whether the information is consistent with the information contained in the financial statements of the Corporation or any subsidiary with public securities.

**16. Internal Control Environment**

- (a) Receive from and review with management, the external auditors and the internal auditors an annual report on the Corporation's control environment as it pertains to the Corporation's financial reporting process and controls.
- (b) Review and discuss significant financial risks or exposures and assess the steps management has taken to monitor, control, report and mitigate such risk to the Corporation.
- (c) Review in consultation with the internal auditors and the external auditors, the degree of coordination in the audit plans of the internal auditors and the external auditors and enquire as to the extent the planned scope can be relied upon to detect weaknesses in internal controls, fraud or other illegal acts. The Committee shall assess the coordination of audit effort to assure completeness of coverage and the effective use of audit resources. Any significant recommendations made by the auditors for the strengthening of internal controls shall be reviewed and discussed with management.
- (d) Review with the President & Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Financial Officer of the Corporation and the external auditors: (i) all significant deficiencies and material weaknesses in the design or operation of the Corporation's internal controls and procedures for financial reporting which could adversely affect the Corporation's ability to record, process, summarize and report financial information required to be disclosed by the Corporation in the reports that it files or submits under the United States Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the "Exchange Act") or applicable Canadian federal and provincial legislation and regulations within the required time periods, and (ii) any fraud, whether or not material, that involves management of the Corporation or other employees who have a significant role in the Corporation's internal controls and procedures for financial reporting.
- (e) Review significant findings prepared by the external auditors and the internal auditing department together with management's responses.

**17. Other Review Items**

- (a) Review the process for the certification of the interim and annual financial statements by the President & Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer, and the certifications made by the President & Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer.

- (b) Review policies and procedures with respect to officers' and directors' expense accounts and perquisites, including their use of corporate assets, and consider the results of any review of these areas by the internal auditor or the external auditors.
- (c) Review all related party transactions between the Corporation and any executive officers or directors, including affiliations of any executive officers or directors.
- (d) Review with the General Counsel, the head of internal audit and the external auditors the results of their review of the Corporation's monitoring of compliance with each of the Corporation's published codes of business conduct and applicable legal requirements.
- (e) Review the findings of any significant examination by regulators and government agencies, that may have a material impact on the interim or annual financial statements or other documents filed with securities regulators containing financial information and related corporate compliance policies and programs.
- (f) Review policies and practices with respect to off-balance sheet transactions and trading and hedging activities, and consider the results of any review of these areas by the internal auditors or the external auditors.
- (g) Ensure that the Corporation's presentation of hydrocarbon reserves has been reviewed with the Safety, Sustainability and Reserves Committee of the Board.
- (h) Review management's processes in place to prevent and detect fraud.
- (i) Review:
  - (i) procedures for the receipt, retention and treatment of complaints received by the Corporation, including confidential, anonymous submissions by employees of the Corporation, regarding accounting, internal accounting controls or auditing matters; and
  - (ii) a summary of any significant investigations regarding such matters.
- (j) Review and discuss the Corporation's cyber security and cyber risks, receive reports from management on the occurrence of significant cyber incidents, and assess the steps management has taken to:
  - (i) develop and implement cyber security processes, procedures, and technology; and
  - (ii) identify, monitor, control, and mitigate the impacts of cyber risks to the Corporation.
- (k) Meet on a periodic basis separately with management.

**18. External Auditors**

- (a) Be directly responsible, in the Committee's capacity as a committee of the Board and subject to the rights of shareholders and applicable law, for the appointment, compensation, retention and oversight of the work of the external auditors (including resolution of disagreements between management and the external auditors regarding financial reporting) for the purpose of preparing or issuing an audit report, or performing other audit, review or attest services for the Corporation. The external auditors shall report directly to the Committee.

- (b) Meet on a regular basis with the external auditors (without management present) and have the external auditors be available to attend Committee meetings or portions thereof at the request of the Chair or by a majority of the members of the Committee.
- (c) Review and discuss a report from the external auditors at least quarterly regarding:
  - (i) All critical accounting policies and practices to be used;
  - (ii) All alternative treatments within accounting principles for policies and practices related to material items that have been discussed with management, including the ramifications of the use of such alternative disclosures and treatments, and the treatment preferred by the external auditors; and
  - (iii) Other material written communications between the external auditors and management, such as any management letter or schedule of unadjusted differences.
- (d) Obtain and review a report from the external auditors at least annually regarding:
  - (i) The external auditors' internal quality-control procedures.
  - (ii) Any material issues raised by the most recent internal quality-control review, or peer review, of the external auditors, or by any inquiry or investigation by governmental or professional authorities, within the preceding five years, respecting one or more independent audits carried out by the external auditors, and any steps taken to deal with those issues.
  - (iii) To the extent contemplated in the following paragraph, all relationships between the external auditors and the Corporation.
- (e) Review and discuss at least annually with the external auditors all relationships that the external auditors and their affiliates have with the Corporation and its affiliates in order to determine the external auditors' independence, including, without limitation, (i) receiving and reviewing, as part of the report described in the preceding paragraph, a formal written statement from the external auditors delineating all relationships that may reasonably be thought to bear on the independence of the external auditors with respect to the Corporation and its affiliates, (ii) discussing with the external auditors any disclosed relationships or services that the external auditors believe may affect the objectivity and independence of the external auditors, and (iii) recommending that the Board take appropriate action in response to the external auditors' report to satisfy itself of the external auditors' independence.
- (f) Review and evaluate annually:
  - (i) The external auditors' and the lead partner of the external auditors' team's performance, and make a recommendation to the Board regarding the reappointment of the external auditors at the annual meeting of the Corporation's shareholders or regarding the discharge of such external auditors.
  - (ii) The terms of engagement of the external auditors together with their proposed fees.
  - (iii) External audit plans and results.
  - (iv) Any other related audit engagement matters.
  - (v) The engagement of the external auditors to perform non-audit services, together with the fees therefor, and the impact thereof, on the independence of the external auditors.

- (vi) The Annual Report of the Canadian Public Accountability Board (“CPAB”) concerning audit quality in Canada and discuss implications for Cenovus.
- (vii) Any reports issued by CPAB regarding the audit of Cenovus.
- (g) Conduct periodically a comprehensive review of the external auditor, with the outcome intended to assist the Committee to identify potential areas for improvement for the audit firm, and to reach a final conclusion on whether the auditor should be reappointed or the audit put out for tender.
- (h) Upon reviewing and discussing the information provided to the Committee in accordance with paragraphs 18.(c) through (f), evaluate the external auditors’ qualifications, performance and independence, including whether or not the external auditors’ quality controls are adequate and the provision of permitted non-audit services is compatible with maintaining auditor independence, taking into account the opinions of management and the head of internal audit. The Committee shall present to the Board its conclusions in this respect.
- (i) Review the rotation of partners on the audit engagement team in accordance with applicable law. Consider whether, in order to assure continuing external auditor independence, it is appropriate to adopt a policy of rotating the external auditing firm on a regular basis.
- (j) Set clear hiring policies for the Corporation’s hiring of employees or former employees of the external auditors.
- (k) Consider with management and the external auditors the rationale for employing audit firms other than the principal external auditors.
- (l) Consider and review with the external auditors, management and the head of internal audit:
  - (i) Significant findings during the year and management’s responses and follow-up thereto.
  - (ii) Any difficulties encountered in the course of their audits, including any restrictions on the scope of their work or access to required information, and management’s response.
  - (iii) Any significant disagreements between the external auditors or internal auditors and management.
  - (iv) Any changes required in the planned scope of their audit plan.
  - (v) The resources, budget, reporting relationships, responsibilities and planned activities of the internal auditors.
  - (vi) The internal audit department mandate.
  - (vii) Internal audit’s compliance with the Institute of Internal Auditors’ standards.

**19. Oversight Over the Internal Audit Group**

- (a) The Committee will have unrestricted access to the head of internal audit.
- (b) Meet with the head of internal audit without the presence of management on a quarterly basis or ad hoc basis.



- (c) Review and approve the appointment, compensation, performance, replacement, reassignment, or dismissal of the head of internal audit.
- (d) Review and approve the Internal Audit budget, resource plan, activities, organizational structure of the internal audit function and the qualifications of the internal auditors.
- (e) Review and confirm the independence of the internal audit group annually.
- (f) Approve the Internal Audit Charter and the Internal Audit Plan annually.
- (g) Review the performance and effectiveness of the Internal Audit function including conformance with The Institute of Internal Auditors' International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing and the Code of Ethics.
- (h) Review and evaluate summaries of all internal audit reports and other communications between internal audit and senior management.
- (i) Monitor management's action plan to address the results of internal audit engagements.

**20. Approval of Audit and Non-Audit Services**

- (a) Review and, where appropriate, approve the provision of all permitted non-audit services (including the fees and terms thereof) in advance of the provision of those services by the external auditors (subject to the *de minimis* exception for non-audit services described in the Exchange Act or applicable CSA and SEC legislation and regulations, which services are approved by the Committee prior to the completion of the audit).
- (b) Review and, where appropriate and permitted, approve the provision of all audit services (including the fees and terms thereof) in advance of the provision of those services by the external auditors.
- (c) If the pre-approvals contemplated in paragraphs 20.(a) and (b) are not obtained, approve, where appropriate and permitted, the provision of all audit and non-audit services promptly after the Committee or a member of the Committee to whom authority is delegated becomes aware of the provision of those services.
- (d) Delegate, if the Committee deems necessary or desirable, to subcommittees consisting of one or more members of the Committee, the authority to grant the pre-approvals and approvals described in paragraphs 20.(a) through (c). The decision of any such subcommittee to grant pre-approval shall be presented to the full Committee at the next scheduled Committee meeting.
- (e) Establish policies and procedures for the pre-approvals described in paragraphs 20.(a) and (b) so long as such policies and procedures are detailed as to the particular service, the Committee is informed of each service and such policies and procedures do not include delegation to management of the Committee's responsibilities under the Exchange Act or applicable CSA and SEC legislation and regulations.

**21. Risk Oversight**

The Committee is responsible for oversight of and reports to the Board about risks related to:

- (a) The design and operating effectiveness of the Corporation's market risk management control framework and the processes to manage such risks;
- (b) Non-compliance with regulations and policies relating to matters within the Committee's mandate;

- (c) All financial filings and public documents, including the Corporation's and any subsidiary with public securities' annual audited financial statements and related documents, and all unaudited financial statements and related documents, and other filings and public documents as to financial information;
- (d) The evaluation, appointment, compensation, retention and work of the external auditors;
- (e) Together with management, the appointment, compensation, replacement, reassignment, or dismissal of the head of internal audit;
- (f) The receipt, retention and treatment of complaints received by the Corporation regarding accounting, internal accounting controls, or auditing matters;
- (g) Significant financial risks or exposures, including those related to cyber security and environmental, social and governance ("ESG") matters, such as climate change; and
- (h) Such principal or emerging risks that have been assigned to the Committee, from time to time, by the Board, as recommended by the Governance Committee.

## **22. Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Oversight**

The Committee is responsible for oversight of:

- (a) The financial impacts from evolving ESG matters (including climate change) and in particular impacts on the Corporation's access to capital from its lenders, debt investors, and equity investors, its access to insurance coverage, and to its credit ratings.
- (b) Monitoring development of legal and regulatory requirements related to integrated reporting affecting financial reporting and disclosures, including climate disclosures.

## **23. Miscellaneous**

- (a) The Committee, upon approval by a majority of the members of the Committee, may engage outside advisors if deemed advisable;
- (b) The Committee, upon approval by a majority of the members of the Committee, may delegate its duties and responsibilities to subcommittees of the Committee;
- (c) Review with the President & Chief Executive Officer and subject to the concurrence of the Committee, recommend to the Board the appointment, replacement, reassignment, or dismissal of the Chief Financial Officer;
- (d) Conduct or authorize investigations into any matters within the Committee's scope of responsibilities. The Committee shall be empowered to retain, obtain advice or otherwise receive assistance from independent counsel, accountants, or others to assist it in the conduct of any investigation as it deems necessary and the carrying out of its duties;
- (e) Determine the appropriate funding for payment by the Corporation (i) of compensation to the external auditors for the purpose of preparing or issuing an audit report or performing other audit, review or attest services for the Corporation, (ii) of compensation to any advisors employed by the Committee, and (iii) of ordinary administrative expenses of the Committee that are necessary or appropriate in carrying out its duties;
- (f) Review and reassess the adequacy of this mandate annually and recommend any proposed changes to the Governance Committee for consideration;
- (g) Consider for implementation any recommendations of the Governance Committee of the Board with respect to the Committee's effectiveness, structure or processes;

- (h) Perform such other functions as required by law, the Corporation's by-laws or the Board;  
and
- (i) Consider any other matters referred to it by the Board.

**The duties and responsibilities of a Committee member are in addition to those duties set out for a Board member.**

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