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**Rockhopper Exploration plc**

("Rockhopper")

**Ninky 14/15-3 exploration well spud**

Rockhopper Exploration plc (AIM: RKH), the North Falkland Basin oil and gas exploration company, notes the announcement by Desire Petroleum plc (the "Operator") that the 14/15-3 exploration well on the Ninky prospect was spudded at 02.45 BST on 29 March 2011. Rockhopper has a 7.5% interest in the well.

The Operator described the prospect as a combined structural dip and stratigraphic pinch-out trap with multiple reservoir targets within the Barremian source rock interval. The well has a planned total depth of circa 2,620 metres and drilling operations are expected to take approximately 30 days.

The Operator will make a further announcement once logging is complete.

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**Notes to Editors**

Rockhopper was established in February 2004 with a strategy to invest in and carry out an offshore oil exploration programme to the north of the Falkland Islands. The Company floated on AIM in August 2005 and holds a 100 per cent. interest in four offshore production licences: PL023, PL024, PL032 and PL033 which cover approximately 3,800 sq. km. Rockhopper has also farmed in (7.5% working interest) to licences PL003 and PL004, which are operated by Desire Petroleum. These licences have been granted by the Falkland Islands government.

An extensive work programme has been carried out over a number of years on the licences operated by Rockhopper. This has included 2D and 3D Seismic and Controlled Source Electromagnetic Mapping (CSEM). In February 2010, the Ocean Guardian drilling rig arrived in Falkland waters to carry out a multi-well drilling campaign. Rockhopper drilled an exploration well on its Sea Lion prospect during April and May 2010, the result of which was the first oil discovery and Contingent Oil Resource in the North Falkland Basin. The Sea Lion discovery was successfully tested during September 2010 and was the first oil to flow to surface in Falkland Islands waters. Rockhopper contracted seismic vessels MV Polarcus Asima and Nadia to carry out 3D seismic surveys, beginning December 2010, over areas of licences PL024, PL032 and PL033 which were not previously defined by 3D, as well as adjacent areas.

Rockhopper Exploration plc [www.rockhopperexploration.co.uk](http://www.rockhopperexploration.co.uk)