



Embargoed: 0700hrs, 16 April 2010

**Rockhopper Exploration plc**

("Rockhopper" or the "Company")

**Sea Lion 14/10-B Exploration Well Spud**

Rockhopper Exploration plc (AIM: RKH), the North Falkland Basin oil and gas exploration company, is pleased to announce that the Sea Lion 14/10-B Exploration well was spudded at 0050hrs BST on 16 April 2010.

The Sea Lion prospect is located on Licence PL032 which is 100% owned and operated by Rockhopper.

The well is being drilled to an estimated target depth of circa 2,700 metres. Drilling operations are expected to take approximately 34 days and a further announcement will be made once drilling is completed.

Sea Lion is being drilled using the second rig slot in the overall drilling programme. The Company currently intends to drill its Ernest prospect (100% Rockhopper) using the fourth slot.

-Ends-

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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 to licences PL003 and PL004 which are operated by Desire Petroleum in which it holds a 7.5% working interest. These licences have been granted by the Falkland Islands government.

An extensive work programme has been carried out over a number of years the licences operated by Rockhopper. This has including 2D and 3D Seismic and Controlled Source Electromagnetic Mapping (CSEM). Rockhopper intends to drill the Sea Lion and Ernest prospects on its acreage during 2010 in addition to participating in three further wells with Desire. In November 2009 the Company completed an equity placing to raise gross proceeds of £50 million which covers the anticipated costs of these wells, including contingencies. In February 2010 the



Ocean Guardian drilling rig arrived in Falklands waters to begin a drilling campaign on each of these prospects during 2010.

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