



## **PRESS RELEASE**

For immediate release:  
Monday, 14 February 2005

### **Rockhopper Exploration signs memorandum of understanding with Desire Petroleum**

Rockhopper Exploration (Rockhopper), a new UK-based oil exploration and production company, has announced the signing of a memorandum of understanding with Desire Petroleum plc (Desire) to farm-in to three wells to be drilled on Desire's acreage in Tranches C and D offshore the Falkland Islands.

It is anticipated that the drilling programme will begin within about a year. As a result of its planned contributions to Desire's exploration costs, Rockhopper will earn an interest in the licences of 7.5 per cent, with an option to increase that stake by up to a further 7.5 per cent by October 2005.

Rockhopper Exploration, formerly known as Crude Oil and Gas Limited, announced in December that the Falkland Islands Government had awarded it two exploration/production licences, PL023 and PL024, covering an area of 4,203 square kilometres and located 50 kilometres to the north of the Islands in the North Falkland Basin.

Pierre Jungels, Executive Chairman, commented: 'This agreement will enable us to accelerate our exposure to drilling opportunities in the North Falkland Basin, and broaden our portfolio significantly. We look forward to working closely with Desire as we move towards the drilling programme itself.'

'This farm-in agreement is another step, further to our recent licence awards, in creating an exploration play covering substantial parts of the North Falkland Basin. In addition, we continue to pursue other ways of building our portfolio by accessing further acreage both through negotiation with other licence holders and applications to the relevant authorities.'

Ends.

For further information, please contact:

Peter Reilly/Patrick d'Ancona, Aquila Financial 020 7849 3319/3326

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

## **Notes to Editors**

In January, Rockhopper announced its appointment as executive chairman of Dr Pierre Jungels. Dr Jungels, who holds a PhD in Geophysics & Hydraulics from the California Institute of Technology, has over 30 years experience in the oil industry. He is currently chairman of AIM-listed Offshore Hydrocarbon Mapping plc and also holds non-executive directorships at Woodside Petroleum Ltd, Offshore Logistics, Inc, and Imperial Tobacco plc.

Rockhopper Exploration is a UK-based oil and gas exploration and production company, and includes amongst its directors Richard Visick. Mr Visick already has significant business and other interests in the Falkland Islands.

The Rockhopper Penguin is one of the most recognisable features of the wildlife of the Falklands. It is adept at climbing very steep rock faces in a series of bounds with both feet together. Close-packed colonies on rocky cliffs can be enormous, numbering many thousands of breeding pairs. They are opportunistic feeders, with prey including crustaceans, squid and fish. The Falklands is the most important site in the world for this breed of penguin.