

TIMOR-LESTE

June through August 2016

OIL & GAS

OFFSHORE PETROLEUM OPERATIONS REGULATIONS APPROVED

The Offshore Petroleum Operations Regulations were approved by the Council of Ministers through Decree-Law No. 32/2016, of 17 August 2016, which addresses in detail essential matters concerning offshore petroleum activities in the Timor-Leste Exclusive Area, such as prospecting authorizations, exploration, development and production operations and applicable requirements on facilities design and operation, health, safety and environment, as well as local content and procurement of goods and services.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND MINERAL RESOURCES

By means of Decree-Law No. 16/2016, of 22 June 2016, the Government approved the organizational structure of the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, which is responsible for defining energy policy and management of mineral resources, including oil and other strategic minerals, as well as for regulating extractive and industrial activities relating to petroleum and minerals. Under the referred statute, the Ministry shall comprise a National Directorate, an Office of Inspections and Auditing, a Legal Support Office, a Secretariat for the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, and an Advisory Body.

ELECTRICITY

NEW ELECTRIC POWER LICENSING AND TARIFF REGIME

Decree-Law No. 33/2016, of 17 August 2016, approved the Regulations on Electric Energy Licensing and Tariffs. By means of these Regulations, the Government has established the new rules governing electricity tariffs and prices, as well as the terms applicable to access to the electricity supply and distribution public network, including control and supervision conditions and the relevant penalties.

CORPORATE / BUSINESS

CONSUMER PROTECTION REGIME APPROVED

The Timor-Leste Parliament approved Law No. 8/2016, of 8 July 2016, on Consumer Protection, covering several relevant matters such as rights and duties in consumer transactions, consumer contractual and legal protection and consumer credit. The new regime not only imposes several duties on producers, importers, retailers and vendors, but also prohibits certain abusive practices and contractual clauses. Penalties for the breach of consumer protection rules are also foreseen in this Law.

CONTROL AND SUPERVISORY AUTHORITY FOR ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES, HEALTH AND FOOD

By means of Decree-Law No. 26/2016, of 29 June 2016, the Government has created the Control and Supervisory Authority for Economic Activities, Health and Food. This body, which falls under the direct supervision and instructions of the Prime-Minister, shall be responsible for controlling and monitoring the enforcement of regulations applicable to food trade, health requirements applicable to certain premises and, in general, the legal framework applicable to economic activities, as well as for promoting public policies and mechanisms for such purpose.

LABOR

NATIONAL LABOR COUNCIL IS CREATED

By means of Decree-Law No. 7/2016, of 15 June 2016, the Government has created the National Labor Council which will be comprised by representatives of the government, employers and unions. Amongst other duties, this new body shall be responsible for proposing the national minimum wage and to act as a forum for collective bargaining in labor relationships.

HEALTH

NEW TOBACCO CONTROL FRAMEWORK

Decree-Law No. 14/2016, of 8 June 2016 sets forth significant rules aimed at controlling and preventing the consumption of tobacco products in Timor-Leste. The new framework establishes strict requirements on tobacco trading in the country, addressing several aspects such as labeling and packaging requirements, tobacco composition, and limitations on promotion and marketing of tobacco products. The new rules also determine certain consumption restrictions, namely by prohibiting smoking in specific areas, and foresees consumption prevention measures, the involvement of public authorities in the control of tobacco products, as well as the applicable penalties.

TOURISM

TRAVEL AND TOURISM AGENCIES RULES APPROVED

The Government enacted Decree-Law No. 19/2016, of 22 June 2016, approving the legal framework for the licensing and operation of travel and tourism agencies, as well as the supervisory role of the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture over this activity. This statute also regulates the activities of tourism guides and touristic information professionals. Amongst other aspects, the new rules establish important requirements regarding guarantees and insurance policies that have to be provided or underwritten by these agencies.

CAMPING SITE REGULATIONS

Decree-law No. 17/2016, of 22 June 2016, establishes the rules governing the licensing, installation, classification and operation of Camping Sites. The statute provides for mandatory rules to be followed by the relevant operators, aimed at ensuring the necessary quality of camping sites and their services, as well as certain duties that campers must comply with.

STATE ADMINISTRATION

NEW LAW ON SUCOS

By means of Law No. 9/2016, of 8 July 2016, the National Parliament approved the *Sucos*' Law. *Sucos* are public entities, with an associative nature, created due to historical, cultural or traditional circumstances, whose members are bound by family or traditional ties in a given area. The new statute establishes the powers and authority of the *Sucos* and their respective association bodies, as well as the rules on the appointment of the respective members.

For further information about the contents of this Legal News, please contact:

Ricardo Alves Silva: ricardo.silva@mirandalawfirm.com

Tereza Garcia André: tereza.andre@mirandalawfirm.com

Miranda & Associados

Av. Eng. Duarte Pacheco, 7

1070-100 LISBON – PORTUGAL

Tel: +351 217 814 800 Fax: +351 217 814 802

www.mirandalawfirm.com

mirandaalliance
www.mirandaalliance.com

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