

Start of the first shipments for Pluto LNG project

Monday, Oct 06, 2008

October 2008 sees the start of a challenging long-term transport project for Jumbo Shipping.

Jumbo has been contracted to ship a total of approx 235,000 freight tons for the Pluto LNG project of Australian energy major Woodside. This project is being developed by Foster Wheeler WorleyParsons (FWW) in Western Australia, and comprises the installation of five sub sea production wells that have to connect to an onshore LNG production system. This system will be constructed in the Burrup LNG Park on the Burrup Peninsula, near the port of Dampier.

Jumbo's heavy-lift vessels Mv Fairlift and Mv Daniella will transport the total of 143 pre-assembled modules from Laem Chabang, in Thailand, to the onshore LNG production system in Dampier, Australia, over the course of 26 voyages.

With the Pluto project currently on schedule to be developed in a record-time of five years, the need for Jumbo's vessels to deliver the modules on time is crucial. The first gas field was discovered in 2005 and production of first gas is planned for 2010.

Challenges abound, not least that the pre-assembled units have to be shipped in the right order as the construction site offers minimal storage space. In addition, the small port of Dampier is likely to become rather busy thanks to the fact that two wide deck vessels and one ro-ro vessel will all be shuttling for this project in the same time frame.

From operational point of view, strict Australian environmental regulations also provide a challenge. All modules will have to be carefully cleaned of any residues of clay and sand to prevent foreign organisms being transported into Australia. The same regulations apply to ballast water treatment and garbage management. In addition, both land personnel and crew will have to remain flexible as the tropical cyclone season in Australia may affect planning.

All in all, the Pluto LNG project is a challenge, even for JUMBO!