

Pluto bounds into action



It's all systems go for Woodside Energy since the company received environmental approval for its \$11.2 billion Pluto gas project in northwest Western Australia.

Within 48 hours of the approval, construction started on the Burrup Peninsula where onshore LNG production facilities for this world-class project will be established.

Woodside is extremely proud of the speed at which it has been able to advance the Pluto project — from the initial gas discovery in April 2005, to a financial commitment in July 2007, then the Federal Government's full environmental approval in October 2007.

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So keen and confident has Woodside been to clear all the major hurdles prior to a construction start-up, the company has had up to 500 people working behind the scenes in different parts of the world to get the project to this important stage.

Timing has been crucial to the success of the project, and Woodside is now in a position to take advantage of an 'LNG window of opportunity' that exists between 2010 and 2015 in the Asia-Pacific and North American markets.

Japanese energy utilities Kansai Electric and Tokyo Gas, have signed agreements to receive the first shipments of Pluto gas in late 2010.

A Woodside spokesperson said the company expects the Pluto project to be producing 4.3 Mt/a of LNG by the end of 2010, with approved environmental conditions allowing for expansion to 10 Mt/a.

Pluto will involve up to 3000 people during construction and 500 full-time jobs once commissioning is completed.

Through extensive consultation with traditional custodians, archaeologists, anthropologists and government agencies, design of the Pluto facilities have been modified to ensure that, where possible, heritage sites are avoided on the Burrup Peninsula, adjacent to the North West Shelf's existing LNG production facilities.

An estimated 95 per cent of the 3000 indigenous petroglyphs (ancient rock carvings) will be undisturbed by construction activity on the Pluto development site. In addition, the construction work will have no impact on the proposed 5000 hectare Burrup Peninsula Conservation Reserve, which is home to literally hundreds of thousands of petroglyphs.

Woodside intends to relocate between 100 and 200 petroglyphs to undeveloped areas of its leases, in consultation with traditional custodians.

Economic modelling indicates the Pluto LNG development will contribute \$28.6 billion to the WA economy, and provide significant opportunities for local businesses. It will generate up to \$8.5 billion in government revenues. ■



Foster Wheeler Worley Parsons field engineer, James Ayers, on location at Woodside Energy's Pluto gas project in northwest Western Australia.

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