

## Western Power Says Extra Capacity to Prevent Blackout

By Angela Macdonald-Smith

Jan. 3 (Bloomberg) -- Western Power Corp., operator of the electricity network in Western Australia, said extra generation capacity has been made available that will help prevent blackouts today after the shutdown of a gas plant cut supplies.

Voluntary reduction of electricity use by customers is also helping better match demand with supplies, which have been reduced by the shutdown of the North West Shelf venture's natural gas plant in Karratha, Western Power Managing Director Doug Aberle said today in an e-mailed statement.

The Woodside Petroleum Ltd.-operated North West Shelf venture halted output at the Karratha plant at 8 a.m. local time yesterday due to an electrical fault. The stoppage cut almost two-thirds of the state's gas supplies and put a third of its biggest power producer's plants out of operation, causing the state government to urge customers to cut electricity use.

"Additional power generation has become available to the system and with the continued support of the public and businesses Western Power is confident there will not be a need for any power blackouts this afternoon related to the gas shortfall," the state-owned company said today in an e-mailed statement.

At midday local time, 3,450 megawatts of power was available for use, 300 megawatts more than what was accessible earlier today, Western Power said. Extra capacity was secured from the Burrup Fertilisers Pty ammonia producer on the Burrup Peninsula, from wind farms and other sources, Miriam Borthwick, a company spokeswoman, said by telephone.

### Hot Temperatures

Temperatures in Perth, the capital of Western Australia, are forecast to rise to 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit) today, the Bureau of Meteorology said on its Web site. Higher temperatures boost electricity demand as homes and businesses increase use of air conditioners.

Consumption in the state at midday was 2,850 megawatts, Western Power said. Western Australia isn't connected to the nation's main power grid in the eastern and southern states.

Woodside expects to resume domestic gas production later today and ramp output up overnight, said Michael Parry, a spokesman in Perth. Liquefied natural gas output will start up about 24 hours after the restart of domestic gas production, he said. It is too early to say whether the timing of LNG cargoes will be affected, Parry said by telephone from Perth.

## North West Shelf

The A\$20 billion (\$18 billion) North West Shelf venture, Australia's biggest LNG producer, supplies fuel under contract to buyers in Japan, South Korea and China. It has capacity to produce 11.9 million metric tons a year of LNG from four production units and is adding a fifth, due to start up late this year.

Woodside doesn't know yet what caused the electrical fault, which may be connected with the installation of new equipment, Parry said. There was no fire and no need to call emergency services, he said.

Woodside has a one-sixth share of the venture, in which BP Plc, BHP Billiton Ltd., Chevron Corp., Woodside's 34 percent shareholder Royal Dutch Shell Plc, and a venture between Mitsui & Co. and Mitsubishi Corp. have stakes.