



PTTEP Australasia TIMOR SEA OPERATIONS Incident Information # 71

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PTTEP Australasia (PTTEP) reports work is continuing today to drill a new side track well to intercept and stop the leaking well in the Montara Field in the Timor Sea.

Following preparation work yesterday, the drilling team aboard the *West Triton* drilling rig has begun the side track using a downhole motor drilling assembly.

As with earlier intercept operations, once the side track is fully established, the motor assembly will be replaced by a rotary steerable assembly to drill within two metres of the intercept target a steel casing 25 centimetres in diameter, 2.6km below the seabed.

The company is aiming to make the next pass for an intercept on Friday (23 October). The drilling crew is now expected to reach the target area late on Thursday (22 October). For safety reasons, the intercept and well kill operation can only take place during daylight. A minimum of eight hours during daytime is required from the time of intercepting the leaking well to inject the heavy mud and complete the operation to stop the flow of oil and gas and water.

“The drilling of the relief well remains the safest and quickest way to stop the leak. It is a complex operation drilling through hard rock which is unfortunately taking longer than planned. This is not because of a lack of resources or commitment,” Mr Jose Martins, PTTEP Australasia Director and Chief Financial Officer, said.

“Working with international experts ALERT Well Control, all options were fully evaluated but this operation remains the most viable course of action. It is based on proven technology and drilling practices which have worked elsewhere around the world many times.”

Following the joint announcement last week by the Federal Government and PTTEP of an immediate and long term environmental monitoring program, a team including representatives from the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA), Geoscience Australia and PTTEP will leave Darwin harbour today.

After training in Darwin yesterday, they will undertake shoreline assessment ground surveys at Ashmore Reef and Cartier Islet.

This is the first of a range of studies to be launched which are expected to continue for at least the next two years. The scientific monitoring program is in addition to operational environmental monitoring already underway which includes surveillance and wildlife protection actions.



Mr Martins said the environmental monitoring program will allow the development of actions to safeguard the local ecology and marine species now and in the future to address both potential short term and long term impacts.

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NOTE: This media statement and all previous statements issued by the company can be viewed at www.au.pttep.com.