



## PTTEP Australasia TIMOR SEA OPERATIONS

### Information Release Statement Incident Information # 33

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PTTEP Australasia (PTTEP) today announced that the *West Triton* rig is preparing to start drilling a relief well tomorrow (Sunday, 13 September) to stop the flow of oil, gas and water from the Montara well head platform in the Timor Sea.

It is expected to take about three-and-a-half weeks for the relief well to intersect with the original well at a depth of 2.6km within the sub-sea formation, thereby allowing for the injection of heavy mud directly into the well bore to stop the leak.

*The West Triton* arrived on site late Thursday night (10 September) after travelling over 1,600 nautical miles (2,963 kilometres) from Batam Island in Indonesia, near Singapore. Early yesterday (11 September), the rig's jack-down legs were pinned into position on the sea floor, 2km SSW from the *West Atlas*' position.

"It normally takes up to 72 hours to start drilling after arrival on site. So we remain on track with our initial schedule," PTTEP Australasia Director and Chief Financial Officer José Martins said.

He said after locating the source of the leak in the existing well and stopping the flow, crews would later reboard the Montara platform. They would then further secure the well through the placement of plugs within the well from the well head platform. This second phase of the operation to plug the well was expected to take another week.

Once back onboard the *West Atlas* an assessment would also be made on what repairs would be needed to the rig and well head platform.

"PTTEP looked at all the available options and drilling a relief well using the *West Triton* was the quickest and safest way to control the leak," Mr Martins said.

"There has been evidence from visual assessments at the scene over recent days that the rate of the flow of oil from the well head platform is reducing. As a result, AMSA has scaled back its dispersal spraying program due to the lack of sufficiently large areas of oil to spray. Dispersant aircraft controlled by AMSA have not been used for a number of days. The AMSA surface spraying vessel is finding it increasingly hard to find suitable patches of oil to disperse.

"The apparent reduction in the size of the visible slick may be due to a reduction in oil coming from the well, a faster natural weathering process due to warmer temperatures, wind and wave action, or a combination of these factors."

AMSA's assessment from its observations, plus its own aerial imagery, shows the main area of containment and recovery is approx. 25 nautical miles (46.3 km) by 70 nautical miles (129.6 km) and heading north east from the well head location.



A team from leading international oil and gas well control engineering specialists ALERT Well Control ([www.alertdisastercontrol.com](http://www.alertdisastercontrol.com)) was mobilised to Perth from its headquarters in Singapore soon after the incident occurred on 21 August. They have been providing PTTEP's technical group with technical planning advice on the relief well drilling program.

ALERT Well Control personnel are now on the *West Triton* and two deluge fire safety vessels at the Montara field. They will be the first to reboard the Montara platform and *West Atlas* rig after the leak is stopped.

ALERT Well Control Managing Director Mike Allcorn has 30 years' experience in emergency response and risk management services involving oil well firefighting and blowout control, critical well integrity and well control/relief well engineering operations worldwide.

The company, which Mr Allcorn established 25 years ago, has successfully completed some 1,200 well control, marine and industrial firefighting and pressure control operations, plus troubleshooting and risk management projects on every continent.

“Working with PTTEP management and the entire drilling operations team, we are committed to a 24 hour operation until we have successfully completed the relief well drilling, stopped the leak and plugged the well,” Mr Allcorn said.

“Together with our specialist well control equipment, systems and products we shall incorporate sophisticated well flow modelling software and proven electro magnetic ranging technology which has been used successfully in similar operations around the world over many years. While the operation poses a number of technical challenges, we are confident in achieving our objective of accurately targeting and intersecting the well to stop the leak.

“To date, we have never had a situation where this has not been able to be achieved.

“Our specialist engineers are providing a range of advice to PTTEP. These include identification of potential hazards and corresponding measures that shall be applied to preferably eliminate, or at the very least alleviate, such risks to personnel and the environment to as low as reasonably practical, given the situation.”

ALERT Well Control was part of the international team mobilised into Kuwait after the first Gulf War when Saddam Hussein ordered the firing of hundreds of oil wells posing a huge safety, economic and environmental challenge.

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NOTE:                      All statements issued by the company on the incident can be viewed at [www.au.pttep.com](http://www.au.pttep.com)