



# Report and recommendations of the Environmental Protection Authority



**Wheatstone Development –  
inquiry under s46 of the  
*Environmental Protection Act 1986*  
to change Condition 8 of  
Ministerial Statement 873**

**Chevron Australia Pty Ltd**

Report 1464

January 2013

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AUTHORITY  
REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE MINISTER FOR  
ENVIRONMENT

**WHEATSTONE DEVELOPMENT – INQUIRY UNDER S46 OF THE  
*ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1986* TO CHANGE CONDITION 8 OF  
MINISTERIAL STATEMENT 873**

The Minister for Environment requested on 14 December 2012 that the Environmental Protection Authority inquire into and report to the Minister on Chevron Australia Pty Ltd's proposed changes to the environmental conditions applicable to the Wheatstone Development.

The following is the Environmental Protection Authority's Report and Recommendations (No.1464) to the Minister pursuant to section 46(6) of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.

**Background**

Chevron Australia Pty Ltd (Chevron) obtained approval under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act) to implement a proposal, referred to as the Wheatstone Development - Gas Processing, Export Facilities and Infrastructure, following assessment of its Environmental Review and Management Programme (ERMP) of July 2010. The implementation authorisation and conditions are specified in Ministerial Statement 873 dated 30 August 2011.

Ministerial Statement 873 provides that Chevron may construct and operate a 25 million tonne per annum Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) facility and associated domestic gas facility in the proposed Ashburton North Strategic Industrial Area 12 kilometres south west of the town of Onslow. The Wheatstone Development includes the construction of a number of facilities and associated activities in the marine environment, including a shipping channel, product loading facility, materials offloading facility (including breakwaters, turning basins, etc), trunklines and dredge spoil areas.

The installation of the trunkline is regulated by Condition 8, which requires the development and implementation of a Trunkline Route and Infrastructure Plan and a Trunkline Installation Environmental Monitoring and Management Plan.

Chevron wrote to the Minister on 28 November 2012 requesting a review of conditions 8-4 and 8-5. The proposed changes relate to:

- the need for a wider anchor spread of the trunkline pipelay vessel, outside the zone of high impact;
- the increase of the direct disturbance footprint of the trunkline for the nearshore component of trunkline installation from 50 metres (m) total (25 m either side of the trunkline) to 80 m total width, for the first 5,000 m from the shore crossing to account for nearshore conditions and design requirements; and
- the removal of the requirement for the direct disturbance footprint to be centred over the trunkline for the first 5,000 m from the shore crossing to allow for specific trunkline installation activities.

On 14 December the Minister submitted a request to the Environmental Protection Authority to inquire into and report to the Minister on Condition 8 of Ministerial Statement 873 under Section 46 of the EP Act.

### **Consideration of the Proposed Change to Conditions**

The request for a wider anchor spread can be managed using the provisions within the conditions of the current Ministerial Statement, without the need for an amendment to the implementation conditions (Section 46).

Chevron has also proposed an amendment to Condition 8-5 of Ministerial Statement 873 to allow for an increase to the direct disturbance footprint of the trunkline, specifically the nearshore component of the approximately 35 kilometre\* (km) trunkline installation (\*of the total approximately 225 km trunkline).

The amendment is proposed to increase the direct disturbance footprint from 50 m total width (25 m either side of the trunkline) to 80 m total width. This requirement is specifically for the first 5,000 m from the shore crossing. The original direct disturbance footprint that is 25 m either side of the trunkline, will continue to apply at the end of the 5,000 m amended area to the State Waters boundary.

Within the first 5,000 m from the shore crossing, Chevron has also requested the removal of the requirement for the direct disturbance footprint to be centred over the trunkline to allow for flexibility in the detailed installation method.

The proposed amendments are required to facilitate the nearshore trunkline installation activities, specifically as a result of:

- the requirement for a wider than originally planned trunkline microtunnel exit pit, to allow for adequate access during construction;

- the requirement of a wider temporary access channel for the trenching and secondary stabilisation activities in shallow water depths, to allow for access at all tidal and weather conditions; and
- the need for allowances in the lateral displacement of the trunkline as a result of the additional length required to weld the trunkline at the surface, and the inherent rigidity of the trunkline at the nearshore trunkline Above Water Tie In.

The Office of the Environmental Protection Authority has considered the environmental impacts of the proposed amendment to Condition 8-5 and has deemed it will not cause any significant additional environmental impacts beyond the original Environmental Protection Authority assessment.

The Office of the Environmental Protection Authority consideration takes into account the following justification:

- the proposed wider direct disturbance footprint area is within an area of predominantly unvegetated sandy sediments.
- the direct disturbance footprint is still within the original area assessed in Ministerial Statement 873.
- the total area of Benthic Primary Producer Habitat impacted will not change.

The impacts of the direct disturbance footprint will be managed by Ministerial Statement 873, the Trunkline Route and Infrastructure Plan and the Trunkline Installation Environmental Monitoring and Management Plan.

## **EPA Conclusion and Recommendations**

In view of the request by Chevron and investigations undertaken by the Office of the Environmental Protection Authority, the Environmental Protection Authority concludes that Condition 8 should be amended.

Having inquired into the matter, the Environmental Protection Authority submits the following recommendations to the Minister for Environment:

1. That Condition 8 is revised in the manner provided for in the attached recommended statement.
2. That after complying with section 46(8) of the EP Act, the Minister publishes a statement of decision to amend Condition 8 in the manner provided for in the attached recommended statement.

RECOMMENDED ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

**STATEMENT TO AMEND CONDITIONS APPLYING TO A PROPOSAL  
(PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 46 OF THE  
*ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1986*)**

WHEATSTONE DEVELOPMENT – GAS PROCESSING, EXPORT FACILITIES AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE.

SHIRE OF ASHBURTON AND ROEBOURNE.

**Proposal:** The Proposal is to construct and operate a 25 million tonne per annum Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) facility and associated Domestic Gas (Domgas) facility in the proposed Ashburton North Strategic Industrial Area (ANSIA) 12 kilometres south west of the town of Onslow. The Proposal includes:

- Subsea gas trunkline to bring produced hydrocarbons onshore to the LNG and Domgas plants;
- Product loading facility (PLF);
- Materials offloading facility (MOF);
- LNG and Domgas plants;
- Accommodation facilities; and
- Domgas pipeline to transport natural gas to the Dampier to Bunbury Natural Gas Pipeline.

The key components of the Proposal are further documented in Schedule 1 of Statement 873.

**Proponent:** Chevron Australia Pty Ltd

**Proponent Address:** 250 St George's Terrace, PERTH WA 6000

**Assessment Number:** 1960

**Previous Assessment Number:** 1754, 1924 & 1956

**Report of the Environmental Protection Authority:** Report 1464

**Previous Report of the Environmental Protection Authority:** 1404, 1440 & 1462

**Previous Statement Number:** 873

The implementation of the proposal to which the above report of the Environmental Protection Authority relates is subject to the conditions and procedures contained in Ministerial Statement No. 873, as amended by the following:

1. Change to Condition 8-5 (i)

Condition 8-5 (i) of Ministerial Statement 873 is deleted and replaced with a revised Condition 8-5 (i):

8-5

- i. The Trunkline Direct Disturbance Footprint, which lies within the Zone of High Impact defined in Condition 8-5 (ii), is not to extend beyond:
  - (a) 80 metres in width about the trunkline to approximately 5000 metres in a straight line distance from the trunkline shore crossing, unless otherwise approved in writing by the CEO;
  - (b) 25 metres either side of the trunkline centre-line from approximately 5000 metres (in a straight line distance from the trunkline shore crossing) to the State Waters boundary, unless otherwise approved in writing by the CEO;

**HON BILL MARMION MLA  
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT; WATER**