Martin visits Bayu-Undan platform for official start of Liquids Production

The biggest infrastructure projects in NT history - the Wickham Point LNG Plant - marked another important milestone today with ConocoPhillips, its partners and Timor Leste holding a ceremony at the Bayu-Undan platform in the Timor Sea for the official start of liquids production.

Chief Minister, Clare Martin, attended the event saying the project, worth more than $5 billion overall, had completed its first stage and remained on track for the second stage.

“Today marks the official start of liquid production at the Bayu-Undan field in the Timor Sea Joint Petroleum Development Area (JPDA), however, the first liquids were brought up in February and the first shipment of liquids took place in March,” she said.

“This is an important stage in the development of the field and its developers are now exporting these liquids to international customers.”

The second phase of production - gas to the Wickham Point LNG plant - begins 2006. Construction of the $2.5 billion, 500km pipe line to Darwin and LNG plant continues, with the first LNG cargo from the 3.24 million-tonne-per-year facility scheduled for delivery during the first quarter of 2006.

“Today is an important celebration and one that my Government welcomes - we are proud to have helped deliver this project for the NT, for Australia and for Timor Leste,” she said.

“Construction of the LNG Plant - which is now hiring hundreds of local and interstate workers - is progressing well and we look forward to the day when gas production begins.

“In this first phase of liquids production the Bayu-Undan gas recycle facility will produce, separate and store condensate, propane and butane and re-inject dry gas back into the reservoir.

“This project is the first outcome of Government's focused campaign to bring gas on shore, which included investing almost $20 million dollars into Wickham Point roads and infrastructure.

“The importance of this project to the Territory is significant with the creation of up to 1300 jobs - consisting of skilled locals and interstate workers - over the 3-year construction phase.”

The Bayu-Undan gas condensate field contains estimated recoverable hydrocarbons of 400 million barrels of condensate and liquefied petroleum gas and 3.4 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. It is 250 kilometres south of Timor-Leste, and 500 kilometres northwest of Darwin.

Ms Martin will also take part in East Timor independence celebrations tomorrow.