

# Decommissioning: Planning For The End

## Report on SUT Perth Branch Evening Technical Meeting

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2020

By Paul Farquharson, Perth Branch Committee Member

The February 2020 SUT technical evening at the Parmelia Hilton was opened by SUT Perth Branch Chairman, Rex Hubbard and chaired by SUT Committee Member, Paul Farquharson.

The event was kindly sponsored by one of the evening's presenters; Subcon as well as Woodside

The first presentation was delivered by Matt Allen, Founder of Subcon and discussed the topic of *"Rigs to Reef"*.

In 2018 Exmouth, Western Australia the first Integrated Artificial Reef was established With the intention of enhancing local recreational fishing experiences. 18 months on the results of *"King Reef"* are phenomenal. The 5 year community vision has led to a strategic collaboration between Subcon, Recfishwest, BHP, NERA and Curtin University. We asked one simple question, "what if? What if, instead of pulling these structures out of the water, we put more in"? The consortium developed the concept of "Integrated Artificial Reefs" and embarked on a journey that has engaged state and federal governments, operators, communities, NGOs and researchers to find a way to repurpose retiring assets into new habitat.

Matt then handed over to Tim Grose, Business Development Manager, from Recfishwest, who talked about the community benefit and the future of artificial reefs, highlighting the story of habitat enhancement in Western Australia the effect King Reef has had in that regard and has demonstrated that the net environmental and social benefits of Integrated Reefs outweigh those associated with full removal. The conclusion of the presentation highlighted the change in conversation from "sea dumping" to "habitat creation".

Our second presentation was by Mark Bourne, Well Integrity Manager, NOPSEMA (National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority) He was joined on stage by his colleague Stephen D'Souza, Environment Manger for Assessment & Inspection. They provide an insight and direction on *"A Regulators Perspective"*

The majority of Australia's regulated offshore wells and structures are located in Commonwealth waters and many have reached, or will in the near future, reach end of field and asset life. Our presenters outlined the legislative obligations for the plug and abandonment of wells and property removal. It was directed that many standard guideline and policies concerning decommissioning, relevance of which are monitored and directed by NOPSEMA. An illustration of "restoring cap rock integrity" also help to highlight the obligations to considered during Well Operations Management Plans.

NOPSEMA highlighted many collaborations to grow the requirements needed for decommissioning. These collaborations include, University councils, APPEA DISC Steering groups and being a member of the International Regulators Forum.

The presentation ended with a case study of the Jabiru/Challis in the Timor Sea.

For more specific details please refer to the pdf presentation.

The final presentation of the evening was by Matthijs Groenewegan, General Manager at Allseas and dealt with the question *“What does it take to bring offshore decommissioning work to shore?”*

The presentation began with an introduction about Allseas, and a timeline of their key vessels culminating with some focus on their specialized heavy lift vessel “Pioneering Spirit”. This vessel was instrumental for installing, but more topically appropriate, for removing four topsides – combined weight 75,000 t – in less than two weeks, thus demonstrating the industry the advantages of the single lift decommissioning.

The next part of the presentation detailed many examples of jacket removal with some animations detailing the process mechanisms to cut and remove the jacket.

The principle is as simple as it is powerful: execute as much work onshore as possible, and greatly reduce risks and costs by limiting the offshore scope to a minimum. By reducing the time positioned around the jacket to just a few hours, predictability of the operation is far more accurate, and the weather conditions have less influence.

The conclusion of the presentation was delivered around topside removal and the subsequent transfer to shore.

For more specific details please refer to the pdf presentation.

SUT Perth branch tried a new approach to questions from the floor by empowering the audience to ask online via the virtual tool, Slido. The incoming questions are crowdsourced for the best and most appropriate, these are then subsequently directed to the presenters by the chair at the end of each presentation.

The presentations and whole evening were extremely well received by the 181 attendees.

Thank you to the SUT members, new members and guests for their attendance during the evening, especially to all the presenters that volunteered their time to speak at the event.

I would like to conclude by again thanking our ETM sponsors, Subcon and Woodside. Events like these cannot be realised without key sponsorship and support.

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