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10 October 2014

Dr Graham Jacobs MLA
Chair
Legislative Assembly Education and Health Standing Committee
Level 1, 11 Harvest Terrace
West Perth WA 6005

Dear Dr Jacobs

RE: Inquiry into mental health impacts of FIFO work arrangements

INPEX welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Western Australian Parliament's inquiry into mental health impacts of FIFO work arrangements. This submission should be considered in conjunction with the response from APPEA, the peak body representing the oil and gas exploration and production industry.

Background

INPEX CORPORATION is a worldwide oil and gas exploration and production company currently involved in more than 70 projects across 27 countries.

INPEX is ranked in the top 100 global energy companies and is listed on the Tokyo Stock Exchange. Part of the Australian business community since 1986, we are active in a number of projects in Australia and the Timor Sea, including the large-scale Ichthys LNG Project, Prelude FLNG project, Van Gogh, Ravensworth and Kitan oil projects, as well as the Bayu-Undan condensate development and associated Darwin LNG.

The Ichthys LNG Project is a Joint Venture between INPEX group companies (the Operator), major partner Total and the Australian subsidiaries of Tokyo Gas, Osaka Gas, Chubu Electric Power and Toho Gas.

Detailed Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) of the Ichthys LNG Project is ongoing and production is scheduled to commence by the end of 2016.

The Ichthys LNG Project is unlike many oil and gas activities in Western Australia as it has a footprint across the Northern Territory and Western Australia. For the purposes of the response to the Standing Committee we have focused on the construction and operational workforce who will be working in Western Australia.

The Ichthys LNG Project offshore operations are located 220kms off the relatively remote North West coast of the Kimberley therefore FIFO arrangements are in place for both the construction and operational phases of the offshore Project.

Our approach to health and wellbeing of personnel

INPEX supports its employees in a number of ways to ensure people are fit for work both physically and mentally. Rigorous pre-employment medical assessments are in place for all employees.

The company has a dedicated wellbeing team who develop programs specifically aimed at identifying and supporting individuals with mental health issues. An online 'wellbeing hub' has been established to provide comprehensive information on mental health issues and is available to all personnel and their families via a personnel login.

INPEX funds a confidential Employee Assistance Program which is available to personnel and their families, 24/7 anywhere in the world. They can access support by:

- online information and self- help programs
- direct email or phone contact with a Psychologist
- arranging a confidential face to face consultation.

Direct families members are also welcome to seek assistance at the Company's expense and there is a focus on mental health strategies.

INPEX has a Return to Work Policy for those employees with mental health issues. Under the Policy the employee is supported by an in-house occupational health nurse and company doctor in liaison with the employee's treating practitioner to ensure a safe structured work plan is put in place to enable their recovery.

INPEX employees and their families are also given support to settle when arriving in Perth from an orientation service that assists with finding permanent accommodation, helping with school selection and providing social inclusion services such as mothers clubs and arranging social activities.

Ichthys Project / Operations – workforce arrangements

The highly technical nature of offshore work attracts and requires people who are experienced and understand the unique environment and working conditions associated with offshore oil and gas production. Employees in this field select this career knowing its rewards and challenges and INPEX's policies are in place to allow the work to be undertaken in a safe and healthy operating environment.

Workforce requirements will vary from construction to operations.

The operational workforce offshore, whilst significantly smaller in size to the construction workforce, will be fly-in, fly-out. Personnel will live and work on the facilities during their rosters and these arrangements will remain over the life of the field. Accommodation arrangements for the offshore operational workforce will be predominately made up of single person cabins and include leisure facilities such as a gymnasium, internet and computer access, television, aerobic room, cinema and quiet lounges. Phones and high speed broadband in cabins will provide employees with private access to family and friends.



Conclusion

Mental health is a complex and important public health issue requiring a range of whole-of-community and whole-of-government strategies to address. INPEX will continue to look to ways it can support its employees to remain healthy and safe while at work and thanks the Committee for the opportunity to outline INPEX’s wellbeing policies.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "BT", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

BT

Bill Townsend
General Manager External Affairs & Joint Ventures