

\$150,000 For Well Integrity And Subsea Support Facility Study

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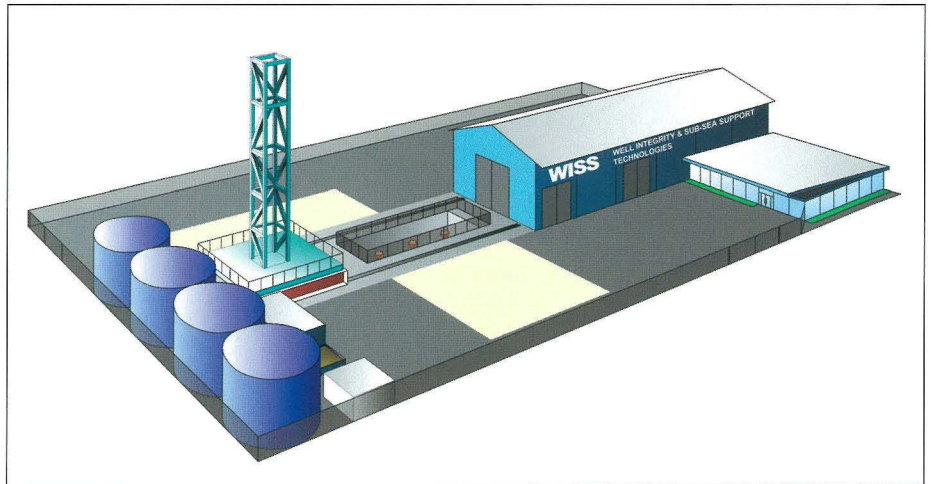
The West Australian government has provided a \$150,000 grant for a feasibility study into the construction of the first Well Integrity and Subsea Support (WISS) facility in the southern hemisphere.

Science and Innovation Minister, Francis Logan, said the study would be conducted by Advanced Well Technology for a facility to be built at the Australian Marine Complex (AMC) at Henderson.

Logan said the study should be completed by May and, if the project was given the green light, construction could start later this year. "Western Australia's oil and gas industry has grown to become a vital pillar of our State's economic prosperity", he said.

"We have a number of prospective sedimentary basins adjacent to our coast, making WA an ideal location to establish a world-class WISS facility." He said the facility would be the only one specifically designed to meet the subsea sector needs of the Asia-Pacific region and would further establish WA as a significant global player in the offshore oil and gas industry.

AWT Emerging Technologies Director, Margaret Hildick-Pytte, said the proposed facility would encompass aspects of other major facilities in Europe and North America



and would be the first to incorporate subsea and downhole equipment integration and testing.

"There will be staged development, with the first stage including storage and an equipment preparation workshop, office complex and a test area for integrated testing of seabed and downhole components", Hildick-Pytte said.

Further planned stages include installation of a moveable drill rig and derrick, a multi-phase meter proving and component testing capability, and construction of vertical and horizontal wells for downhole technology development and testing.

"These facilities will be used for the hands-on training and competency development of oil and gas industry technicians and engineers to address skills shortages", she said. "It will complement the TAFE Australian Centre for Education in Process Technologies (ACEPT) and facilitate expanded training opportunities supporting the Asia Pacific region.

"It will also catalyse the commitment of a number of equipment, technology and service providers to establish a presence within the AMC to build a cluster of capability in a single location, each generating new employment opportunities in specialised skill areas for potential export overseas."

AWT welcomed the commitment of Vetco Gray, one of the largest manufacturers of subsea equipment in the world, as a foundation partner to the facility. Vetco Gray Subsea Systems President, David Lamont, said that the company views the Asia Pacific region as one of the major growth centres for the deployment of subsea technology.

"Vetco Gray is very pleased to occupy the role of foundation partner for this exciting

initiative", Lamont said. "We look forward to working with Advanced Well Technologies to make the high technology well integrity and subsea support facility a great success and to leverage the capability that it represents across current and future projects."

"This commitment is a major boost to the establishment of the facility and enables access to the global capabilities of Vetco Gray in ensuring appropriate world-class functionality of the facility." ■