



Doug Short holding court, with class teacher modelling knitted hardhat

Primary School Class Visits the Willaroo-1 Wellsite

A group of some 90 Year-6 school children and their teachers visited Orion Petroleum's Willaroo-1 wellsite in the Surat-Bowen Basin of northern NSW in late May 2008. They were shown the Ensign Rig 20 drilling operation and given a general talk on the objectives of the well by the company representatives.

The excursion was arranged by the landholders and local residents, David and Clare Mailler, who also provided a bus to transport the children from Goondiwindi Primary School to the Willaroo-1 wellsite. Later that day David and Clare hosted afternoon tea for the children at their homestead.

Orion's wellsite geologist, Doug Short and Ensign Australia's rig manager, Chris Whiting conducted a tour of the site for the children and teachers.

Doug described how seismic surveying was used to map the sub-surface structure in order

to select the drill site. He also explained how oil was derived from organic matter and how it can accumulate in sandstone reservoirs towards the high point of the structure.

Samples from the formations drilled were examined by the group and it was explained how oil and gas were detected by use of a gas detector and fluoroscope. Fortunately sufficient oil was recovered on test to provide samples for both the school and for oil character analyses.

Although some of the information relayed to the children was beyond their understanding, there is no doubt that a lasting impression was made on some of the students. Hopefully the students of Goondiwindi Primary School will gain a greater appreciation of petroleum exploration from this experience, which may also stimulate their interest in studying science in school. Ultimately this excursion may even inspire a few students to become future explorationists. ■



A bit of fascination.