LNG Unlimited

LNG JOURNAL PUBLICATION 24 January 2017

Woodside boosted by LNG prices and pending revenues from Wheatstone

First LNG from processing Train at Chevron-led project is due in mid-year

Our Asia-Pacific editor

Woodside Petroleum, the Australian operator of liquefied natural gas plants, reported record fourth-quarter production and also said commissioning had started at the Wheatstone LNG joint venture onshore Western Australia where it is a stakeholder.

"The Wheatstone project is approaching LNG Train 1 construction completion, all modules are on-site and final hook-up and commissioning has commenced," said Woodside Chief Executive Peter Coleman in Woodside's fourth-quarter earnings report.

"The First LNG from Train 1 is expected in mid-2017 and from Train 2 six to eight months later," said Woodside.

Latest Australian plant is located in isolated Pilbara region

Modules

"All Train 1 and Train 2 modules are set on their foundations. Installation of piping, electrical and instrumentation continues as planned," it added.

"The storage and loading system is ready for commissioning and cool-down, with the LNG storage tanks and export loading jetty now complete," the company said.

Woodside operates the Northwest Shelf and Pluto LNG plants in Western Australia and the Wheatstone start-up will boost its volumes for export into Asia.

The impending coming on stream of the Wheatstone plant will coincide with rising LNG prices.

Woodside said higher realized prices reflected a strengthening of oil prices in the second half of 2016.

Prices for the North West Shelf plant rose by 17 percent and by 4 percent at its single-Train Pluto LNG plant.

Woodside said its NWS plant prices amounted to US\$6.20 per million British thermal units in December 2016 compared with \$5.30 per MMBtu three months earlier at the end of September.

Its Pluto LNG prices were US\$8.40 per MMBtu in December compared with US\$8.10 per MMBtu in September.

"We look forward to adding production from Wheatstone in the middle of this year. Wheatstone is a key component of our near-term growth strategy and will contribute more than 13 million barrels of oil equivalent in annual production once both Trains are fully operational," added the Woodside CEO.

Wheatstone is majority-owned by Chevron Corp., also operator of the Gorgon LNG plant on Barrow Island in Western Australia, and will have an initial capacity of 8.9 million tonnes per annum.

The Wheatstone venture is located near Onslow, in the Pilbara region. The feed-gas comes from the Wheatstone, Iago, Julimar and Brunello gas fields.

Woodside joined the project in 2015 when it completed the acquisition of 65 percent stakes in the Julimar and Brunello gas fields assets from Apache Corp of the US.

"Woodside starts 2017 in a strong position," stated Coleman.

Outstanding

"Production performance has been outstanding, with the team consistently delivering world-class operational performance. LNG production system reliability has now exceeded 99 percent for a second consecutive quarter," he added.

Woodside said other highlights during the quarter included contracting five uncommitted LNG cargoes under a mid-term sales agreement.

The Australian company also secured drilling equipment and services at competitive rates for 2017 drilling campaigns offshore Myanmar and in West Africa, offshore Senegal.

UNLIMITED AGENDA

German group Siemens succeeds in entering LNG fuel market in Marcellus Shale region

Our Europe editor

Dresser-Rand, part of the German Siemens Group, said production was successfully ramped up at a small-scale natural gas liquefaction facility supplied to a US operator making LNG for fuel in the Marcellus Shale region of Pennsylvania.

The modular, portable liquefaction technology called "LNGo" enables production of LNG at up to 6,000 gallons per day and can be installed in a short period of time to meet local demand.

LNG used for high horsepower machinery in shale plays

Acquired

US company Dresser-Rand was acquired by Munich-based Siemens in September 2014 for $7.6 billion, giving the German conglomerate more access to LNG technology and the US market.

"This cost-effective solution, developed by the Dresser-Rand business, allows the operator, Frontier Natural Resources, to monetize unutilized gas assets at Tenaska Resources Mainesburg gas field, located in the Marcellus shale play," said Dresser-Rand. Frontier Natural Resources is an independent gas producer focused on developing conventional and unconventional resources in the US.

The LNG facility produces LNG for use in high horsepower machinery use in the shale gas plays of Pennsylvania.

"LNG is ideal for high horsepower machinery including marine, rail, mining, over-the-road trucking, drilling, fracturing and power equipment," Dresser-rand explained.

The scope of supply includes a standardized LNGo liquefaction solution consisting of four different modules, each handling one step of the liquefaction process.

"The whole LNGo system can be transported on eight trucks, is deployed directly at the gas field and has a footprint of approximately 508 square meters, roughly the size of a basketball court," the company explained.

"This project demonstrates our unique capabilities to deliver innovative solutions for oil and gas applications that help our clients maximize the value of their assets," said Michael Walhof, sales director for Distributed LNG Solutions for Dresser-Rand.

We are proud to provide Frontier Natural Resources with a reliable, robust solution to liquefy natural gas and cost-effectively move it to market," added Walhof.

The LNGo system is manufactured by Dresser-Rand at a facility near the town of Painted Post in upstate New York.

"The small-scale LNGo solution is self-sufficient and eliminates the need to establish an expensive gas pipeline infrastructure or arrange for long-distance trucking of LNG from centralized plants to point of use.

"Furthermore, it can be deployed in rough terrain or remote regions. It can function as a decentralized solution where the requisite pipeline infrastructure is lacking, or as an onsite transformation solution to reduce or eliminate flaring of petroleum gas at, for example, oil rigs or producing gas fields," it added. ■

Norwegian LNG fleet owner Höegh orders next series of FSRUs from two Korean shipyards

Höegh LNG, the Norwegian fleet owner and project developer specializing in floating storage and regasification units, has signed an agreement with South Korean shipbuilders Samsung Heavy Industries and Hyundai Heavy Industries for its next series of FSRUs.

Höegh has signed one firm shipbuilding contract for one FSRU and an option for three additional FSRUs from the Samsung yard.

The Samsung FSRUs will have a storage capacity of 170,000 cubic metres and will have regasification equipment designed by Höegh LNG and gas system and propulsion maker Wartsila of Finland.

Each of the FSRUs will have regasification capacity of 750 million standard cubic feet per day.

Höegh said the vessels would also have full trading capabilities as conventional carriers.

The FSRU with the firm contract will be delivered in May 2019 and the optional FSRUs will be delivered at six months intervals thereafter if finally confirmed.

Höegh also signed a firm contract with another Korean shipyard Hyundai for an FRSU to be delivered in the fourth quarter of 2018.

The Hyundai-built FSRU will have a storage capacity of 170,000 cubic metres and regasification capacity of 1,000 MMscf per day, with full trading capabilities.

Höegh also said two other newbuilds ordered from Hyundai would be allocated to serve as import facility in the West African nation of Ghana and in Pakistan.

It signed a 20-years FSRU charter with Quantum Power for the Tema LNG project in Ghana and a charter for the same term with Global Energy Infrastructure Limited for the second import facility being provided for Pakistan at Port Qasim, near Karachi.

"The company has spent considerable efforts optimizing its FSRU portfolio, maximizing charter revenues from FSRUs under construction and reducing overall technical risks," it explained.

"The company has therefore decided to allocate FSRU No. 7 (HHI hull number 2552) to serve the Quantum Power charter in Ghana and to allocate FSRU No. 9 (HHI hull number 2909) to the GEI charter in Pakistan," said Höegh.

"We are very pleased to have completed this agreement with SHI, a yard we know well as SHI built Höegh LNG's first two FSRUs," said Höegh President and Chief Executive Sveinung J. S. Stohle.

"These units have shown excellent performance since their delivery," added Stohle.

"The agreement with SHI also marks a new era for Höegh with FSRU newbuilding programs at two of the world's biggest shipyards, which solidify our position as the leading FSRU provider to the LNG industry," it stated. ■

Developer of North America projects sees shares surge

Liquefied Natural Gas Ltd, the Australian company developing LNG export plants in the US and Canada, has been required to issue a second statement in under a year to the Australian Securities Exchange after a 23 percent surge in its shares in three days.

LNG Ltd., whose ventures include the Magnolia LNG plant in Louisiana and the Bear Head facility planned for Nova Scotia received the ASX request after its shares jumped from A$0.70 to A$0.86 from January 10 to January 13.

The company, which also has a lease for a planned Fisherman's Landing coal-seam-gas-to-LNG venture in Gladstone in the state of Queensland, where three similar plants are already in production, told the ASX that it was unaware of the reasons behind the share surge

LNG Ltd was obliged to issue a similar statement to the ASX on June 9, 2016, when its shares had also taken off during a short period amid takeover speculation.

In addition to the price change, the ASX also noted "the significant increase in the volume of the company's securities traded" in the past few trading days.

In light of this, the ASX asked the company to respond to the following questions:

"Is the company aware of any information concerning it that has not been announced to the market which, if known by some in the market, could explain the recent trading in its securities?"

In response, LNG Ltd said it was "not aware of any information concerning it that has not been announced to the market" which, if known, could explain the recent trading in its securities.

US Cove Point LNG export project now has 2,500 workers on site

Our North America editor in New York

Dominion, the US energy and power company whose assets include 14,400 miles of natural gas pipelines, said its Cove Point LNG project in Maryland was progressing well as it aims to be the nation's second export facility to come on stream after Sabine Pass in Louisiana.

The Cove Point plant is about 80 percent complete and will come on stream before the end of the year.

Dominion said in its latest project update that there were currently more than 2,500 construction workers on site at the facility overlooking Chesapeake Bay.

Concrete

"All of the concrete has been poured, the sound wall is essentially complete, and more than 90 percent of the steel and 60 percent of the pipe has been installed for this project," Dominion added.

"All barge loads have been received and all heavy haul deliveries have been transported and the temporary pier at Offsite Area B has been removed and the site restoration is complete," it said.

Transformation work well underway at Chesapeake Bay

The Cove Point plant will ship around 5.25 million tonnes per annum of LNG to Asia and elsewhere when it starts up.

Dominion has fully subscribed the capacity of the project with 20-year service agreements with a Japanese joint venture comprising Sumitomo Corp., one of the world's leading trading companies, and the utility Tokyo Gas Co.

Another company which will have liquefaction capacity is Gas Authority of India, the national transmission company and a leading LNG player in the Asian nation.

The US subsidiary of IHI International Corp. of Japan and Kiewit Corp. of Omaha, Nebraska, are the engineering, procurement and construction contractors for the liquefaction facilities.

Additionally, the $5-billion Atlantic Coast Pipeline will enable the delivery of feed-gas from the Marcellus Shale to LNG export plants in Maryland, Georgia and further south as well as to pipeline consumers.

The Atlantic Coast Pipeline is itself a joint venture involving Dominion, Duke Energy, Piedmont Natural Gas and Southern Company Gas.

Japanese spot LNG price rose last month by as much as a $1 to $8

Japan said the average price of spot liquefied natural gas cargoes contracted in December 2016 was $ 8.00 per million British thermal units, a rise of $1 per MMBtu compared with the previous month and also higher than a year ago.

The Japanese said the average price of spot shipments that arrived last month after being contracted earlier was $6.8 per MMBtu compared with $5.9 MMBtu in November 2016.

The contracted spot prices were also $0.60 per MMBtu higher than in the same month a year ago when shipment costs averaged $7.40 per MMBtu.

The spot cargo numbers come from the commerce division of the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and are only issued if a minimum number of two trades are recorded.

The ministry emphasizes that "spot LNG" refers to fuel traded on a cargo-to-cargo basis and does not mean shipments under contracts on a short-term, medium-term or long-term basis. The statistical accounting of the spot prices started in March 2014.

"Subjects of these statistics are companies which are end-consumers of spot LNG. In order to avoid double counting, companies that mediate transactions (for example trading companies) are excluded from subjects of these statistics," the Ministry noted.

Statistical accounting of these spot LNG prices was started by the Finance Ministry in March 2014.

Overall Japanese LNG imports jumped 12.7 percent in November as shipments rose for a second straight month, boosted by new production in Australia and increased volumes from Asian nations.

The shipments to Japan's network of 34 terminals amounted to 7.54 million tonnes in November compared with 6.69MT in the same month a year ago.

LNG imports had risen by 3.7 percent in October to 6.28MT, but had dropped by 3.5 percent in September compared with 2015.

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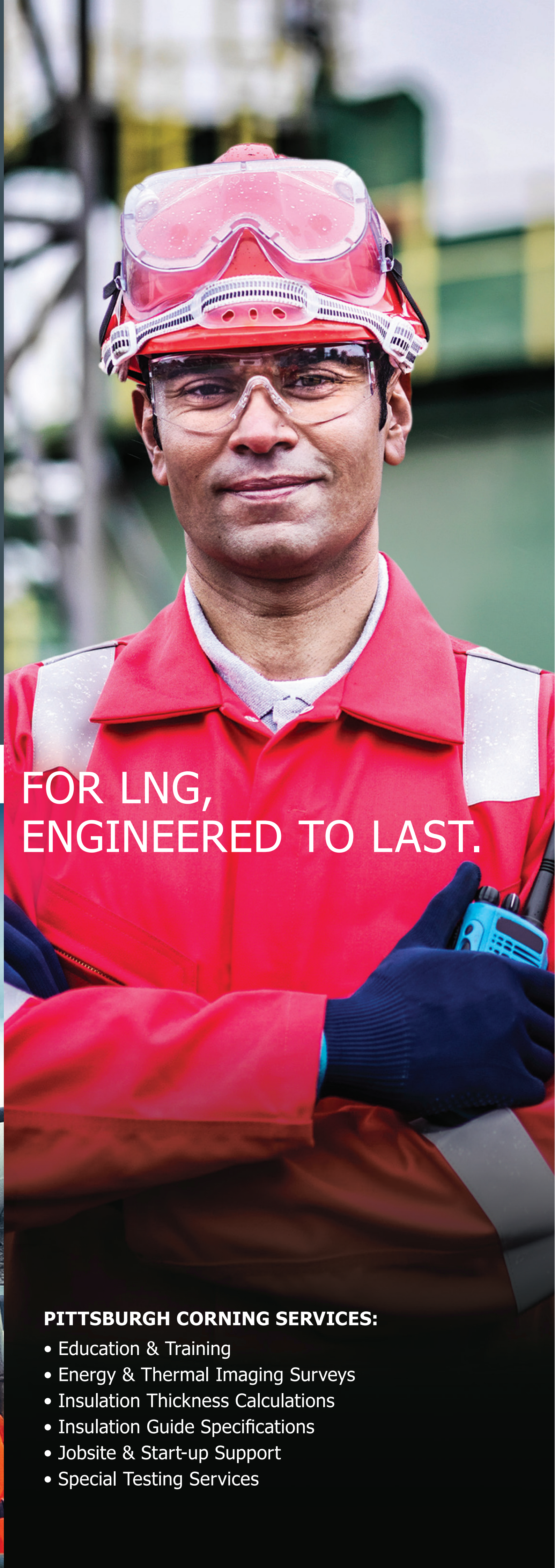

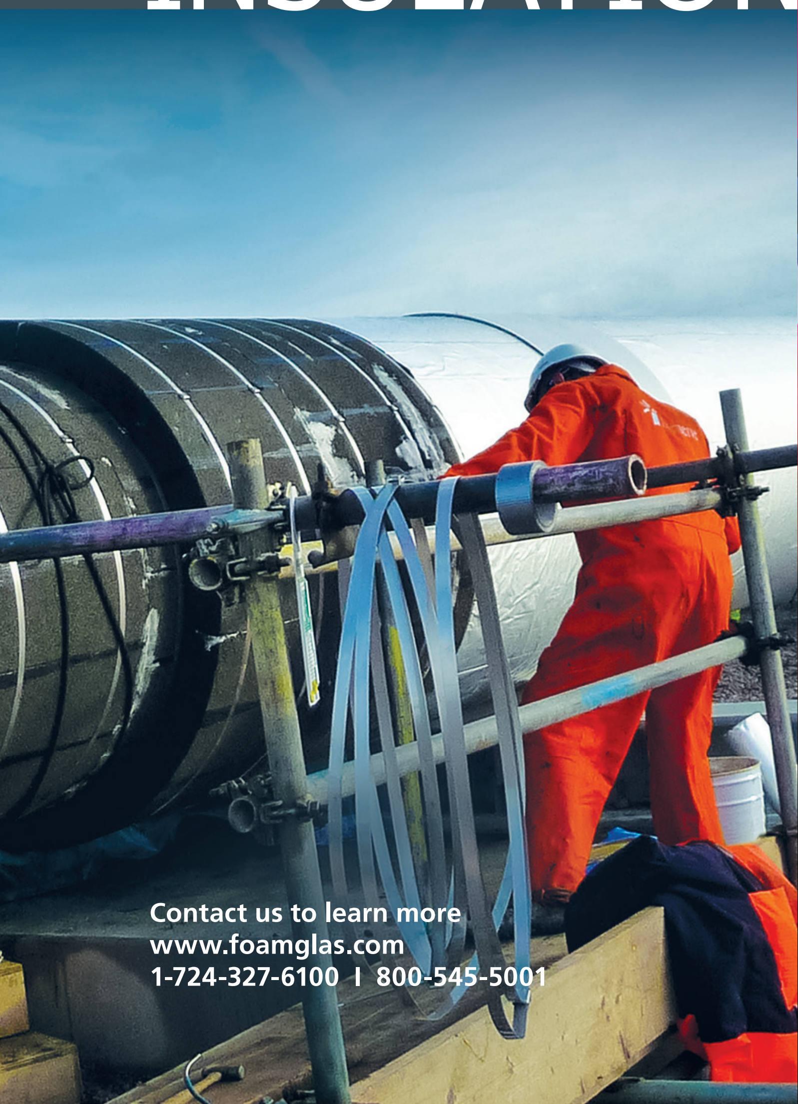

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NEWS NUDGES

GasLog CFO to step down

GasLog Ltd, the Monaco-based shipping line with a fleet of 28 liquefied natural gas carriers and with charter customers such as Royal Dutch Shell, has announced that Chief Financial Officer Simon Crowe is stepping down. Crowe has told the company he would leave his position on June 30, 2017. A statement added that in order to facilitate a smooth transition, Crowe was prepared to remain with the company for now as the search for his replacement proceeds. "Simon joined GasLog at a critical point as it evolved from a private business into a leading publicly traded LNG transportation company," said Peter Livanos, Chairman of GasLog and Director of US-listed affiliate GasLog Partners.

Norway licences for 29 firms

A total of 29 companies have been awarded 56 new production licenses on the Norwegian continental shelf as part of Norway's Awards in Predefined Areas (APA) 2016 licensing round. The licences cover 148,014 square kilometres of blocks in the North Sea, Norwegian Sea and Barents Sea. Of the licences awarded, 36 are in the North Sea, 17 in the Norwegian Sea and three in the Barents Sea. Norwegian energy company Statoil, Europe's only baseload LNG plant operator, led the way in the APA round with interests awarded in 29 licences and with operatorship of 16 of these.

TechnipFMC makes debut

TechnipFMC, the merged subsea energy and LNG players, France Technip and FMC Technologies of the US, began operating as a single company with US and Euronext lshares. "This is a transformational day for TechnipFMC and our employees," said Thierry Pilenko, Executive Chairman of TechnipFMC. ■

Vancouver-based Steelhead firm takes serious step forward by hiring global LNG executives

Our North America editor

A possible Steelhead LNG plant location in BC

Steelhead LNG, the Vancouver-based energy company focused on liquefied natural gas project development in the province of British Columbia, has hired experienced global LNG industry executives Paul Sullivan and Gerry Peereboom to help push forward its planned operations.

Sullivan is the former Senior Vice President of Global LNG and Floating LNG at the Australian-based Worley Parsons Group.

Nigel Kuzemko, Chief Executive of Steelhead LNG, said Sullivan had been appointed Vice President of Projects and was one of two executives hired.

Joint venture

Steelhead, which is backed by native North American First Nations in its joint venture developments, additionally named Gerry Peereboom, as its new Vice President of Integration.

Peereboom has more than 38 years of international experience on major oil, gas and LNG projects for companies such as Houston-based Noble Energy, BP of the UK and US company Amoco Corp.

Steelhead said new executive Sullivan has had a long career in engineering and construction, with more than 25 years of experience in LNG import and export projects.

He previously led the front-end engineering division at BG Group, where he was involved in the development, from concept to implementation, of the company's liquefaction and regasification projects.

"He was instrumental in developing Atlantic LNG, BG's first grassroots liquefaction project in Trinidad.

"He has also previously served as the Development and Projects Director for Whessoe Oil & Gas, where he was responsible for front-end engineering, product innovation and project development, together with operations responsibility for the western hemisphere, India and East Asia," said the Canadian company.

Steelhead is backed by two First Nation groups and is exploring two separate ventures in BC.

Steelhead said in September 2016 that it was continuing to refine its LNG concept design to make use of floating LNG production and storage units moored to marine jetties.

It explained that the concept would contribute to the planned "low-impact, low-cost" development of Steelhead's proposed Malahat LNG venture with the Malahat First Nation.

FLNG is also the concept for the planned Sarita project with the Huu-ay-aht First Nation, which aims to develop a venture at Sarita Bay at the southern end of the Alberni Inlet.

That second project would be located on Huu-ay-aht First Nation land at Sarita Bay, about 10 kilometres north of Bamfield, and about 70 kilometres southwest of Port Alberni.

The Sarita project is in the preliminary engineering and conceptual design stage.

Steelhead has also recently joined forces with Canadian exploration and production company Seven Generations Energy.

The arrangement, through which Seven Generations has also acquired a minority interest in Steelhead, is expected to provide potential new markets for the explorer as well as increased certainty of feed-gas supply for Steelhead.

Seven Generations has assets in the Kakwa River project, located about 100 kilometres south of its operations headquarters in Grande Prairie, Alberta.

"Steelhead LNG is at an exciting point and has the potential to be a game changer in the LNG industry," said Sullivan.

"I look forward to overseeing the next phase of development of the company's At-Shore LNG export projects, which have the potential to deliver some of the lowest cost LNG to international markets," he added.

Steelhead said Peereboom would lead the schedule, risk assessment and risk mitigation activities in his new role, while also dealing with new upstream partner Seven Generations.

Peereboom will also oversee the development and application of Steelhead's environmental stewardship.

"I see Steelhead as one of the most dynamic and innovative companies in the industry and am excited to join the team," said Peereboom.

Both Sullivan and Peereboom will be based at Steelhead's corporate headquarters in Vancouver. ■

Indian LNG import terminal caught up in US Enron collapse of 2001 still awaits its full completion

Our Asia editor

Dabhol LNG import terminal in India, the facility caught up in the US Enron power scandal in 2001, may finally be making plans to complete its infrastructure, including a breakwater to allow the handling of more capacity.

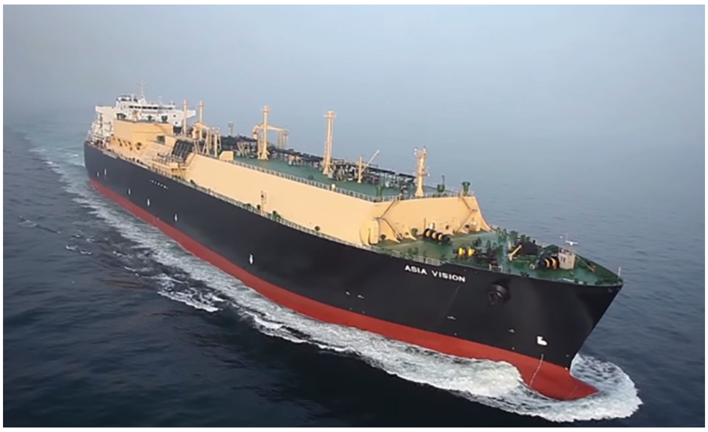
Ratnagiri Gas and Power Co. executives have said they were considering a tendering process for the breakwater project for some time during 2017, with a construction time-frame of three years.

Breakwater plan

The terminal only formally entered service in January 2013, though with a reduced capacity because of a lack of berthing protection from the breakwater.

Rising Indian natural gas demand is not being met because of a lack of infrastructure and pipelines in the country. This is also at a time when there is a glut of LNG supplies and prices are at relatively low levels.

Gas Authority of India has a stake in Ratnagiri Gas and helped oversee the commissioning of



More LNG will be pointed at India as facilities improve

the terminal, located south of Mumbai.

More than 50 percent of Ratnagiri Gas is owned by GAIL and state power conglomerate NTPC, while the balance of the shares is held by financial institutions and the Maharashtra State Electricity Board.

The Dabhol LNG facility has been dogged by ill-luck since it was conceived as part of a power project in India controlled by Enron before the US company became the biggest bankruptcy in US corporate history in 2001 amid a financial scandal.

The Dabhol terminal was just 80 percent complete when it finally reverted to Ratnagiri Gas ownership in 2005.

The terminal was considered to be adequately completed to receive a commissioning cargo in March 2012, delivered from the Hammerfest plant in Norway, operated by Statoil.

However, the facility with nameplate capacity of 5 million tonnes per annum and located not far from the existing Dahej and Hazira import terminals, had to be temporarily shutdown in 2012 because of two equipment failures.

Even now, the Dabhol facility still only has the capacity to handle just 1.7 MTPA on a seasonal basis.

The terminal and the adjacent Dabhol power plant receive cargoes only between October and May, due to the lack of the breakwater.

Future plans for the Dabhol facility include providing access to natural gas supply for the southern and western Indian states of Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

GAIL is currently trying to complete the 1,400-kilometres Dhabol-Bengaluru pipeline system to connect more users to natural gas.

The four Indian West Coast terminals, including another at Kochi in the southwest state of Kerala, all have plans or potential to increase existing capacity.

Petronet LNG recently completed the expansion of its Dahej terminal from 10 MTPA to 15 MTPA in terms of capacity.

Dahej, located north of Mumbai, is the most widely used terminal. The Shell-operated import terminal at Hazira, also on the West Coast near Mumbai, has 5 MTPA of capacity. ■

Gazprom gas sales revenue rise on more EU volumes

Russian natural gas company Gazprom, whose pipeline supplies are the main competition to LNG sales in Europe, posted a third-quarter profit as volumes shipped to the European Union increased and amounted to more than 160 billion cubic metres for the first nine months of 2016.

Gazprom had reported a loss for the same three months last year and this time said quarterly profits amounted to $1.6 billion.

The volume of gas sold to the European market increased by about 30 percent for the first nine months of last year.

Gazprom said natural gas revenue for sales to the EU increased by 8.5 percent for the nine-month period.

The nine-month European sales totaled $26 billion, net of excise tax and customs duties, compared with $24Bln in the year-before period.

"This was mainly driven by the increase in volumes of gas sold by 28 percent, or 35.6 Bcm, which was partially compensated by the decrease in average Russian ruble prices (including excise tax and customs duties) by 20 percent," Gazprom said.

Net sales of gas accounted for 54 percent of total net sales for the first nine months of last year.

Sales of gas outside of Russia and former states of the Soviet Union amounted to 160.9 billion cubic metres from January until September 2016 versus 125.3 Bcm previously.

Total gas sales, including the Russian Federation, amounted to 322.6 Bcm compared with 303.1Bcm in the same nine months of 2015.

Engie to merge LNG terminals with natural gas transmission operator

Our Europe editor

Engie, the French energy company, is overseeing an overhaul of its subsidiaries as its natural gas pipeline company prepares to take over its LNG terminal operator.

The LNG terminal owner Elengy has signed a preliminary accord to be acquired by another Engie company, GRTgaz.

France's GRTgaz will absorb three regasification facilities

Fund stakes

Elengy is owned 100 percent by Engie while GRTgaz has the French financial institutions, CNP Assurances and Caisse des Depôts, holding 25 percent of its shares and Engie owning the other 75 percent.

Elengy is the operator of three French LNG import terminals, the Atlantic coast facility at Montoir de Bretagne and the Fos Tonkin and Fos Cavaou terminals near the Mediterranean port of Marseilles.

Elengy's three terminals have regasification capacity of 21.25 billion cubic metres per annum of natural gas and a workforce of 376 employees.

GRTgaz is Europe's second-largest natural gas transmission network operator with over 32,000 kilometres of pipelines and 3,000 employees. "For the shareholders of GRTgaz and Elengy, this planned acquisition responds to both European gas infrastructure challenges and market player needs," said Engie.

"The market is currently subject to infrastructure consolidation where very large players are integrating several gas chain businesses, in particular LNG terminals and gas transmission networks," the company explained.

"GRTgaz's acquisition of Elengy, bolstering GRTgaz with high quality LNG assets, would thus enhance France's position as a well-regulated market at the crossroads of international LNG trading," said Engie,

Engie itself was born out of consolidation. Formerly known as GDF Suez, it emerged from the merger of French utility Gas de France with Franco-Belgian conglomerate Suez.

"The parties will continue their discussions, respecting the rights of the employee representative bodies concerned, whom they will be consulting soon," said Engie.

"As provided by applicable regulations, the planned acquisition will also be submitted for clearance to the French Energy Regulatory Commission (CRE) and to the governing bodies of the companies involved.

"The transaction would have no impact on the legal status of the two companies, GRTgaz and Elengy, nor any consequences for their employees," it added.

Spanish monthly imports reach peak of 25 cargoes in colder weather

Spanish imports of LNG in December rose by more than 60 percent compared with the same month a year ago to a total of 25 cargoes received at the nation's six operating regasification facilities.

The majority of imports came from Nigeria and Peru, followed by volumes from Algeria, Qatar, Angola and Norway, according to national transmission company and terminal owner Enagas.

Enagas has four fully owned regasification terminals in Barcelona, Cartagena, Huelva and Gijon.

It also has 50 percent of the Bahía Bizkaia Gas (BBG) plant in Bilbao and 72.5 percent of the Saggas terminal in Sagunto. All of them have the necessary technology for the unloading and reloading of carriers, which allows the company to reinforce the supply structure in Spain.

The increase in the need for LNG cargoes was prompted by colder weather in Europe and a rise in gas-fired power generating capacity, which in terms of LNG amounted to 20.2 terawatt hours (TWh) in December compared with 12.5 TWh in the same month of 2015.

The Sagunto terminal in eastern Spain received the most shipments during the month, with seven cargoes arriving.

The Enagas report also showed that six cargoes were landed at the Huelva terminal in southwest Spain and four more in the northeast port of Barcelona.

The southeast port of Cartagena received three shipments, as did the Bilbao terminal in the northwest, while the second northwest facility at Mugardos, near El Ferrol, received two cargoes.

Enagas said that demand for natural gas in Spain during 2016 rose by 2 percent to 321 TWh, while industrial demand increased by 3 percent during the year, in line with the evolution of the economy.

Former Shell LNG senior executive Eisbrenner signs lease for second large Texas project

Our North America editor in New York

The US LNG project development company run by former Royal Dutch Shell LNG senior executive Kathleen Eisbrenner has signed a land lease for a second potential liquefaction and export project in Texas.

Eisbrenner's company NextDecade has signed its land agreements with the State of Texas and with the Texas City municipal authorities for a site of around 1,000 acres at Shoal Point for the potential development of a "multi-billion dollar" LNG export facility.

Texas City owns almost 376 acres at Shoal Point, while the Texas General Land Office manages the adjoining 618 acres of state land.

In addition to the potential Shoal Point project with deep water acces to the Gulf of Mexico, NextDecade's current main focus is its Rio Grande LNG project planned for the port of Brownsville in Texas.

Eisbrenner's role at Shell before founding NextDecade was as Executive Vice President for Global LNG Development.

She also worked in senior management in the US with El Paso Energy Corp. and was one of the founders of Excelerate Energy, the US floating LNG project developer. The Rio Grande venture is planning to produce 27 million tonnes per annum and is advancing rapidly through the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) permitting process.

Graphic of how Eisbrenner's Texas export plants will look

"The project at Shoal Point will benefit from NextDecade's ability to replicate much of the design and engineering work done for Rio Grande LNG, a project that is expected to have one of the lowest construction costs of any LNG production facility in the world," the company explained.

The agreement comes as the State of Texas continues to draw international attention following significant new natural gas finds totaling over 90 trillion cubic feet (tcf) in 2016 and as global buyers increasingly seek new, long-term competitive natural gas supplies to support their energy needs.

"Now more than ever, the US has the potential to benefit from the incredible natural gas resources we have right here in Texas," said Kathleen Eisbrenner, NextDecade Chairman and Chief Executive.

"The US is the most competitive source of LNG in the world and NextDecade is looking forward to bringing new supply to the global marketplace from the heart of the global energy industry," she added.

Together, the Ports of Houston, Texas City, and Galveston form the largest port complex in North America and the NextDecade project would be the first LNG facility in the area.

"The Shoal Point site, located just east of Texas City's major petrochemical industrial complex and 40-miles southeast of Houston, provides an attractive location for an LNG export terminal," said NexDecade.

The ample acreage at Shoal Point allows for significant design flexibility and potential expansion capability, increasing the project's appeal to potential customers and investors.

The site also benefits from its deep-water access and proximity to nearby natural gas pipeline infrastructure.

Eisbrenner and her company signed an accord in December 2016 with the firm Flex LNG, controlled by Norwegian shipping tycoon John Fredriksen, to cooperate in marketing floating import terminals as well as US LNG volumes to customers.

NextDecade and Flex LNG signed a heads of agreement to create "a full value chain solution" for customers looking to purchase LNG from NextDecade's Rio Grande project.

Point Comfort near-shore LNG project proposed for Texas applies for permit to export cargoes

The Point Comfort near-shore LNG project in Texas has submitted an application to the US Department of Energy to export shipments to countries with a US Free Trade Agreement.

The company behind the application is an operator called Lloyds Energy Group with offices in Bermuda, Dubai and Moscow.

Lloyds Energy was established in 2013 with the aim of becoming a global LNG developer in the LNG supply chain. It has no connection with Lloyd's Register, the UK-based classification society.

The company is planning its Point Comfort facilities in Calhoun County, Texas.

"This is one of the first steps in developing the LNG project, which would bring significant and lasting benefits to the South Central Texas Coastal region," the company said.

"Lloyds Energy is strongly positioned to meet client demand, and submitting our Point Comfort LNG FTA application is an important first step towards making the final investment decision," said Philip Holland, Chief Executive of Lloyds Energy.

"The US has an abundant supply of natural gas and the international market has a growing demand for cleaner, more-efficient fuel," added Holland.

Calhoun County Port Authority Board Chairman Randy Boyd said the project would help to stimulate economic development.

"Point Comfort LNG will bring hundreds of millions of dollars of revenue to the county and state as well as provide hundreds of long-term jobs," said Boyd.

Lloyds Energy said it would use two near-shore floating LNG vessels with each unit able to produce 4.5 million tonnes per annum, as well as having additional support barges and related onshore facilities.

"Over the course of three years, Lloyds Energy has grown rapidly in the fields of Near Shore LNG," said the company.

"It has established strong international alliances with offtakers and two major engineering groups specializing in LNG," it said.

Lloyds Energy signed a letter of intent in April 2106 with global engineering companies KBR Inc. of the US and South Korea's Daewoo Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering for front-end engineering and design and other services related to its near-shore FLNG concepts.