

For Public Notice via Internet

REASONS FOR DECISION UNDER *ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS ACT 1978*

TITLE OF PROPOSAL: Patricia-Baleen Gas Plant (Longtom Upgrade)

Proponent: Santos Limited ('Santos')

Description of Project:

Santos proposes to upgrade the Patricia Baleen Gas Plant located off Ewings Marsh Road, 7km south of Newmerella. This proposed work is to support processing gas from the Longtom gas field, 45km offshore in Bass Strait. The works will require that some additional plant be constructed within the existing gas plant area. The existing plant area is to be expanded to the east to include an additional area of 2.1 hectares. Condensate tanks with a holding capacity of 600m³ are proposed to be erected within the subject land. The condensate would be removed by truck for offsite refining.

Decision:

The Minister for Planning has determined that an Environment Effects Statement is not required for this project, subject to the following condition:

- That Santos Limited, prior to the removal of any native vegetation, prepare a native vegetation offset and implementation plan consistent with *Victoria's Native Vegetation Management – A Framework for Action* (2002), to the satisfaction of the Gippsland Regional Director of the Department of Sustainability and Environment.

Reasons for Decision:

- the clear indication, on the basis of studies completed for the Environment Effects Statements prepared for both the Patricia Baleen and Sole Gas Projects and the experience of the Patricia Baleen development, that effects from the current proposal would be limited;
- the limitation of the foot print of the proposed development to the area of the existing Patricia Baleen gas plant and the adjoining, approved Sole gas plant;
- the availability of procedures under *Environment Protection Act 1970 and Planning & Development Act 1987* to assess and manage most environmental effects of the project;
- the limited significance of the native vegetation to be removed and the opportunity to offset this loss consistent with net gain requirements.

Date of Decision: 6 June 2007