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NEWSLETTER #8

Welcome to Aventus Consulting's latest news

To celebrate Aventus Consulting's seventh birthday, we decided to further embrace the digital age and establish a LinkedIn page. Please 'like' the [Aventus LinkedIn page](#) to stay in touch with the latest and greatest Australian and international stories of interest regarding environmental management in the oil and gas industry, along with company updates.

At the time of the last newsletter (November 2015), Aventus predicted that the oil price may have bottomed out (it was sitting at about USD\$40/bbl at the time). This proved to be a tad optimistic, with the bottom having occurred in January this year when the oil price sunk to USD\$28/bbl. Since then, the price has inched upwards ever so slowly. In late July 2016, [Schlumberger and Halliburton declared](#) that the worst may be over in the 2-year-long oil price shock. This could be a brave call, but let's hope it's a correct call for the sake of a healthy exploration and development sector and to ensure us consultants remain gainfully employed!



Puffin Field Subsea Equipment Decommissioning Project

Through 2015, Aventus worked with [AGR \(Australia\) Pty Ltd](#), on behalf of [Sinopec Oil & Gas Australia \(Puffin\) Pty Ltd](#), to secure the environmental approvals for the decommissioning of the Puffin Field's subsea equipment. The [Environment Plan \(EP\)](#) was accepted by NOPSEMA in November 2015, and decommissioning activities commenced in early January 2016. This took only two weeks, with all subsea equipment safely recovered.

APPEA has just released a consultation draft on offshore oil and gas decommissioning decision-making guidelines, and is seeking feedback from all relevant stakeholders. Please call [APPEA](#) if you'd like to obtain a copy of the guidelines. The development of such guidelines is critically important as more fields approach the end of their production life (a case in point being Esso and BHP Petroleum's oil fields in Bass Strait, with the [oil assets up for sale](#) due to declining production). A recent [article](#) about offshore decommissioning indicates that support for *in situ* disposal of petroleum infrastructure may have more environmental benefits than complete removal.

In the case of the Puffin Field, despite early and ongoing consultation with the Commonwealth Department of the Environment (DoE) regarding the Sea Dumping Permit Application process (a permit was submitted as a contingency in case some equipment could not be safely recovered), it later asked Sinopec to formally withdraw the application. This was because the DoE's investigations found that the *Environment Protection (Sea Dumping) Act 1981* (Cth) does not apply in circumstances where the intent is to recover all equipment; it only covers deliberate disposal or abandonment. Needless to say, decommissioning guidelines would have made navigating the approvals process a tad easier!



Puffin subsea manifold on deck, with dense marine growth clearly evident.



All six anchors secured on the deck of the Far Senator.

Victorian Transition Zone Seismic Survey win

Aventus was delighted when it recently beat 15 other consultancies Australia-wide to win the approvals work for Origin's proposed Enterprise 3D transition zone seismic survey (3DTZSS) in southwest Victoria. This includes the preparation of an offshore Environment Plan (EP), onshore Environmental Management Plan (EMP) and EPBC Act Referral for the survey that is proposed to take place entirely within the Victorian jurisdiction (i.e., no Commonwealth waters for the offshore component).

Given the proposed project location in an area of high tourism value along the 'Shipwreck Coast', a great level of effort has gone into stakeholder consultation and social impact assessment.



Part of the dramatic limestone cliff coastline in Origin's proposed Enterprise 3DTZSS area.



The popularity of the Victorian Shipwreck Coast with international driving tourists is evident in this road signage near one of the coastal lookouts.

Great Australian Bight exploration update

Aventus prepared the first revision of [BP's Great Australian Bight \(GAB\) drilling EP](#), which was re-submitted to NOPSEMA in mid-March 2016. NOPSEMA provided their [assessment](#) in mid-May 2016, and the EP is being revised again for re-submission and re-assessment.

It was recently [reported](#) that the *Ocean Great White*, a sixth-generation harsh-weather semi-submersible drill rig, was delivered by Hyundai Heavy Industries (South Korea) to Diamond Offshore. This rig is contracted to drill for BP in the GAB starting in late 2016, and was recently [classed by DNV GL](#).

The hearing as part of the [Senate Inquiry into Oil and Gas Production in the GAB](#) was held in Adelaide on 26 April 2016. Sixty-three submissions were made to the inquiry, which make for very interesting reading (for those with the time!). It is clear from reading the inquiry transcript that the Senators generally support petroleum exploration and that exploration in the GAB could reap huge economic benefits for South Australia. Due to the double dissolution election, the inquiry has since lapsed. Therefore, unless a Senator asks the Senate to re-open the inquiry (and who would want to go through that pain again?), there will not be a Senate Inquiry Report released.

With detailed insight into the environmental sensitivities of the GAB, Aventus provided due diligence assistance to an exploration company bidding for [Release Area S15-1](#) in the GAB.

Auditing

Despite the low exploration activity caused by the depressed oil price, Aventus has recently conducted several audits, including two onshore pipeline audits.

One of the few petroleum developments happening in Victoria at the moment is Origin's Halladale, Blackwatch & Speculant (HBWS) Gas Field Development Project. Following up from the project's drilling audit in late 2014, Giulio undertook a audit of the pipeline construction phase in early 2016. Given that the 31-km long pipeline is located predominantly in prime agricultural land, interspersed with high value remnant native vegetation, there were several hundred controls to be audited. It was pleasing to see such a strong focus on environmental performance during this construction phase.

An Environment Authority (EA) post-decommissioning and rehabilitation compliance audit was undertaken for QGC's [Narrows Pipeline](#) (recently purchased by the [APA Group](#)). It was great to get up north for a brief stint of sunshine and warmth. Having being on site during pipeline construction and during the decommissioning of

temporary infrastructure, it was very satisfying to see a stable and well rehabilitated pipeline easement, with lush vegetation growth and the re-emergence of tree species.

Client feedback on auditing

Aventus undertook a survey of recent clients to ascertain their satisfaction with our auditing services. Of those who responded, the following results are in:

- All respondents agreed that the consultant was 'very well prepared' (meaning he was familiar with the project and the document/s or system being audited);
- All respondents agreed that the consultant was 'very professional' in seeking evidence from audits;
- Post-audit feedback at close-out meetings was judged to vary between 'good' and 'excellent';
- All respondents would use Aventus again and would recommend Aventus to colleagues;
- The overall quality of the audits ranged between 'very good' and 'excellent'; and
- All respondents confirmed that the audits were undertaken within budget.

The take-away message? If you have environmental compliance auditing needs, Aventus is your go-to consultancy!



An HDD rig drilling under a road to avoid the clearing of remnant native roadside vegetation and avoid traffic disruptions during HBWS pipeline construction.



Cultural heritage signage along Origin's HBWS pipeline construction Right-of-Way, illustrating the careful management of cultural heritage artefacts during pipeline construction.



It was fascinating to be so close to the Maran Gas Achilles LNG tanker loading at the QCLNG facility on Curtis Island while steaming past in our little tinnie.



Giulio (right) with the QGC Environmental Compliance Advisor (left) and QGC Field Environmental Officer (middle) on the pipeline easement during the audit at Curtis Island.

Industry forums

With no APPEA HSE or Environment conference to be held this year, what's a lonely environmental consultant working in the upstream petroleum sector to do in order to socialise and network?

Giulio will be attending the [APGA Pipeline Conference](#) to be held in Perth during October 2016, and is looking forward to catching up with pipeliners and other colleagues. See you there!

Stakeholder consultation guidelines

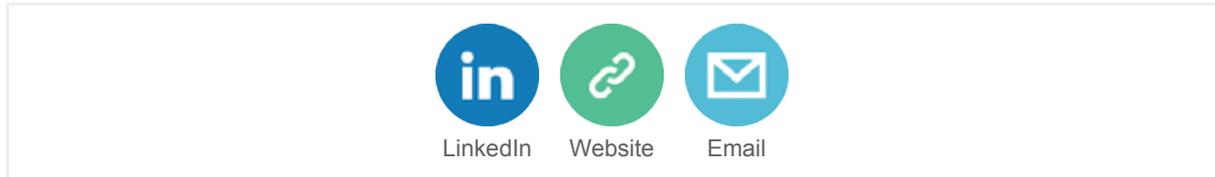
APPEA has advised that Practices for Stakeholder Consultation are not far off from being released. These have been drafted with input from NOPSEMA and Titleholders, with the aim being to introduce a standardised approach to consultation. For those of us working in this space, especially in the offshore sector, these guidelines can't come soon enough. Get in touch with [APPEA](#) for more information.

Charity

Over seven years, Aventus has donated over \$20,000 to charities in the areas of

environment, health and social well-being.

With several family members and close friends lost to or living with cancer, several charities focused on cancer research are regular donation recipients. These include the [Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation](#), [Peter Mac Cancer Centre](#) and the [Leukaemia Foundation](#), among others. These institutions do fantastic work in trying to find preventions and cures to a terrible disease that touches us all in some way.



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