

# Northern Endeavour FPSO now an unmanned idle vessel in Timor Sea

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Northern Endeavour, a floating production, storage, and offtake vessel (FPSO) formerly operated by Northern Oil and Gas Australia (NOGA) for production of Laminaria and Corallina oil fields in the Timor Sea, is now unmanned and idle following the exit of the last of its crew this week.

The FPSO had been run with a skeleton crew since production was shut in mid-last year by order of the Australian National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA) citing an ‘immediate threat to health and safety’ due to structural corrosion at the facility ([OGJ Online, July 11, 2019](#)).

NOGA and its associate companies subsequently went into voluntary administration in September 2019 ([OGJ Online, Sept. 20, 2019](#)).

NOPSEMA said removal of the crew was allowable under the vessel’s approved safety case and immediate safety risks had now been reduced to zero.

NOPSEMA said that the facility is unmanned, but in “lighthouse” mode with all navigational aids operating. The field wells have been shut in and other controls have been applied.

Northern Endeavour is moored in 400 m of water between Laminaria and Corallina oil fields in production licenses WA-18-L and AC/L5 in the western Timor Sea about 550 km northwest of Darwin. The vessel is of double hull design and was originally installed by a Woodside Petroleum-operated group following discovery of the fields in the mid-1990s. Oil production began in 1999.

The FPSO has the capacity to hold 1.4 million bbl of oil. At peak production it processed 170,000 b/d.

NOGA bought 100% of the licenses and the FPSO from Woodside in April 2016.

In a report to be considered at a forthcoming creditor’s meeting, NOGA’s appointed administrator KPMG has recommended that the company and its associates be liquidated. KPMG said it had not received an acceptable deed of company arrangement offer (a binding arrangement between NOGA and its creditors). Ending the administration and returning to normal company operation is not an option because the companies are insolvent.

The debate about who is liable for decommissioning costs is unresolved. A takeover with a view to resuming production would require substantial capital to restore the vessel to working order.

Meanwhile Shell Australia’s Prelude floating LNG facility in Browse basin has been temporarily shut down due to a power outage. Shell said production had been halted and the number of people on board had been reduced for the time being. Work is underway to restore full operations.