EMPNG responds to COVID-19

As the events of COVID-19 continue to adapt, teams across ExxonMobil PNG (EMPNG) are focused on actions that will keep us and our families, our partners and the communities in which we operate healthy while maintaining the safe operation of the PNG LNG Project.

Across our sites, our workforce remains committed in adapting to and reinforcing health guidelines. Our Upstream team are promoting personal hygiene through the distribution of 1,700 WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) kits containing items such as hand soap, laundry soap bars and towels to our staff at the Hides Gas Conditioning Plant. While at the LNG Plant our Community Affairs team is developing and distributing information posters to Central Province health facilities in Lealea, Papa, Porebada and Boera.

Following face covering recommendations from global and local health authorities, we engaged nine local tailoring businesses to manufacture 10,000 face coverings for staff to wear when physical distancing is not possible.

At ExxonMobil facilities, we have implemented important safeguards to protect us, our families and community from the risk of coronavirus including; ongoing education of our staff, practical physical distancing of 1.8 meters, use of face coverings when physical distancing is not possible, conducting temperature checks of all personnel entering sites, restricting visitors to sites, use of conferencing technology to conduct meetings remotely practicing ‘islanding’ (quarantine) at operating sites, increasing frequency of cleaning services and reinforcing good personal hygiene practices such as frequent handwashing and encouraging the use of hand sanitizers, and staying at home if feeling unwell.

Where possible we have enabled employees to work from a remote location. We also implemented the 2020 seasonal influenza vaccine program for employees. As we are currently in the Southern Hemisphere’s winter season, this vaccine prepares the immune system for the flu.

Read more inside about what ExxonMobil PNG is doing as we stand with Papua New Guinea to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.
The ongoing event of Coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to impact our daily lives, concerning us all. Throughout this challenging time, we see the best of what Papua New Guineans have to offer; resilience, comradery and compassion.

Andrew Barry, Managing Director ExxonMobil PNG

To our readers

Our highest priority is the health and safety of our staff, their families, and the communities in which we live and operate. We continue to focus on our important work to sustain normal levels across the PNG LNG Project, supply gas to Niu Power for their power plant in Port Moresby, and provide fuels for transportation and power generation across PNG through our Mobil Oil Niugini affiliate.

We also achieved a significant milestone, in April 2020, with PNG LNG celebrating six years since its first LNG production. It’s amazing what has been achieved during these six years, the challenges and triumphs of which are significant.

As a major contributor to the PNG economy, we continue to support and build capacity of local businesses.

In 2019, 20.6 million kina was spent on community investment programs, including education and community-based projects; a further 77 million kina was invested into infrastructure enhancements, including the construction of a new health centre in Porebada, Central province near the LNG Plant.

This reaffirms our commitment in creating partnerships that drive positive change in the communities in which we operate and supporting the Papua New Guinean Government in its long-term healthcare preparedness efforts, following the global coronavirus pandemic.

Information about these partnerships are available on our latest Environmental and Social Report that is available at www.pnglng.com/Report.

We have made sacrifices whilst adapting to the new normal including playing or watching your favourite rugby league team. 2020 marks the seventh year of our sponsorship of the PNG LNG Kumuls and we look forward to supporting the team in the red, black and gold in the coming months.

A most notable partnership in the current environment is with NDOH and Provincial Health Authorities where we were able to assist with raising awareness of coronavirus risk reduction behaviours we can all follow, and supporting the need of the communities in the fight against coronavirus.

On behalf of the PNG LNG Project, thank you to NDOH and the Provincial Health Authorities for all your tireless efforts. We reinforce our commitment to continuing to work together to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and keep each other and our communities safe.

About the PNG LNG Project

The US$19 billion PNG LNG Project is an integrated development that includes gas production and processing facilities that extend from Hela, Southern Highlands, Western and Gulf provinces to Port Moresby in Central Province.

ExxonMobil PNG Limited operates PNG LNG on behalf of five co-venture partners.

Our facilities are connected by over 700 kilometres of onshore and offshore pipeline and include a gas conditioning plant in Hides and a liquefaction and storage facility near Port Moresby.

The Hides Gas Conditioning Plant (HGCP) is located just outside of the township of Hides in PNG’s Hela Province. The plant processes up to 1 billion standard cubic feet of gas gathered from eight wells each day.

At the plant, gas, condensate and water are separated and treated before being sent via separate pipelines to other facilities in PNG for further handling.

The gas is transported along a 700-kilometre-long pipeline to the LNG Plant near Port Moresby where it is converted into liquid form, ready for shipping.

Our operation commenced in the middle of 2014, and we ship liquefied natural gas to customers in Asia. Our operations have the capacity to produce more than 8 million tonnes of LNG annually.

We are proud of our strong record in PNG for providing support to local communities across a wide range of economic and social programs that continue to transform the lives of Papua New Guineans.

PNG LNG is operated by a subsidiary of ExxonMobil in co-venture with:

NDOH Secretary Dr. Paison Dakulala receives Personal Protective Equipment from EMPNG’s Executive Director Keith Killian. ExxonMobil PNG donated Personal Protective Equipment to NDOH to help keep its frontline workers safe.

PNG LNG Ties is quarterly newsletter published by PNG LNG Project on activities and partnerships with communities around the PNG LNG project areas. Soft copies are available at www.pnglng.com.
The company has supported the State of Emergency (SOE) with its charter airplane, transporting NDOH supplies and materials between Port Moresby and other provinces, as well as the transportation of samples to the PNG Institute of Medical Research for testing.

EMPNG also supported NDOH and its COVID-19 National Operations Centre with a donation of office equipment and supplies to ensure staff have access to tools needed to complete their work. And most recently donated Personal Protective Equipment to help keep the frontline workers safe.

“The safety of our workforce, their families, and the communities in which we live, and work are of the highest priority,” said Executive Director of EMPNG Keith Killian.

“On behalf of ExxonMobil PNG and PNG LNG, we are pleased to donate these supplies in support of the frontline response workers, to enable them to safely carry out their important roles in the country’s COVID-19 response,” said Mr Killian.

When receiving the donation, National Department of Health Secretary, Dr Paison Dakulala, said the donation would go down to the frontline workers such as the security forces and other professionals who are helping to implement the SOE order by doing testing and caring for those that get sick.

Dr Dakulala also received an after-hours tour of the ExxonMobil office in Port Moresby to learn first-hand how EMPNG is applying preventive and protective measures as part of the “new normal” in the workplace.

“Just looking at what you’ve got here, the entry screening, the information broadcast on the screens, the social distancing mechanisms and wearing masks, is an example of what needs to be done everywhere in all organisations and facilities in PNG. And the masks were made by our people who are SMEs, which is very important because we need to support our SMEs as well,” said Dr Dakulala.

A joint initiative between the Papua New Guinean Department of Foreign Affairs, the Philippine Embassy in Port Moresby and Air Niugini and EMPNG also saw the repatriation of thirty-eight citizens returning to Port Moresby due to COVID-19 related international border closures.

In Hela Province, fuel and rations are being provided to support remote areas. At the same time, in the National Capital District, a donation of critical medical equipment was made to the Port Moresby General Hospital.
Supporting Provincial Health Authorities with Health Preparedness

EMPNG is supporting local Provincial Health Authorities with a range of healthcare donations to assist with long-term healthcare preparedness efforts.

EMPNG, together with Chiyoda Oceania, donated triage tents, infra-red thermometers and surgical masks to the Central Province Health Authority (CPHA). The support is expected to help bolster healthcare services and ensure frontline workers have access to vital equipment needed to respond to any health situation.

Dr James Amini, Chief Executive Officer at CPHA, said this donation would ensure there are no disruptions to day-to-day medical services. “Local hospitals are located right in the middle of communities, and the COVID-19 pandemic has raised concerns around screening methods.”

“These new triage tents will not only provide a separate area where frontline officers can isolate patients but give us peace of mind that we are now better prepared to respond to future medical emergencies,” Dr Amini said.

In Hela Province, EMPNG is working closely with the Hela Provincial Health Authority (HPHA) to improve healthcare outcomes through a donation of two 400-litre steam sterilisers to Tari General Hospital.

Dr James Kintwa, CEO at HPHA, said this donation would help increase the capacity to treat more patients by speeding up the hospital process between procedures.

“We are grateful to ExxonMobil PNG for their donation of materials that will allow us to continue to provide sterile surgical services and ensure our emergency department is prepared for minor procedures.”

In addition to sterilisers, EMPNG also donated 600 WASH kits containing items such as hand soap, laundry soap bars and towels to be handed out to Tari General Hospital staff.

Keith Killian, Executive Director of EMPNG, thanked the Central and Hela Provincial Health Authorities for the work they are undertaking to safeguard the health of their communities, from diseases such as COVID-19, for the long-term.

“Healthcare preparedness requires ongoing support, and we remain committed to supporting the hard-working doctors and nurses with the tools and equipment they require to meet healthcare needs of their communities,” Mr Killian said.
HGCP clocks 1,000 days LTI Free

Across EMPNG a strong safety philosophy underpins everything we do to ensure we reach our goal of ‘Nobody Gets Hurt’.

An integral part of this is maintaining commitment to safeguard the workforce and its operations each day.

Our Hides Gas Conditioning Plant (HGCP) team in Hela province recently reinforced this commitment by achieving 1,000 days Loss Time Incident (LTI) free.

This milestone is a testament to the dedication our workforce has to actively care for each other, work safe, and ensure everyone around them is also working safe – operating under a family mentality.

HGCP management and team leaders understand the important role ongoing education plays and host regular training sessions to increase awareness of different hazards associated with different jobs and that no job is too important to sacrifice safety.

Congratulations to our HGCP team.

PNG LNG TIES

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Gau Eguta
Land & Community Affairs Lead

Being part of the front line in engaging with community leaders has become a crucial job, especially during the first weeks of the outbreak of COVID–19.

ExxonMobil PNG’s Land & Community Affairs lead at the LNG Plant, Gau Eguta and his team have been busy coordinating much needed COVID–19 awareness to the surrounding communities near the Plant in Central province.

“The COVID–19 community information and awareness efforts started in mid–March covering the villages of Porebada, Boera, Papa and Lealea, including peripheral villages of Kido and Gorohu whose villagers transit through Port Moresby for livelihood needs via Lealea village.”

Richard Haguai
Upstream Community Affairs Manager

Sharing the ‘new normal’ in the community near the Hides Gas Conditioning Plant is now part of the daily operations of the PNG LNG Project.

Upstream CA Manager, Richard Haguai said this lifestyle change had shown the importance of community relations.

“The Provincial Health Authorities have taken the important leadership role in promoting key messages of the importance of physical distancing and hygiene and EMPNG has helped in delivering these messages jointly in Komo, Angore and Hides.”

Richard and his team had to prepare copies of flier to assist the provincial health authority to deliver the awareness. They also supported the health authority team with food rations.
In a world that has changed drastically due to the coronavirus, physical distancing has become a requirement everywhere.

As the only LNG operator in the country, EMPNG continues to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of their workforce.

Across all sites, from the LNG Plant (LNGP), Hides Gas Conditioning Plant (HGCP), the Moro Camp and EM Haus headquarters in Port Moresby, on physical distancing strict measures have been implemented.

At HGCP in Hela, where the natural gas is sourced from the well pads and existing oil fields, designated areas have been set up to carry out the health checks for all employees and contractors who are on rotation.

Measures such as wearing face masks, temperature screening and quarantine protocols are part of the continuous safety requirements.

EMPNG’s Upstream Asset Manager, Kim Hahn said accepting the ‘new normal’ has allowed the workforce to think of innovative ways to continue safe operations.

“COVID-19 has challenged us to think outside the box. I’ve been amazed about how the workforce has been able to change, adapt and look for innovative ways to continue to work.”

At EMPNG's Moro camp, which accommodates at least 50 employees and contractors, Pipeline Operations Supervisor, Noah Pingin admitted that it was a challenging time.

“We were changing the way we work, and this was a tough thing to do but necessary for the health and wellbeing of all our team members.”

LNGP Manager Alyssa Warner agrees that one key reminder is adapting to this new change.

“We put banners in the walk-in and walk-out area. It’s a reminder that our behaviours, honesty in health and travel attestations, social distancing and practising good hygiene are the first and strongest barriers against the spread of infectious diseases.”

Committed to preventing the spread of COVID-19, the team at ExxonMobil PNG are following guidance from the PNG Government and global health authorities to implement measures including physical distancing, and where possible enabling staff to working remotely.

One of those staff members is Julie Kutan-Kassman, Tenant Services Administrator at ExxonMobil Haus. This mum of three is finding her new normal as she adapts to working from home.

Since transitioning from the office to home, Julie has experienced challenges from finding the right working space, juggling parenting, to finding the right motivation for work tasks.

“It’s a mental reminder that even though you are at home, you still have to go to work. During breaks, allow around 10 minutes to check on what your family is up to and engage in their activity also.”

Oripa Papat, Industrial Hygiene Technician at ExxonMobil PNG, agrees finding the right workspace for physical and mental health is just as important as finding a schedule that works for you and your family.

“During these challenging times, it’s so important to keep both your physical and mental health in check and to also pay extra attention to the health and wellbeing of your families and wanwoks.”

Commemorating Easter across our production sites looked a little different this year due to COVID-19 physical distancing measures. Still, thanks to our incredible catering partners, our staff were treated to a special Easter menu.

While practising stringent food and safety measures, the LNG Plant through the Laba Alliance catering team prepared a decadent offering that included two crowd-pleasing deserts, a triple chocolate peanut butter cake and pavlova. While at the Hides Gas Conditioning Plant, the Hides Alliance Group catering team treated staff to a special meal and a dessert that went the extra mile.

Thank you to our catering partners for your support and dedication not only during these unprecedented times but every day – you are an integral part of our team to ensure the continued safe operations of the PNG LNG Project.

Excited Upstream staff couldn’t wait to get a slice of the Hides Alliance Group catering team’s Easter celebration cake.

Julie Kutan-Kassman works from home during the lockdown.

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Committed to virus risk reduction behaviours for the long-term

The impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) on our daily lives concerns us all, but by supporting each other and working together, we can all help prevent the spread of the virus.

The Papua New Guinean Government and local health authorities are doing their bit by continuing to monitor the global situation and implement measures to manage the risk of COVID-19. Across the country, we have been fortunate to record a low number of confirmed virus cases, compared with some of our neighbours, thanks in part to the quick action of our Government.

However, EMPNG’s Medical Advisor Dr. Valentine Kolant said, “there is still more work to do and we must remain cautious and continue to follow recommended health guidance to prevent the spread while a vaccination or cure is being developed.

We have come so far, let’s not undo the fantastic work that every one of us has achieved. We know the best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19, for the long-term, is by practising physical distancing, increased hygiene practices and wearing face coverings.”

Studies suggest that COVID-19 (including preliminary information on the virus) may persist on surfaces for a few hours or up to several days. Routine cleaning of surfaces inside the house or workplace may further lower the risk of spreading the infection.

What are symptoms of COVID-19

COVID-19 symptoms can appear anytime within the 14-days after exposure and symptoms can sometimes be mistaken for common cold.

Those with COVID-19 can display signs that range from mild to severe illnesses and include cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing and/or at least two of the following symptoms: fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell.

There are currently no vaccines, treatments or medications available to treat COVID-19. If you or somebody you know is experiencing any of the above symptoms, please seek medical advice by calling NDOH hotline.

Here’s what you need to know

COVID-19 is the disease caused by SARS-CoV-2 virus, a new strain of virus that comes from the large family of corona viruses that cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to more severe respiratory diseases.

NDOH and the World Health Organisation recommend wearing face coverings when physical distancing is not possible, such as traveling and visiting crowded areas.
COVID-19
Let’s prevent the spread

Wash your hands after visiting public places or touching surfaces outside the house.

Cover your mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing.

Avoid touching your face as the virus can enter your body through mouth, nose, and eyes.

Clean your house or workplace surfaces more frequently with disinfectants.

Exercise physical distancing when you are in public.

Let’s prevent the spread. We all can work together.