

Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee  
Parliament of Victoria  
East Melbourne VIC 3002



7 November 2025

## **Submission to the Parliament of Victoria's inquiry into decommissioning oil and gas infrastructure**

### **About ExxonMobil Australia**

Through its subsidiary, Esso Australia, ExxonMobil Australia has a long history of supplying reliable and affordable energy to Australia and has invested significantly in maintaining this supply. We own and operate assets in Bass Strait that consist of 421 wells, 19 platforms, six subsea facilities and more than 800 kilometres of subsea pipeline. These assets form part of the Gippsland Basin Joint Venture between Esso Australia and Woodside Energy (Bass Strait) Pty Ltd (Woodside Energy) and the Kipper Unit Joint Venture (Esso Australia, Woodside Energy, and Mitsui E&P Australia Pty Ltd).

Our ongoing investment means that the Gippsland Basin remains the largest single source of gas supply to the east coast domestic market. Our operations have produced more than half of Australia's crude oil, and in their most prosperous days were providing over 10 percent of all Australian Government revenue.

As operator of some of Australia's oldest oil and gas fields, ExxonMobil has a leading role in shaping Australia's decommissioning landscape. We are pleased to be making a submission to the Victorian Government's Inquiry into decommissioning oil and gas infrastructure.

In addition, as a member of Australian Energy Producers, we contributed to, and fully support, their submission to this Inquiry.

### **ExxonMobil Australia is committed to safely decommissioning our Bass Strait offshore facilities at the right time, in an environmentally responsible way.**

Following more than 50 years of delivering energy for Australia, 13 of the platforms, four subsea facilities, 26 pipelines and more than half of all wells, no longer produce oil and gas. Six facilities will continue to supply gas to the domestic market until the early-mid 2030s.

Over the last few years, we have completed nearly \$3 billion of decommissioning works in Bass Strait, including permanently sealing over 200 wells.

The process of offshore decommissioning presents complex challenges, and ExxonMobil has world-class experience in safely and effectively decommissioning facilities to achieve positive outcomes across the globe.

Using lessons learned from ExxonMobil's experiences in other locations, and from the ExxonMobil decommissioning centre of expertise, we have assembled a multidiscipline leadership team with vast international experience to ensure our Bass Strait decommissioning activities meet regulatory, community, government, and our own requirements.

As we continue our progressive decommissioning activities, we are sourcing the right assets for the work we are completing, given the variety of facilities we have operated for over 50 years. Our priority is to remain safe, all whilst using first-class solutions which ensure we are meeting our decommissioning requirements.

Over the last few years, we have commissioned seven mobile offshore assets which are supporting our ongoing decommissioning works including:

- Several platform-based rigs for well sealing
- A Multi-Purpose Supply Vessel, fitted with a remote operated vehicle, a heave compensated crane, and a walk-to-work gangway system which will allow work crews to easily transfer from the vessel to the offshore facilities,
- A semisubmersible vessel to permanently seal the Gudgeon and Terakihi subsea wells in deeper water, and
- The VALARIS 107, a heavy-duty modern jack-up drilling rig, which has played a pivotal role in the safe and permanent seal of 26 wells.

Most recently we have awarded an execution contract to Allseas Marine Contractors, for the Pioneering Spirit heavy lift vessel (HLV) to remove the topsides and upper jacket sections of 12 platforms, commencing in 2027.

### **Bass Strait decommissioning provides opportunities for the Gippsland community**

Historically, between 300-500 staff have worked on Esso Australia's offshore oil and gas platforms. However, with our decommissioning efforts now in full swing, our offshore workforce has grown to over 800 people. In addition, 50-100 jobs are expected to be required to carry out the dismantling and recycling of the platforms at Barry Beach Marine Terminal. This onshore workforce is expected to come largely from Gippsland, providing an opportunity for those in our local community to learn new skills and benefit from this growing industry.

Esso plans to maximise recycling of the removed facilities for reuse and minimise the amount of materials processed as waste. Our aim is that more than 95% of the mostly steel material will be able to be recycled or reused from our oil and gas structures. All of the steel will be transported to recycling facilities by road or sea and we will actively seek opportunities to recycle materials locally wherever possible.

### **The Australian decommissioning industry benefits from a robust regulatory framework involving a number of federal, state and local government bodies and independent regulators.**

ExxonMobil Australia is committed to ensuring that our decommissioning activities are performed in accordance with all applicable regulatory requirements, as well as balancing safety, environmental and stakeholder considerations.

We believe a well-designed and streamlined regulatory environment and approval process, along with clarity on community consultation requirements, is imperative to support the success of the Australian decommissioning industry.

Reducing duplication, streamlining regulations and providing greater regulatory certainty will allow industry to achieve the best environmental outcome while maximising efficiency. Further, it will ensure that local companies have sufficient confidence to procure essential equipment and expertise required to support decommissioning works, such as international drilling rigs and vessels, which need to be booked years in advance.

We look forward to our participation in your inquiry and are proud to share the world class work we are doing to decommission our Bass Strait facilities.

Yours sincerely



Simon Younger  
ExxonMobil Australia Chair