



Media release

Local suppliers provide valuable support to Victorian natural gas development

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Australian energy producer Beach Energy says that its contracts with local suppliers in Western Victoria have been essential to its program of developing natural gas reserves in the region – ensuring a continued energy supply to Victorians throughout 2020 and beyond.

Warrnambool-based McKinnon Quarries & Civil is one such company that is supporting Beach's program, providing earthworks at drilling sites, including the current Enterprise project near Port Campbell.

The McKinnon Family has been in the earthmoving and transport industry in the western district since the early 1940's. They are a local business, with a local quarry, employing local people.

Civil works took place on the Enterprise site while Victoria's first wave of COVID-19 hit back in March, lasting over the three months and providing much needed work for the company's cohort of local employees.

Office Manager Karolyn McKinnon says that the major contract with Beach has provided some much-needed certainty for her workforce in an otherwise challenging year.

"Our contract to deliver civil works for the Enterprise site has helped us to keep the business ticking over in what has been a really unpredictable year for everyone," Ms McKinnon said.

"At its peak, we had up to 18 workers on the Enterprise site, putting in roads, establishing the camp compound as well as the required earthworks for the drill pad.

"All of our workers are locals, so it been encouraging that while a number of other jobs have been deferred this year, Beach's projects have continued allowing us to keep our workforce together."

Otway Gas Plant Manager Frank Groen said that while many energy projects require very specialised work, Beach will always seek to contract locally where it is possible.

"While the Otway Gas Plant has many locally based workers, the perception is that our industry only uses fly-in-fly-out workers. What people often don't see are the local businesses and workers that are supported as they provide us with important goods and services.

"The McKinnon family are a great example of this and have been partnering with us for a number of years now.

"In an industry like ours, our contractors become key partners on the delivery of our projects – and they are contributing to the supply of natural gas to Victorian homes and businesses."

Beach has begun drilling the Enterprise well, located near Port Campbell, which is being constructed using 'extended reach drilling', the same method safely used for Black Watch, with the potential reservoirs located up to 3 nautical miles (5.55 km) from the coastline.

Black Watch is now supplying natural gas to the Otway Gas Plant – the first new supply in over four years.

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