

Shell rapped over safety

Shell • Business

30 Jan 2020 SEAN SMITH MELIN CHEW

Shell has been pulled up by the offshore safety regulator over “gaps” in safety management at its Prelude floating LNG project off WA after several potentially dangerous incidents.

The National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority has ordered Shell improve its safety processes around certain work activities on the giant Prelude floating production vessel, 500km off Broome, citing “a significant risk to the health and safety of persons at the facility”.

A Perth-based biotech firm has emerged as an early beneficiary of the deadly coronavirus, announcing a strong spike in demand in Malaysia for its powerful disinfectant spray.

Holista Colltech yesterday confirmed that since midJanuary it had sold out of its NatShield Sanitizer product, after the recent outbreak of the deadly virus originating from China.

The ASX-listed company, led by Dr Rajen M, pictured, said each bottle of the product, that has now been manufactured and marketed as a hand sanitiser, contains 5 per cent

of

NOPSEMA’s notice of direction does not affect production at Prelude, which was developed at a cost of \$US15 billion (\$22 billion) and shipped its first LNG cargo last June.

While there is no immediate threat to workers, Shell has been given 60 days to address the regulator’s concerns.

The energy giant said that as a result of the Prelude notice, “activities related to isolations of the plant and equipment have ceased except

where required for safety reasons”.

“A detailed review of the controls is now being undertaken to

Path-Away, a natural plantbased substance that kills all pathogens on impact.

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Path-Away, a natural plant-based substance that kills all pathogens on impact.

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"The big demand we expect is from China, they're wanting to put it in all trains and aircraft. Our lead scientist is talking to the Chinese Vice-Premier at the moment, it's the only organic, non-alcohol, non-evaporating, safe-to-swallow sanitiser they've got," Mr O'Connor said.

"That's going to be their front line for controlling the virus."

Mr O'Connor is also working on securing a distributor to bring the product into the Australian market, which he says will not need approval from the Therapeutic Goods Administration as the product is not consumed.

It comes as several WA businesses revealed the precautionary measures being taken amid the virus outbreak.

Fortescue Metals Group chief executive Elizabeth Gaines said the iron ore miner had "paused all non-essential travel to and from China in line with the advice from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade".

Education juggernaut Navitas yesterday announced it had

a travel ban in place for work-related travel to Wuhan and Hubei Province.

In addition to the ban, staff have been asked to reconsider any non-essential travel to China and Hong Kong.

BHP had advised employees to limit their travel in China to business critical only, and to take suitable precautions and follow the latest advice from health authorities.

David Sun, president of the China Chamber of Commerce in Australia (WA), said he had heard of several companies cancelling business trips to China. "The chamber has encouraged members to postpone all unnecessary trips to China at the moment," he said.

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"Currently, Prelude continues to safely operate, and production is not impacted."

NOPSEMA said an inspection of Prelude in November 2018 found the vessel's safety management system was "broadly consistent with good industry practice" but it nonetheless made 10 recommendations to improve "minor gaps".

However, the authority said since September, there had been "three notifications of dangerous occurrences" at Prelude that its inspectors had blamed on deficiencies in aspects of the safety

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The incidents included gas leaks on September 18 and January 9. In the other incident, on December 10, a work party accessed a piece of

equipment holding high-pressure liquid that not been properly isolated from energy sources.

“The inspectors have concerns with multiple aspects of the safety management system which may have contributed to these, and potentially future, events,” NOPSEMA said. a travel ban in place for workrelated travel to Wuhan and Hubei Province.

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“The events of late 2019 and early 2020, and the findings from the associated investigations, led the NOPSEMA inspectors to the conclusion that risks associated with conducting intrusive activities at the Prelude FLNG facility were not being reduced to as low as reasonably practicable and there was a significant risk to the health and safety of persons at the facility.”

The regulator has ordered Shell address the shortcomings in its safety management and demonstrate its Prelude work parties are properly trained in the safe isolation of equipment.