



## **STOCK EXCHANGE ANNOUNCEMENT**

19 December 2006

### **Pateke-3H starts drilling**

Pan Pacific Petroleum N.L. ("PPP") reports that the development drilling programme for the Tui Area Development has commenced. The first well in the programme, Pateke-3H, spudded at approximately 07:00 hours on December 16, 2006. At 06:00 hours today, the well was drilling ahead at a measured depth of 1,500 metres.

The Tui Area Development drilling campaign is being undertaken on a "batch-drilling" basis, to optimise the sequencing of drilling operations and the tie-ins of flowlines to the subsea development wells. The "batch drilling" will involve the drilling of the upper sections and installing subsea wellheads and trees on at least three of the planned four wells, prior to drilling the deeper sections of the wells, including the horizontal sections within the oil reservoirs.

Following the cementing of the surface casing and the installation of the sub-sea tree, the Pateke-3H well will be temporarily suspended and the drilling rig will be relocated to allow similar activities to be completed on the Tui-2H and Tui-3H wells. Tui-2H is planned to be the first well drilled to total depth and completed for hook-up to the production facilities.

The Tui Area Development is located within PMP 38158, in the Taranaki basin, approximately 50 kilometres offshore of the west coast of the North Island of New Zealand. First oil is expected from the development by June 30, 2007, and when fully commissioned, a production rate peaking at 50,000 barrels of oil per day is anticipated.

The project remains on-time and on-budget with the remaining key risks being abnormal drilling and/or weather conditions.

Participants in Pateke-3H and PMP 38158 are:

<b>Pan Pacific Petroleum NL (through its subsidiary WM Petroleum Ltd)</b>	<b>10.0%</b>
Stewart Petroleum Company Ltd (through New Zealand Oil & Gas Ltd)	12.5%
AWE New Zealand Pty Limited ("AWE")	20.0%
New Zealand Overseas Petroleum Pty Ltd ("AWE")	22.5%
Mitsui E & P New Zealand Limited	35.0%



K M Ware  
Company Secretary

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**Notes:**

1. References to *PPP*, and *the company*, are to be read as inclusive of the subsidiary companies within the consolidated PPP group.