

**Multi-Diameter Pig Development for the Gannet Field** 

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## Background

- Gannet to Fulmar 16" oil export pipeline commissioned 1992
  - Regular operational pigging currently carried out for wax removal and corrosion management
  - Alternative export route required
- New oil export route will require pigs to traverse 16", 24" and 34" sections with increase in travel distance from 107km to 450km
- Not an option to stop pigging, use of wax inhibitors/depressants and corrosion inhibitors will not be sufficient
  - → Multi-diameter pigging with 132% increase in pipeline size is unknown territory for Shell (& the industry?)



#### **Current Route**

- Bi-directional metal bodied pigs varying in aggressiveness launched approximately every 7 – 10 days
- Selection of pigs dependent on wax returns recovered at Fulmar and monitoring of pipeline fouling factor







#### Future



- Requirements vary for each section of the pipeline
  - $16'' \rightarrow$  Sweep water and remove wax
  - $24'' \rightarrow$  Sweep water and remove wax
  - $34'' \rightarrow \text{Travel only}$
- Low flow rates through <u>x4</u> wye sections which decrease over time...



# **Trial Overview**

- Series of trials completed at vendor facility to test multi-diameter prototypes in February and June 2018 (with new trials ongoing)
  - "Sun" Pig Prototype 16/24 A



Titanium Body Pig – Prototype 16/24 C



Metal Body Pig – Prototype 16/24 B



Steel Body Pig – Prototype 16/24 D





#### Trial Criteria

- Remove wax & water in 16" & 24" sections
- Traverse asymmetrical diameter changes from 16", 24" & 34"
- Traverse wye structures at low flow
- Self travel in 34" sections

Prototype E currently awaiting testing

# **Trial Setup**

- Trials proved that pigs can travel through 16" and 24" sections
- Key challenge is transiting through the wye pieces... pigs do not seal completely and require very high flow rates





#### Test Cases

- 16", 24" & 34" transitions with wye pieces
- Wax removal
- Buoyancy tests
- Interaction with other 24" and 34" pigs

## Trial #1 - February 2018

- Prototypes A & B tested... Sun and metal bodied pigs
  - Sun Pig Prototype 16/24 A



Metal Body Pig – Prototype 16/24 B





- Different hardness of polyurethane trialled to test wax removal and sealing capabilities (different colour discs)
- Similar performance from both prototypes, though type B slightly more successful hence selected for further development

# Prototype A - Sun Pig

- Able to travel in 16" and 24" sections
  - Successfully removed wax in 16", more limited in 24"
  - Issues with transition from 16" to 24"
  - Large flow rates required to move in 34"









VIDEO







# Prototype B - Metal Bodied

- Similar performance to 'Sun' pig, though slightly better at removing wax in 24"
  - Some issues noted with uniform fold away of 24" discs in 16"













VIDEO

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## Trial #2 - June 2018

- Prototypes C & D tested... Steel and titanium metal bodied pigs
  - Titanium Body Pig Prototype 16/24 C



Steel Body Pig – Prototype 16/24 D



Titanium pig able to self-transit at lower flow rates in 34"



- Finger spacers added to the front of sealing discs to give additional support in 24" and centralise the pig, more uniform folding of 24" sealing discs in 16" section
- Syntactic foam added to try make it neutrally buoyant for self transit in 34" section

# Prototype C - Titanium Metal Bodied

- Steel metal bodies replaced with titanium and syntactic foam added
  - Fingers good at removing wax in 24" but leaving streaks of wax



Titanium Body Pig – Prototype 16/24 C



 Prototype D... similar performance but heavier due to steel instead of titanium





# **Backup Option**

- 16" cast PU pig with syntactic foam
  - Wax removal and water sweep in 16" section only
  - Able to self transit in both 24" and 34"
- No water removal from 70m section between two wyes...
  mitigate with larger corrosion allowance
- Dual diameter foam pig considered to sweep water from 70m section... not viable









#### **Next Steps**

- Prototype E currently in development...
  - Investigate replacing PU support components with carbon fibre or composites
  - Trial low drag materials where PU components contact pipe wall
    - → Trials have identified a suitable design to progress... Results expected November 2018





