

Offshore data acquisition. Enhancing the social licence to operate: challenges and opportunities

Simon J. Molyneux¹

¹ *Molyneux Advisors Pty Ltd*

simon.molyneux@molyneuxadvisors.com

The acquisition of geophysical imaging data, in particular conventional marine seismic, in areas of shallow water (<20 m) has always been challenging in terms of cost, quality and permitting. A heightened sensitivity about the possible environmental impact of conventional marine seismic has made achieving environmental approval of marine seismic activity in water depths up to 60 m challenging in Australia.

In this abstract, a suggestion is made that the social licence to operate of offshore industries could be enhanced by re-framing permit work programs around in-permit mobilisations where impact to the exploration assessment is maximised, and environmental disturbance is minimised. This approach will be illustrated through a discussion of two case studies the Zenaide 3D and Bethany 3D seismic surveys and a consideration of alternative approaches from an environmental, work program and regulatory point of view.

Acknowledgement:

Updated from an extended abstract published in The APPEA Journal 2019, 59, 915-919