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SUPPORTING SUBSEA PIPELINE DECOMMISSIONING - GULF OF THAILAND

Centurion is supporting one of the Asia-Pacific's largest subsea pipeline decommissioning campaigns, an ambitious multi-phase project in the Gulf of Thailand that began in March 2024. Working alongside a leading subsea contractor, we're providing a full suite of cutting and recovery tools, workshop cabins as well as personnel to enable the safe and efficient removal of over 335km of aging pipeline.

With Phase 2 set to begin in July 2025, this project highlights the critical role Centurion is playing in delivering practical, cost effective and safe solutions for complex offshore decommissioning.

THE CLIENT

The client, a leading subsea services provider, is responsible for the safe, efficient and cost-effective removal of aging subsea infrastructure. Their decommissioning efforts involve complex challenges, including the recovery of 335km of subsea flowline networks while adhering to strict environmental and regulatory requirements.

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PHASE 1 - CLIENT REQUIREMENTS & CHALLENGES

The project involved recovering 64 pipelines, ranging from 2 km to 21 km in length and 6” to 18” in diameter, many of which were encased in concrete weight coating (CWC).

Key challenges identified included:

- Ensuring efficient and cost-effective pipeline recovery
- Managing variable pipeline conditions and information gaps with legacy assets
- Meeting environmental regulations and managing pollution risks
- Adapting to external weather conditions that could potentially affect project timelines
- Selecting the right cutting tools to optimize performance and reduce downtime.

OUR SOLUTION

Centurion worked closely with project stakeholders to help determine the most efficient removal methods, balancing environmental regulations, operational constraints, and safety.

The project utilised multiple methodologies, including:

- Reverse S-Lay technique
- Cut and recover approach using shears and chopsaws

Ongoing collaboration between the operator, EPRD contractor, and service providers, along with real-time project learnings has been key in refining methodology, equipment selection, and execution:

- Tailored cutting tool selection based on pipeline specifications
- Continuous refinement of cutting methodologies
- System Integration Testing (SIT) to validate equipment performance.

An example was when we ran into cutting limitations with a standard blade, our team saw an opportunity to improve. We worked with the OEM to design a custom CWC (pruner) blade, which significantly improved performance, cutting clean through the pipe in a single pass, where multiple cuts were normally needed.

This kind of thinking is core to how we work. On every job, our team looks for more efficient, safer, and faster ways to deliver. That could mean modifying equipment, sourcing better tooling, or adapting methodology based on real-time learnings in the field.

THE RESULTS

- Centurion's contributions have significantly improved the efficiency of the decommissioning project, achieving to date (as of March 2025), the following:
- 64 pipelines removed
- Over 22,000 shear cuts and 5,000 chopsaw cuts completed
- Optimized blade selection for different pipeline conditions:
- Tungsten Carbide Tipped (TCT) Blades: Fastest cuts recorded – 2" pipe in 1 minute, 16" pipe in 4 minutes
- Diamond Blades for CWC: Cutting times – 16" CWC pipe in 12 minutes, 18" CWC pipe in 18 minutes
- Enhanced shear performance with Genesis GSS775 shears for precise and efficient cutting
- Reduction in equipment downtime.

PHASE 2 - STARTED JULY 2025

After the successful delivery of Phase 1, we have been engaged to support Phase 2. The client had seen our team's capability first-hand and was confident in our experience and understanding of the scope.

Phase 2 which started in July 2025, adds another 12 pipelines totalling 85km, ranging from 140m to 13.7km in length and 6" to 12" in diameter. This phase is being delivered through a collaboration between Centurion teams in Singapore and Australia, supplying a full package of subsea tools, control cabins, recovery systems and offshore-certified equipment, all pre-tested, integrated and ready to go.

The three-month operation spans 24/7 vessel activity aboard the DSV Van Gogh and DLV HQ1200.

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CONCLUSION

Centurion's role in this large-scale decommissioning project has gone well beyond supplying cutting and recovery tools. It's the combination of extensive hands-on offshore experience, practical problem-solving in the field, and a willingness to adapt and improve solutions as the job progresses that has helped make the work safer, more efficient, and cost-effective for our client.

With the demand for pipeline decommissioning surging worldwide and set to grow even further, these insights will be invaluable in helping clients optimise future projects.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information contact our team in Australia and Singapore.

Australia
T: +61 8 616 44505
E: CSSAU@centurionaprs.com

Singapore
T: +65 6863 4470 or **E:** CSSSG@centurionaprs.com