



barrow island and mundabullangana

flatback turtle tagging program

Gorgon Project

Operated by Chevron Australia
in joint venture with

ExxonMobil



Osaka Gas | MidOcean Energy | JERA

2026/27

prospective volunteer information booklet

Chevron is one of the world's leading integrated energy companies and through its Australian subsidiaries, has been present in Australia for more than 70 years.

Located on Barrow Island, the Gorgon Project is operated by Chevron Australia and is a joint venture of the Australian subsidiaries of Chevron (47.3 percent), ExxonMobil (25 percent), Shell (25 percent), Osaka Gas (1.25 percent), MidOcean Energy (1 percent) and JERA (0.417 percent).

Gorgon is one of the world's largest Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) projects and the largest single resource project in Australia's history. Located on Barrow Island – a Class A Nature Reserve – Gorgon comprises a three-train, 15.6 million tonnes per annum LNG facility and a domestic gas plant with the capacity to supply 300 terajoules of gas per day to Western Australia

The Barrow Island and Mundabullangana flatback turtle populations are considered significant due to the size of their rookeries, with around 2,000 turtles nesting per year at each site.

Chevron Australia is committed to protecting the conservation and biodiversity values upon Barrow Island and provides full support for

the marine turtle monitoring program. One part of this monitoring program involves the Flatback Turtle Tagging Program that has been conducted since 2005.

The Barrow Island & Mundabullangana Flatback Turtle Tagging Program is delivered by our program partner **Elemental Consulting Services** in partnership with **Nocterra** and runs annually between November and January. This document provides information you need to know before completing the online application form. Please read the document in its entirety as it explains what you are applying for.



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1 Introduction

The flatback turtle (*Natator depressus*) is endemic to Australia and is found nesting on mainland and island beaches across the northern coast (Limpus 2009). The current status of this species on the IUCN Red List is Data Deficient (IUCN 2013), while it is listed as Vulnerable under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act (1999). Its common name (i.e. flatback) is derived from the shape of its shell (carapace), which appears flatter when compared with other marine turtle species. The carapace lacks keratin and distinctively curves up at the margins. The flatback is a medium-sized marine turtle, growing close to 1 m in length (Figure 1).

Barrow Island and Mundabullangana flatback populations are considered significant due to the size of their rookeries, with around 2,000 turtles nesting per year at each site. Flatback turtles generally breed every one to three years (average two years) and lay up to four clutches of around 50 eggs between October and February in a nesting year (Pendoley et al. 2014). Nesting activity at Barrow Island peaks between late November and January each season, with the peak activity at Mundabullangana occurring slightly earlier between the beginning of November and December. After an incubation period of approximately six weeks, the eggs hatch and the hatchlings immediately make their way to the ocean. When offshore, flatback turtles do not have an oceanic phase to their lifecycle and instead remain on the continental shelf (Hamann et al. 2009). It is thought that females reach maturity at about 12-23 years of age (Turner Tomaszewicz et al. 2022), after which they often return to their natal (birth) rookery to lay their eggs.



Figure 1: Adult flatback turtle; flatback turtle track; and flatback turtle hatchling

The Flatback Turtle Tagging Program is designed to assess and monitor the status of the nesting flatback turtle population on the east coast of Barrow Island so that any impact from the Gorgon Project can be identified. Equivalent studies are also undertaken at a reference beach located on the mainland at Mundabullangana

Station, west of Port Hedland. Figure 2 shows the location of the two sites in WA, and the closest major town.

Beyond Barrow Island, the Gorgon Joint Venture participants agreed to fund a North West Shelf Flatback Turtle Conservation Program to increase the protection of the Flatback population, at a cost of \$62.5 million for the life of the Project. The conservation program commenced in June 2011, with key objectives of surveying, monitoring and research, reducing interference to key breeding and feeding locations, and establishing information and education programs (DBCA 2024).



Figure 2: Location of Barrow Island and Mundabullangana

2 Program Costs

The Flatback Turtle Tagging Program is **FREE***.

2.1 Costs covered by the Program

Costs covered by the Program include:

- flights to and from Barrow Island or Port Hedland;
- pre-mobilisation medical;
- pre-mobilisation police check (application completed by Volunteer and cost reimbursed);
- field equipment and PPE including safety or hiking boots, high visibility work shirts, safety glasses and gloves (boots to be purchased by the volunteers and cost [capped at \$200] will be reimbursed only if full swing has been completed unless otherwise approved by project manager);
- accommodation and meals while at Barrow Island or Mundabullangana Station; and
- insurance – volunteers are covered during the course of their volunteer duties under the Elemental Consulting Services (ECS) insurance policies (conditions and limitations apply).

2.2 *Costs not covered by the Program

The following costs are not covered by the Program:

- travel to and from Perth from regional WA, interstate, or overseas (includes taxis, rideshare and parking);
- accommodation in Perth (including accommodation required following demobilisation for a Tropical Cyclone);
- travel to and from:
 - the Perth Airport;
 - the volunteer medical; and
 - information/training nights.
- your time.

3 Pre-selection

To be eligible for selection as a Volunteer on the program you must:

- be **18 years** or older at the time of participation in the program;
- be fit and healthy (capable of walking up to 20 km per shift on a sandy beach for up to 18 nights in hot/humid conditions while carrying a backpack and tagging turtles);
- complete the online application form on the [ECS website](#); and

- attend an Information Night in Perth in-person (remigrant¹ attendance is mandatory. Interstate applicants may be offered a phone interview as an alternative to attending an Information Night).

¹ **Remigrant = returning volunteer:** The term “remigrant” also refers to a nesting female turtle that has been recorded nesting at a particular nesting beach before and has returned or remigrated to the nesting beach in a different subsequent year to nest again.

3.1 Online application

Online applications will close on **Wednesday 9th September 2026**. Applications submitted after the closing date will not be considered. When completing your online application form you will be asked to indicate your availability for Information Nights and Tagging Groups.

3.1.1 Information night preferences

Four information nights will be held in Perth (refer to Table 1 for dates). There are limited seats at each information night, so please indicate **all** the sessions for which you are available. You will receive an email from the Volunteer Coordinator after you apply detailing what information night you have been assigned to. Additionally, a formal invitation, reminder, and confirmation of the venue for each information night will be sent out ahead of your scheduled date.

Note: Attendance **in person is required**, unless you are unable to. If you are unable to attend any of the scheduled information nights, you **may** be granted a phone interview. Please specify why you cannot attend on your application form. For example, regional WA, interstate applicants. Other reasons and exceptional circumstances will be considered by the program manager on a case-by-case basis.

Table 1: Information Night Schedule

Information Night	Date	Time
1	Wednesday 16 th September 2026	18:00 – 20:00
2	Thursday 17 th September 2026	18:00 – 20:00
3	Monday 21 st September 2026	18:00 – 20:00
4	Tuesday 22 nd September 2026	18:00 – 20:00

3.1.2 Tagging site preference

During your application, you will be asked to indicate your preference between Barrow Island and Mundabullangana.

Please be aware that Mundabullangana is a cattle station that, due to its remoteness, does not provide alternative food options for vegan, vegetarian,

allergies, or gluten/lactose free diets. Barrow Island caters for all diets, so please select this site if you have **any** dietary requirements.

We will do our best to place successful volunteers at their preferred location, but as spots for the program are very competitive you may not be offered your preferred location. This also means that you will significantly improve your chances of selection by not having a specific preference for when and where you go, i.e. having a greater availability.

3.1.3 Tagging group preference

You will also be asked to indicate which Tagging Groups you are available for (see Table 2). Please select **only** the groups for which you are genuinely available. If you only want to go to Barrow Island, then **only** select the Barrow Island groups. If you want to go to Barrow Island but are willing to accept a position at Mundabullangana if you miss out, then please select **both** tagging site groups.

Table 2: Tagging group dates and duration

Location	Group	Start Date	End Date	Duration
Mundabullangana (MDA)	1	Thursday 5 th November 2026	Friday 20 th November 2026	16 days
	2	Friday 20 th November 2026	Monday 7 th December 2026	18 days
	3	Monday 7 th December 2026	Wednesday 23 rd December 2026	17 days
	4	Monday 28 th December 2026	Wednesday 13 th January 2027	17 days
Barrow Island (BWI)	1	Friday 20 th November 2026	Tuesday 8 th December 2026	19 days
	2	Friday 4 th December 2026	Tuesday 22 nd December 2026	19 days
	3	Monday 28 th December 2026	Friday 15 th January 2027	19 days
	4	Monday 11 th January 2027	Friday 29 th January 2027	19 days

IMPORTANT: These dates could be subject to change based on flight availability. Changes will be minor and within a few days of those presented above. The **typical duration** for Barrow Island will be **15 days**; however, some applicants may be asked to stay for up to 19 days within the **19 day availability window**. Crossovers of groups may occur due to flight schedules.

3.1.4 Confirmation

If your online application form is successfully submitted, the system will generate an automated response to the email address you provided. Please allow a few minutes for the response to come through (if it does not come through then please contact volunteer@elementalconsultants.com.au)

Note: Check your email (including junk / spam folder) to confirm your application has been received.

4 Information nights and selection

4.1 Presentation

The information night presentation will provide information about the Gorgon Project, flatback turtles, Barrow Island and Mundabullangana, an overview of the Flatback Turtle Tagging Program, administrative and training requirements, accommodation, and recreational activities available on site.

After the presentation you will have the opportunity to ask questions and speak with ECS and Chevron staff about the Volunteer tagging experience.

4.2 Group activities

The main purpose of the information night is to facilitate the selection of Volunteers. After the presentation you will be separated into small groups, assigned to a staff member, and then participate in group activities. Your participation and interaction within your group will allow your assessor to determine your suitability.

Note: Group activities may involve sitting or kneeling on the floor so please wear sensible / comfortable clothing and shoes.

4.3 Selection

Selection for the Volunteer Program is **very competitive!** Last season, there were ~350 applicants applying for the 88 Volunteer positions. There are also Reserve positions available which are used in the event a Volunteer position re-opens (historical figures show that a very high percentage of selected Reserves make it onto the Program).

Selection for the Program depends on a number of factors including (in no particular order):

- your information night group activity assessment;
- your previous experience;
- your availability (greater availability means you are more likely to be offered a position);
- your previous application history;
- your online application information; and
- your location.

4.4 If you are selected

If you are selected for the Program (Volunteer and Reserve positions) you will be informed by **Friday 9th October 2026** and sent the **Information for Selected Volunteers** Booklet.

Prior to participating in the program, you will need to complete the following training requirements which will be booked directly by your Volunteer Coordinator:

- pass your Volunteer Medical (half day);
- complete a police check (online application);
- complete online MyPass training modules (about two hours);
- if you are selected as a driver at Mundabullangana, complete your Defensive Driver Training (1 day course); and
- provide copies of your Medical, police check and MyPass training certificates to your Volunteer Coordinator.

4.5 If you are not selected

If you are not selected, we encourage you to put your name down as an option for a Reserve position or apply again in future seasons.

5 What to expect on the program

Note: Consumption of drugs or alcohol at any time during the Program is **strictly prohibited**. Persons caught drinking alcohol will be immediately removed from the Program. Volunteers and staff are subject to random drug and alcohol testing in accordance with Site Policies.

5.1 Pre-departure training evening

Pre-departure training events will be held for Volunteers at a Perth location. One training event will be held for each tagging group and will be scheduled on an evening in the week preceding their mobilisation date. Details of the evening will be provided upon selection.

Attending the training event is **mandatory** for all volunteers, including remigrants¹. It gives you the opportunity to meet your Field Team Leader and the rest of your Volunteer Tagging Group and ask any last-minute questions prior to your departure.

A key element of the training is the methodology for tagging flatback turtles and review the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) which can change from season to season. This will be reinforced throughout your time at Barrow Island and Mundabullangana to ensure a high level of quality and consistent data is recorded, and a high standard of animal wildlife ethics and health and safety is implemented.

Similar to pre-selection information nights, for Volunteers from regional WA, interstate, or with exceptional circumstances, a MS Teams/Zoom link may be provided.

5.2 Behaviour while onsite

Everyone onsite has a right to work in an environment that is safe, respectful and inclusive. It is therefore a responsibility for all Volunteers to treat everyone they meet onsite with consideration and respect. Respectful behaviour displays personal integrity and professionalism, demonstrates respect for individual rights and differences, practices fairness and understanding, and encourages accountability of actions. A respectful workplace:

- is inclusive;
- values diversity;
- clearly communicates expectations around behaviour;
- promotes employee health and safety;
- strives for improvement; and
- has open channels of communication.

5.3 Day One

When you arrive at your work site you will be assigned a room in an accommodation block, and allowed to get yourself settled in. Under the direction of the Field Team Leader, you will then be required to attend:

- an on-site kick-off meeting incorporating a site induction; and
- on-site tagging training.

You will then attend an evening toolbox meeting to discuss the plan for the night and sign on to the Job Hazard Analysis (JHA). As a group, you will then head to the nesting beaches where the Field Team Leader and their Assistant (BWI Only) will conduct some practical tagging demonstrations with any encountered nesting flatback turtles. Then, once fully trained and under supervision of the Field Team Leader, it will be your turn to read the tags of a turtle or, if necessary, tag a turtle.

5.4 Day Two Onwards

Once the Field Team Leader is confident in your tagging ability (and your ability to work safely in the field), you will be divided into tagging pairs and assigned a beach section to patrol for the night. A typical night will include:

- onsite safety (toolbox) meeting to plan the shift and discuss hazards and controls;
- equipment checks;
- transport to the beach via mini-bus or light vehicle;

- drawing a 'line' along the beach in order to identify the tracks of new or missed turtles;
- patrolling the high tide line during the night-time beach survey (8 – 9 hours in duration);
- walking on sand in safety/hiking boots and other PPE for up to 20 km to monitor nesting flatback turtles;
- sighting turtles and waiting for a suitable time to approach;
- bending down to tag turtles;
- scanning turtles for PIT tags, collecting and recording relevant data;
- removing barnacles from existing flipper tags; and
- applying PIT tags when required.

Each day's nightshift will be conducted around the night-time high tide or as determined by the Field Team Leader. Nightshifts can be tiring as they affect the daily circadian rhythm of the body, and you may feel more fatigued than normal throughout the trip. However, you will have plenty of downtime during the day to rest and recover.

5.5 Beach patrols

Beach patrols are hard work. You will walk up to 20 km a night on soft sand in hot, humid conditions. You will be tagging, reading the tags, and collecting data (measurements/GPS) of up to 30 turtles in one patrol. You will be required to wear safety glasses (provided), safety or hiking boots (purchased by volunteers and reimbursed [capped at \$200]), work shirts (provided), full length cotton/natural fiber workpants (**not provided**), and gloves (provided).

You will be required to patrol the beach each night of the survey period, with a partner, for up to eight hours at a time. What this means is that you will require a good level of fitness to avoid muscle fatigue or joint stress.

Due to shifting high tide times, beach patrols will take place at a slightly later time each night and will sometimes be required over two consecutive high tides. What this means in practice is that on one occasion during your tagging group you will have to work two shifts in one 24-hour period.

Heat stress and fatigue are very real hazards for work in the Pilbara. To minimise the associated risks, you will need to:

- drink lots of water;
- get plenty of rest;
- look out for each other; and
- report immediately to the Field Team Leader if you (or another Volunteer) feel unwell.

6 Barrow Island



Figure 3: Barrow Island Nature Reserve sign, flatback turtle, volunteer 'drawing the line' on the beach, volunteers on a recreational trip to the West Coast.

Barrow Island is a 23,400-hectare island located 88 km from the north-west of Onslow (Figure 1). As a Class A Nature Reserve providing habitat for 14 mammal species, more than 110 types of birds, 54 reptile species, and over 350 native plant species, strict quarantine requirements are in place to keep the island pest and disease free. An oil field has been in operation on the island since 1964 and is now being decommissioned. The construction phase of the Gorgon Project on Barrow Island was completed in 2017 and is now operational.

Four species of marine turtles either nest on Barrow Island and/or forage in the waters surrounding the island.

The Flatback Turtle Tagging Program focuses on six to eight of the most populous flatback turtle nesting beaches, all located along the east coast of the island.

6.1 Travel

Flights to Barrow Island are arranged by Chevron and operate from National Jet Express Airport, Perth. Strict quarantine controls apply during transit.

6.2 Accommodation and facilities

You will be assigned your own private room, complete with ensuite. Your linen/towels will be provided, and your room cleaned weekly. You will have access to laundry facilities and laundry powder.

You will have access to a pool, a gym, and a general shop which stocks toiletries, confectionery, snacks, soft drinks etc., each purchased at your own expense.

6.3 Meals

You will dine at the camp 'mess', buffet style. Vegetarian and vegan diets are well catered for, and meals are labelled for those with common special dietary requirements (i.e. dairy or gluten-free). Takeaway meals (known as 'Crib') are available during periods when your work shifts overlap with the mess opening hours (you are required to bring your own reusable containers for food storage).

6.4 Recreation

Barrow Island is a Nature Reserve and an operational oil and gas facility. For the sake of Barrow Island's ecology, and your own safety, you will have very limited opportunities to partake in recreational activities outside the camp.

Island tours **may** be arranged but cannot be guaranteed. There are designated areas outside of camp for walking, running and cycling. Bikes are provided, subject to Gym and Bike induction. There is strictly **no swimming** (or wading) in the ocean due to the presence of dangerous 'stingers'.

Recreational activities available within the confines of the camp include yoga, tennis, basketball, soccer, pool/snooker, darts, arcade games, gym/fitness classes and swimming pools.

6.5 Communications

If you are on a Telstra plan you will have mobile phone reception within the camp and designated recreational areas for walking, running, and cycling. Otherwise, calls to Perth landlines are free of charge from phones in your room. Wi-Fi is available within each accommodation room.

7 Mundabullangana



Figure 4: Entrance to Mundabullangana; flatback turtle, cattle on the Station, Munda Station Homestead.

Mundabullangana Station is located on the Western Australian mainland approximately 60 km southwest of Port Hedland (Figure 1). It is a working station spanning approximately 500,000 acres and home to approximately 10,000 head of cattle. It is host to a significant flatback turtle rookery, located on the beaches to the north of the station. This population of flatback turtles appears to be discreet from the turtles found on Barrow Island, located approximately 280 km to the west.

7.1 Travel

To get to Mundabullangana you will fly from Perth domestic airport to Port Hedland. Note that Volunteers cannot make their own way to the site. There will be an opportunity to purchase last minute supplies at South Hedland Shopping Mall prior to departure for the station. The drive to the station takes approximately 1.5 hours.

Note: Your arrival at Port Hedland is your last opportunity to stock up on your favourite snacks / drinks. Mundabullangana is very remote, and supply runs will be made only when absolutely necessary.

7.2 Accommodation and facilities

At Mundabullangana you will be accommodated adjacent to the homestead. You will likely have to share a room with another Volunteer of the same gender. Your linen/towels will be provided and facilities are available for you to wash and change these at your discretion and at the end of your stay. All rooms are air conditioned and fitted with blackout curtains for sleeping during the day.

Bathroom facilities are communal. You will have access to laundry facilities and free laundry powder.

At times you will be required to clean your own room, bathroom, and wash linen as well as assist with kitchen clean-up duties.

7.3 Meals

Mundabullangana is a cattle station that, due to its remoteness, does not provide alternative food options for vegan, vegetarian, or gluten/lactose free diets. Meals are prepared by the cattle station cook and served in a communal kitchen.

Dinner and lunch often consist of hot or cold meats with salads, side dishes and vegetables. Breakfast foods are made available for self-serve. Access to the kitchen is during mealtimes only and everyone is expected to assist with clean-up afterwards.

7.4 Recreation

The recreation room is equipped with a TV, Foxtel, and a fridge for the sole use of the Volunteers. You are also encouraged to bring your own games, books, board games, playing cards etc. There is an open grass area where football, soccer, Frisbee or other outdoor games can be played.

Recreational field trips around the station will be organised by the Field Team Leader (fatigue dependent).

7.5 Communications

If you are on a Telstra plan you will have mobile phone reception in particular areas at the Mundabullangana Station. There is Wi-Fi internet access that is available to Volunteers (dependent on data allowance and use).

8 Personnel Protective Equipment (PPE)

As a Volunteer you will be required to dress in accordance with the Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) Management Plan, and in accordance with any additional site rules. You will also need to supply some of your own gear (Table 3).

Table 3: Field PPE

Item	Specifications	Provided by	Example
Safety / hiking boots*	-	Program	
Sun hat	Wide brimmed legionnaire style	Volunteer	
Safety glasses	-	Program	
Hi-visibility shirt	-	Program	
Trousers / Socks	Full length, natural fiber, loose fitting (Jeans are not recommended)	Volunteer	
Gloves	Full length and fingerless	Program	
Boot protectors/gaiters	-	Program	
Fly net	Fine mesh for over the head	Program	
Head sock / buff	Natural fiber	Volunteer	

Note: It is very important that the trousers you take to site are made of natural fiber i.e. 100% cotton. This is to ensure compliance with onsite requirements.

Note: Biting insects (mosquitos, sand flies, etc) are common on site and can result in skin irritation both during and after your deployment. It is important that you bring additional insect bite prevention PPE and aftercare with you if you are sensitive to insect bites.

Note: Volunteers are requested to purchase safety / hiking boots up to the value of \$200 and are reimbursed upon provision of receipts once the relevant swing has been completed (unless otherwise approved by the program manager).

9 References

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