

Inpex makes new NW gas find

8th August 2008, 13:00 WST

Japanese gas giant Inpex has discovered a 72m gas column in the Browse Basin, in the State's North.

Inpex, along with joint venture partner Total E&P, completed the first well on the project last month after acquiring the WA-344-P exploration acreage in November last year.

The Mimia-1 well was drilled in a water depth of 254 metres approximately 20kms north-east of Inpex's portion of the Ichthys gas condensate field.

Inpex and the French company are proceeding with a project to build a \$12 billion liquefied natural gas plant to tap the Ichthys field adjacent to the area, with plans to incorporate the new find into the planned development.

But the location of that plant is still undecided, with the Japanese company deciding between WA and the Northern Territory.

That decision has been a major issue in the Northern Territory election, due to take place tomorrow, with Chief Minister Paul Henderson calling a snap poll, in a move he said would provide Inpex with "certainty" when making its decision.

"Every vote in this election will be vital for securing the Inpex gas plant," he said at the election launch, three weeks ago.

"We're talking about 4000 jobs. We're talking about a \$50 billion income stream into our economy over the next 20 years, securing the Territory's economic future.

"Only myself and Labor is 100 per cent committed to delivering this project for the Northern Territory."

It was a line Country Liberal Party leader Terry Mills called "nonsense".

ANDREW HOBBS and AAP