

## **Shell reiterates Pulau Bukom steam cracker will restart "in next few weeks"**

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The status of Shell Chemical's steam cracker at Pulau Bukom has not changed and the cracker is expected to restart in the next few weeks, a company spokesman reiterated Thursday.

"Based on current assessment, we expect to restart the plant in the next few weeks," the spokesman said, reiterating previous comments. "Nothing has changed."

"Our ethylene cracker complex at Pulau Bukom is currently shut down for unplanned maintenance to repair a compressor," he said. "As a result, we have declared force majeure on our ability to supply base chemicals customers on September 29, 2016. Our supply teams are working hard to minimize the impact from this disruption. Safety remains our top priority and we want to ensure integrity of our assets before we resume operations."

Shell Chemicals issued the force majeure after an emergency shutdown of the cracker on September 27 due to a compressor problem.

The petrochemicals complex comprises a steam cracker, which is able to produce 960,000 mt/year of ethylene, 540,000 mt/year of propylene and 186,000 mt/year of butadiene. The site also has a 276,000 mt/year benzene unit and a 750,000 mt/year monoethylene glycol plant.

The prolonged shutdown comes amid reports that several downstream derivatives plants in Singapore are raising production after the unexpected shutdown resulted in run cuts.

Mitsui Phenols Singapore expects to raise the operating rate of its solvents plant to 100% of capacity in early November, a source close to the company said previously.

This was based on expectations that Shell Chemicals, the company's supplier of feedstock propylene, would restart its cracker at Pulau Bukom "at the end of October," the source said.

MPS delayed or canceled some of its October phenol shipments after reducing its operating rate by 30-40% on October 1 following the shutdown of the cracker.