

Well status and surveillance definitions

Document No: N-04600-IP2117 A1001556

Date: 27/02/2026

1. Objective

The objective of this document is to promote greater consistency within the Commonwealth petroleum and greenhouse gas storage industry by establishing standardised definitions for common well terms based on international well integrity standards.

2. Definitions

The table below provides NOPSEMA's definitions for key terminology related to well status and surveillance:

Descriptor	NOPSEMA definition	Reference
Abandoned	<p>A well in which all penetrated zones with flow potential have been permanently isolated from surface and from lower pressured zones.</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Also referred to as “permanently abandoned” / “plugged and abandoned” / “plugged or closed off” / “decommissioned”.</p> <p>This status implies the wellhead has been removed unless approval has been granted to leave it in situ, which NOPSEMA refers to as “Abandoned - Wellhead in situ”.</p>	[5]
Borehole	A drilled hole including the open hole or uncased portion. Different boreholes may be drilled from the same well origin, such as sidetracks and multi-laterals.	
In progress	A well that is under construction.	
Monitoring	<p>The act of continuously recording data regarding well barriers.</p> <p>Note: For wells that are not tied back to a production facility, this can still be achieved, for example with wireless signal transmission.</p>	[1]
Operational	A well that is producing or injecting.	[3]
Planned	A well that is yet to be drilled.	

Shut-in	A well with one or more valves closed in the direction of flow. Note: Reinstatement of the operation of the shut-in well should be possible at any time without the requirement for intervention or the reconnection of facilities or control systems.	[4,6]
Suspended	A well with qualified barrier(s) (object or material, temporary or permanent) isolating the wellbore from the reservoir. Note: "Suspended" can be a short-term status during well construction (e.g. to secure a well due to bad weather) or a long-term status for a well that is partially abandoned (referred to as "temporary abandonment" and "Decommissioned Phase 1 or 2" in in NORSOK D-010 and OEUK guidance respectively).	[4,6]
Visual inspection	Visual observations of well equipment, often using remotely operated vehicles (ROV).	[1]
Well	A well is a single borehole or aggregation of boreholes drilled from a single well origin.	[5]

3. References

1. NORSOK D-010:2021 - Well integrity in drilling and well operations
2. *Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006*
3. Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage (Resource Management and Administration) Regulations 2025
4. Well Life Cycle Integrity Guidelines Issue 4 - Offshore Energies UK (OEUK)
5. Well Decommissioning Guidelines Issue 7 - Offshore Energies UK (OEUK)
6. ISO 16530-1:2017 Petroleum and natural gas industries — Well integrity — Part 1: Life cycle governance