



MEDIA RELEASE

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World first in engineering competency standards launched

For the first time, Australia's pipeline industry will be covered by a single engineering competency system that brings the onshore and offshore sectors together in what appears to be a world first.

Once again, Australia has found an innovative solution to a large and complex problem that has stymied the industry both here and overseas, APGA President Shaun Reardon said

"This has been achieved purely through the vision, application and dedication of the members of what is really a comparatively small Australian industry," Mr Reardon said at today's launch in Perth of the APGA Pipeline Engineer Competency Standards for Offshore Pipeline Engineers.

The offshore competency standards will be added to the already-developed onshore competency standards to form a complete system covering all pipeline engineering.

"This is a significant contribution to pipeline engineering which will assist in improving public safety by reducing the potential for vulnerability where offshore and onshore pipelines meet," Mr Reardon said.

"The system is a new way for engineers and their supervisors to understand, assess and document competency. It has been entirely funded and resourced by the members who have been determined to ensure that pipeline engineers continue to achieve the levels of competency required by our industry Standard.

"That Standard, AS 2885, has underpinned the achievement of an enviable safety record in pipelines in Australia."

The competency standards system was developed because the Australian pipeline industry is not large enough to create the required volume of students to make a university course viable. Pipeline engineers in Australia gain a degree in another engineering discipline, such as mechanical or chemical engineering, and then acquire their specialised knowledge and expertise on the job and via short courses.

"The system enables engineers to plan their careers so they become more competent in their chosen areas of specialised practice and to ensure that engineers who have the right knowledge and experience are making decisions that are required for the safe design, construction, operations and maintenance of high-pressure hydrocarbon transmission pipelines in Australia," Mr Reardon said.

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“The competency standards have been recognised nationally and they form the basis for registration on the National Engineering Register, and with the Queensland engineering registration system RPEQ, in the special area of practice of Oil and Gas Pipeline Engineering.

“Internationally, the system is the first of its kind and is being examined with a view to implementation by the overseas pipeline industry.”

In developing the competency standards with offshore pipeline engineers, APGA has worked with the Society for Underwater Technology’s Perth Branch which is producing a set of competency standards for all subsea engineering. The competency standards for offshore pipelines will become an integral part of the subsea set, further spreading consistency through the oil and gas industry.

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