

Health and Safety under the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act

WHAT OPERATORS AND WORKERS NEED TO KNOW

What is validation?



NOPSA

National Offshore Petroleum Safety Authority

www.nopsa.gov.au

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1 : Q. What do we mean by validation when we are talking about offshore petroleum safety?

A. 'Validation' is an independent assessment of the design, construction and installation of elements of a facility against appropriate standards.

The validation must establish a level of assurance acceptable to NOPSA that the facility includes measures that will protect the health and safety of people.

2 : Q. When is a validation required?

A. It is NOPSA policy to request a validation for all proposed facilities and all significant changes to existing facilities, including decommissioning. Validation is not requested if a safety case revision is triggered for any other reason. For example, five-year revisions of safety cases that do not include significant change or modification to the facility do not require validation.

3 : Q. What aspects of a facility does a validation cover?

A. It will cover the agreed scope of validation. This will generally be the hardware at a facility that may affect the health and safety of people.



4 : Q. What is a 'scope of validation'?

A. It is those structures and equipment that are covered by the validation and the associated standards and codes that form the validation criteria. Before an operator of a proposed facility can submit a safety case to NOPSA for assessment, the operator must agree a scope of validation with NOPSA. NOPSA may propose the critical equipment that will form the minimum basis for the scope of validation.

The formal safety assessment processes for design, construction, installation, or significant change to the facility usually form the basis for selection of the elements to be included in a validation.

5 : Q. What about validation on vessels?

A. Vessel classification by a reputable society may provide sufficient validation of hull, buoyancy, ballasting, propulsion and station-keeping systems so that such elements do not have to be included in the scope of validation. However, as the vessel (as a facility) will be engaged in offshore petroleum operations, other aspects of the facility may require validation.

6 : Q. What criteria must a validator meet?

A. The operator who has provided material for a validation must satisfy NOPSA as to the independence, competence, ability and access to data of anybody undertaking the validation.



7 : Q. How does NOPSA assess the validation?

A. NOPSA assesses whether the person undertaking validation meets independence, competence, ability and access to data requirements. The documentation provided by the operator on the outcomes of the validation must match the agreed scope.

NOPSA also considers whether the validation provides reasonable assurance that the measures incorporated will protect the health and safety of people at the facility.

It expects these measures to be consistent with the formal safety assessment for the facility.

8 : Q. What is the difference between validation and verification

A. NOPSA considers validation to be an independent review, carried out by a competent person, of the codes and standards used for design, construction and installation of an agreed set of structures, equipment and systems. This process helps to provide assurance that the facility incorporates measures to protect the health and safety of people.

Verification is understood as the process of confirming that the agreed set of structures, equipment and systems actually meet the specified standards.

9 : Q. How does a validation relate to the safety case?

A. An operator must not submit the safety case for a facility unless the operator and NOPSA have agreed on a scope of validation. A completed validation that meets the agreed scope is required before a decision on the safety case can be made.



NOPSA'S ROLE

To work with the industry, workforce and other authorities to ensure all health and safety risks in the offshore petroleum industry are properly controlled, and to reduce the likelihood and consequences of major accident events.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

For information on health and safety in the offshore petroleum industry, refer to the NOPSA website (www.nopsa.gov.au).

The *Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006* and the associated regulations can be sourced at the Attorney-General's Department ComLaw website (www.comlaw.gov.au) or via the links on NOPSA's website.

The information in this brochure is intended as a general guide only. The relevant Acts and regulations should be consulted for detailed information. This brochure is produced by:

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