



# Media Release

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For Immediate Release

## **Ageing facilities and lifting operations a concern for Australia's offshore petroleum safety regulator**

Australia's National Offshore Petroleum Safety Authority (NOPSA) is conducting a national awareness campaign to alert employers and workforce of two major classes of risk currently facing the industry.

Ageing facilities and lifting operations on offshore petroleum installations are the focus of the campaign. Ageing facilities pose an increased risk of hydrocarbon releases, while lifting operations increase the risk of injury to individuals.

Workshops to be held in Perth on 25<sup>th</sup> February and Melbourne on 29<sup>th</sup> February to share latest findings and promote safe practices for industry operators and workforce health and safety representatives are already over-subscribed.

The CEO of NOPSA, John Clegg said that ageing facilities in the oil and gas industry were a global problem and had the potential to heighten risk.

“Many operators are using facilities on a ‘life extension’ basis which means that the operating life of the facility has been extended beyond its original ‘use by date’. Because of this, operators undertake risk assessment and improvement programmes.”

He said the scope of NOPSA's facility integrity national programme is to facilitate the industry operator's inspection, testing and maintenance arrangements to prevent loss of containment of petroleum fluids that may arise from failure of offshore production topside structures, process equipment, piping and systems.

Lifting operations on offshore facilities are some of the most ‘routine’ of tasks carried out yet have been recognised globally as carrying significant risk.

“We need a continued focus to improve safety in these risky but routine offshore operations,” Mr Clegg said.

NOPSA's lifting operations program inspects operator's lifting procedures and arrangements for inspections, maintenance and testing of lifting equipment. The scope of this programme covers loads freely suspended from a crane or winch – including personnel and man-riding.

Indications from data collected suggest that personnel competency and the management of lifting and crane operations are the main areas of concern.

Mr Clegg said that the Australian offshore petroleum industry generally manages the hazards associated with its operations very successfully but there is no room for complacency.

“NOPSA aims to deliver world class health and safety regulation for the Australian offshore petroleum industry and this entails working closely with industry to identify risks and improve health and safety outcomes.”

Ends.

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## **NOPSA - FAST FACTS**

The National Offshore Petroleum Safety Authority (NOPSA) is the occupational health and safety (OHS) regulator for the Australian offshore petroleum industry.

### **NOPSA's Background**

NOPSA is a Commonwealth statutory agency established under the *Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1967* (PSLA) that began operating in 2005. It is fully funded by statutory levies from industry.

NOPSA's mission is to deliver world class health and safety regulation for the Australian offshore petroleum industry. Its vision is that health and safety risks in the industry are properly controlled.

### **NOPSA's Organisation**

NOPSA is led by a Chief Executive Officer. Occupational health and safety (OHS) inspectors based in its head office in Perth regulate facilities in the Perth Basin, Carnarvon Basin (the North West Shelf), the Browse Basin and the Bonaparte Basin in the Timor Sea. Inspectors based in Melbourne deal with facilities in the Bass, Gippsland and Otway basins to the south of Australia.

### **NOPSA's Responsibilities**

NOPSA regulates OHS on facilities and diving operations in Commonwealth waters. It is not responsible for the Joint Petroleum Development Area in the Timor Sea. It is responsible for facilities in coastal waters where the State or Territory has passed the necessary mirror legislation. NOPSA also provides regulatory services to the relevant States in some other places.

Offshore petroleum facilities are defined in law. They include fixed and mobile production and drilling facilities, licensed pipelines and vessels carrying out some associated activities.

### **NOPSA's Functions**

The law places responsibility for the health and safety of persons working on offshore facilities on the operators, employers and others who are regulated by NOPSA.

NOPSA's functions are to promote the occupational health and safety of persons engaged in offshore petroleum operations; monitor and enforce to secure compliance with OHS legislation; investigate incidents; provide reports to Ministers; advise persons on OHS matters; and cooperate with relevant agencies.

NOPSA and its inspectors have duties and powers for carrying out assessment of safety cases and similar documents, inspections of facilities and investigations of incidents. Inspectors can issue various enforcement notices and report offences to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

NOPSA runs national programmes as appropriate on topics identified as key areas of concern in relation to health or safety.