

## Media Release

Thursday 11 August 2011

### Tripartite action plan for future of offshore industry

The week of industry events culminating in the International Offshore Petroleum Regulators and Operators Summit, initiated by Minister for Resources, Energy and Tourism, Martin Ferguson, has resulted in a tripartite agreement between the Commonwealth Government, industry and the national health, safety and well integrity regulator, NOPSA.

Speaking this week at the APPEA Safety Conference and the International Offshore Petroleum Regulators and Operators Summit at the Burswood Convention Centre, NOPSA CEO, Jane Cutler, said the agreement represents a formalisation of expectations of the regulator, government and industry for current and future best practice.

“The seriousness of 2009’s Montara incident off northern Australia and 2010’s Macondo disaster in the Gulf of Mexico made the oil and gas industry, the government and the public stand up and take notice,” said Ms Cutler.

“It is important that lessons are learned from these events and that insights are translated into actions – actions that benefit the safety of the workforce, the viability of the industry and adherence to environment responsibility.

“Industry, government and regulators all have expectations of each other but added to that is a layer of expectation from the community that all those involved in the petroleum industry are committed to safety, responsibility and accountability.

“As the national regulator, NOPSA has signed a commitment to undertake its regulatory role in a renewed environment of cooperation in the Australian offshore oil and gas sector to ensure every party shares the objective of a safe industry and that we have the resources to do it properly,” she said.

Ms Cutler added that in effect the signing represented a social contract between NOPSA, the Commonwealth Government and APPEA, outlining each other’s roles and responsibilities to the Australian people. Specifically, the signed agreement states that NOPSA will:

- Be independent, objective and transparent in its engagement with the offshore petroleum industry, to promote and secure compliance with the regulatory regime;
- Maintain a critical mass of competent, skilled and experienced staff with the ability, through the application of rigorous assessment, inspection and audit processes, to provide independent assurance that risks are properly controlled by industry; and
- Embrace continuous improvement in its regulatory systems and practices through dialogue and information exchange with industry, governments and other regulators, both domestically and internationally.

At the signing Minister Ferguson reiterated the Government’s commitment to implementing the accepted recommendations arising from the *Report of the Montara Commission of Inquiry* and ensuring the viability of Australia’s offshore petroleum industry.

Eric Streitberg, chair of peak industry body, APPEA, was present to affirm industry’s pledge to meet government and community expectations regarding its social licence to operate, its safety culture leadership, and the design and development of a capping and containment strategy that incorporates regional and local capability. The International Summit concludes Thursday 11 August 2011.

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NOPSA Media contact: **Natasha Mutch** e: [natasha.mutch@nopsa.gov.au](mailto:natasha.mutch@nopsa.gov.au) m: 0407 076 041

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