



THE YOUNG PIPELINERS FORUM

The inaugural Young People's Forum was arranged as a result of concerns raised by many APIA members in relation to attracting and retaining younger people in the industry. After talking to the younger people, APIA found that they were "hesitant" about attending functions and did not have enough information about the opportunities within the industry. So the YPF was "born"!

The first seminar, the "Young People's Forum", was held in Canberra in May 2006. There were approximately 90 attendees, all sponsored by their employers, participating in the opportunity to meet other young people in the industry and learn about the depth and breadth of the industry. What evolved from the May 2006 seminar was a group of enthusiastic young people who have organised site visits, social gatherings and information sessions around Australia.

From the initial Young People's Forum, a national YPF committee (now the Young Pipeliners Forum) was established and this group now meets regularly via teleconference and each State has its own organiser - sometimes backed up by a committee - to provide networking opportunities and tours of members' facilities.

The aims of the YPF initiative are to:

- promote to younger people the tremendous opportunities in the industry and the variety of interesting careers available;
- build relationships with and between younger APIA members and experienced APIA members
- assist in enhancing the career development of younger people, thus helping to address the skills shortage in the industry;
- encourage the sharing of information and provide a gateway for the transfer of knowledge to and from the more experienced members; and
- provide a conduit for young members' ideas to help shape an even better future for the industry and participants in the industry.

Although a longer-term focus will be to encourage graduates into the industry, it was recognised that, firstly, the industry must keep the talented young members it already has.

The YPF group also wanted a training program for young engineers to expand their skills. This initiative is also supported by the experienced members and such a program now has APIA Board support and a proposal is now underway.

In the meantime, the YPF groups around the nation continue to organise networking events, tours of members' facilities and attendance at APIA functions by groups of young people, expanding their knowledge of the industry and their interaction with the experienced members of APIA.