



# Australian Pipeline Industry Association Ltd

***MEDIA RELEASE***

12 August 2009

## **New Energy Pipeline Research Centre lays “vital” foundations for low-carbon energy future: APIA**

A new, \$17.5 million research centre will underpin the safety and security of Australia’s low-carbon energy future.

The nation’s peak energy transmission body, the Australian Pipeline Industry Association (APIA), has welcomed the announcement, by the Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, of the first research centre dedicated to ensuring the continued safe and cost effective operation of the nation’s gas transmission pipeline network.

“This decision is an important show of support for the key role of gas as a primary energy source in Australia’s carbon-constrained future and it is a great vote of confidence in the essential role that gas pipelines play in the Australian economy, APIA’s Chief Executive, Ms Cheryl Cartwright, said.

“It is a key step towards a new era of energy efficiency and responsibility – both in supporting the shift towards natural gas in the medium term, and in the longer term development of a globally significant carbon capture and storage industry,” Ms Cartwright said.

The *Energy Pipelines Cooperative Research Centre* is one of 10 new centres to be allocated funding in the latest round of the Government’s Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) Program. The program has a focus on new technologies and innovation in support of; energy security, climate change mitigation, indigenous health, and deep minerals exploration, among others.

With funding of \$17.5 million over 10 years, the *Energy Pipelines CRC* will initially focus on four areas of pipeline development, covering construction and maintenance, corrosion control, and public safety, through four distinct projects:

- More efficient use of materials for energy pipelines;
- Extension of the safe operating life of new and existing energy pipelines;
- Advanced design and construction of energy pipelines;
- Public safety and the security of supply of energy pipelines.

As well as researchers from APIA’s Research and Standards Committee, the Centre will include academics and researchers from; the Australian National University, Monash University, the University of Adelaide, and the University of Wollongong.

Ms Cartwright said Commonwealth encouragement of pipeline infrastructure is seen as a critical part of the nation’s battle to reduce carbon emissions – not only by increasing the use and security of supply of natural gas, but also by supporting the development of world-class carbon capture and storage (CCS) technologies.

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“It’s already well known that gas-fired power generation has less than half the greenhouse gas emissions of coal-fired power generation, and the need for safe and reliable transportation of carbon dioxide has emerged as an area in which Australia can provide global leadership,” Ms Cartwright said.

“With most of the sites of major CO<sub>2</sub> ”capture” being significant distances from identified storage sites, efficient and secure transportation will clearly be critical to the success of this emerging technology,” she said.

“Many of Australia’s older transmission pipeline infrastructure is nearing the end of its initial “design life”, so the use of advanced materials technologies and innovative corrosion control techniques will be essential to ensuring safe and cost effective life extension for these pipelines.”

Mr Leigh Fletcher, the Chairman of APIA’s Research and Standards Committee, said an important objective would be to advance corrosion prevention of pipelines to such a level that their design life would increase from around 40 years to 100 or more years – for existing as well as new energy pipelines.

“The new Centre will ensure that the required infrastructure needs can be met by providing technical solutions to critical issues, including fracture control of CO<sub>2</sub> pipelines and the prevention of hydrogen embrittlement,” he said.

“Advanced sociological research will also be undertaken with the goal of ensuring the continued safeguarding of the Australian public from any risk of pipeline failure, with the related public safety and loss of supply issues.

“The Energy Pipelines CRC will help to provide the foundation for the next generation of energy transmission pipelines.”

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