



Media Release
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ENA welcomes historic agreement on emergency response training for energy industry workers

Australia's energy companies have welcomed an historic agreement between industry, government and unions providing new emergency response training protocols for electricity workers.

The move will create nationally consistent training and greater capacity for energy industry employees to move between States and Territories to perform their duties in crisis situations.

The National Refresher Training Recognition Protocol for Emergency Situations was signed at the Energy 21C conference at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre on Tuesday 8 September 2009.

Signatories were Martin Ferguson, the Federal Minister for Resources and Energy, George Maltabarow, Chairman of the Energy Networks Association, and Peter Tighe, National Secretary of the Communications Electrical Plumbing Union (CEPU).

Mr Ferguson said the agreement would allow workers' skills to be recognised and transferable across the nation, which would lead to greater efficiency and relief in crisis situations. The protocol will be implemented before the start of this year's bushfire season.

Mr Maltabarow said the protocol would ensure that by summer electricity distribution and transmission line workers would have access to nationally consistent refresher training creating a mobile workforce that could respond in emergencies. Over time, the training will extend to a broader range of electricity workers.

Mr Maltabarow said the ENA, the peak body representing gas and electricity distribution businesses throughout Australia, had consistently promoted the importance of rapid response and recognition of competencies in emergency situations.

He said the National Refresher Training Recognition Protocol for Emergency Situations was a major milestone that would have long-term benefits for the industry and the nation.

"The protocol commits the energy supply industry to a number of identified essential training competencies that will form the basis for longer-term labour mobility and skills," Mr Maltabarow added. "It demonstrates the energy industry's willingness to work with unions and government to develop a nationally harmonised approach to achieve industry efficiency, employee and public safety."

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