

## Benchmarking Summary Report: 2006

### Conduct of the survey

The HAN is comprised of workplace competency assessors from companies in the Australian hydrocarbons industry and from RTOs currently working in the industry. It aims to assist its members to move towards best assessment practice.

The benchmarking survey was drafted by Kevin Hummel, one of the facilitators of the network. Network members, including companies such as Santos, ExxonMobil and ConocoPhillips, reviewed the draft and agreed on the content and processes for the benchmarking program. Kevin Hummel undertook the collation and analysis of the raw data to protect confidentiality and reports from the survey do not include any identifying material.

Survey responses were received from both HAN members and non-member companies. A full report on the survey outcomes is provided to network members; this report is a summary for distribution to non-members.

Queries should be made to either the:

- HAN Coordinator, Celeste Howden celeste@m्लाust.com or
- HAN Facilitator, Kevin Hummel kevin@ttaps.com.au.

### Scope

The benchmarking program aims to:

- provide a basis of measuring against industry leaders
- assist HAN members to achieve superior performance
- identify, use and cultivate best practice
- supplement continuous improvement.

The results of this survey include data from companies covering:

- large and small sites/plants (from 11 to 370 operations personnel)
- on shore and off shore
- new and old plants (<1 to 57 years of operation)
- gas, liquid and oil plants.

### Assessment patterns

The survey requested details of assessment systems and practices. The results indicate that on average:

- the ratio of assessors to assessees (operators) is 1:6
- the face to face component of an assessment takes an average of 2 hours for each participant (eg assessor, assessee, subject matter expert)
- additional time is required by the assessor for preparation, reviewing the evidence and recording
- additional time is required by the assessee for preparing evidence

The allocation of time was identified as one of the main difficulties of the assessment process. One HAN member company is currently working to quantify a 'recommended time' for assessing.

## The assessors

Who is the 'typical' assessor? What does a 'typical' assessor do? Assessors are generally nominated for the role; they will typically be a senior operator or person of equivalent technical expertise. As well as performing their technical role, being an assessor typically requires them to:

- ask assessment questions
- check evidence and validate its authenticity
- do field assessments
- provide mentoring to operators who are learning the job

While all the respondent companies provide assessment tools and banks of assessment questions, the assessors are involved in validation activities to continuously improve both the assessment tools and processes.

All work place assessors in the respondent companies are qualified; all holding the BZS401, BZS402 and BZS403 units. A small number hold the full BSZ Certificate IV; and several hold the TAA04 units designed for workplace trainers/assessors.

## Awarding qualifications

All companies in the survey align their training and assessment to the PMA02 Chemical, Hydrocarbons and Oil Refining Training Package enabling their operators to achieve a Certificate II, III or IV qualification, depending on their job role.

None of the respondents is an RTO<sup>1</sup> in their own right. Instead they work with an external RTO who provides quality assurance and awards the qualifications to successful candidates.

## Drivers for assessing

Respondent companies identify a range of drivers for competency assessment. The top four drivers are:

1. To demonstrate regulatory compliance
2. Meet enterprise standards/internal safety agenda
3. Recertification of existing workers is required for present job
4. Internal consistency of evaluation of the workforce.

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<sup>1</sup> RTO – Registered Training Organisation – only organisations meeting the quality standards (RTOs) may award recognised qualifications.