New pipe handling technology improves personnel safety and efficiency

New technology that can be operated remotely and increases the rate of loading and unloading of pipe has won the 2019 APGA Safety Award.

Handling coated pipe can be risky for people and also for the pipe, but new technology developed by Qube has enabled the process to be undertaken without the need for humans to be nearby. Loading and unloading is also able to be done more quickly.

This new development earned Qube the 2019 APGA Safety Award.

Vacuum lifting technology has been around for some time, and single lift vacuum units have been used within the pipeline industry to load and unload the trucks that carry pipes from ports to the field.

Qube teamed up with Vacuworx® to take this technology a step further, developing a multi-lift vacuum unit which could be used on a larger scale to eliminate and minimise risks associated with pipe handling on board vessels during discharge, and in storage yards.

The result was a multi-lifter that could be operated by remotely through wireless technology, eliminating the need for hooks, slings or chains and for a tag line of operators on the ground or in the hold of vessels. This greatly increases safety for personnel.

The process also eliminates the risk of damage to delicate materials and bonded coatings on the pipe.

With no need for hooks and slings, and people at a safe distance, the technology enables faster lift cycles and less downtime than conventional methods. Air sensing technology is used to determine whether a pipe is underneath the pad or not, this allows for the system to lift pipe without requiring a full load.

Damage from impact and from hooks dropping on pipes is also reduced and as the pipe ends are kept clear, there is a reduced possibility of damage to their bevelled edges, an important safety consideration.

Contact: John Field 0418 819527
john@fieldpr.com.au