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## JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

# Energy supply essential during COVID-19 challenges

The Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration (APPEA) and Australian Workers' Union (AWU) are jointly calling on the government to ensure the oil and gas industry can continue to maintain vital and essential energy supplies to the nation in the event of more stringent lockdowns.

APPEA Chief Executive Andrew McConville said: "Our industry provides vital energy resources and inputs to millions of Australian homes, major manufacturers, businesses, electricity suppliers and public facilities.

"It's essential we continue to do so and, accordingly, we are treating the operational challenges posed by COVID-19 very seriously. Our industry's first priority is always safety."

AWU National Secretary Daniel Walton said it was the health and safety of those in the oil and gas industry that would secure the energy supply across the country.

"Now more than ever we must maintain the industry's ability to operate safely and maintain gas supply to the industries, downstream manufacturers, businesses, electricity suppliers and households that depend on it," Mr Walton said.

"That means avoiding taking the industry offline but ensuring that those who work in it – many of whom operate in regional and remote areas – are kept safe.

"The oil and gas industry underpins some 80,000 jobs. The resilience of the oil and gas industry during this crisis will be essential to maintaining the health of our economy."

Around 75 per cent of east coast energy supply is from onshore gas development, located in remote and regional Queensland and South Australia, while the Gippsland Basin, Western Australia and the Northern Territory all have substantial gas developments powering our national economy.

These projects supply critical energy inputs as well as vital economic and employment activity in regional Australia.

APPEA and the AWU have committed to working with all Australian governments to ensure security of energy supply and maintain the industry as a key engine of economic stability.

Through APPEA, the oil and gas industry is establishing protocols – and, where necessary, dispensations – to allow the movement of essential FIFO workers, under strict conditions and health requirements, between operations and their homes in other states.

"Access to workers and those with specialist skills when required will be critical to preserving the operational capability and safety of our gas producing assets. It will ensure a strong base after this crisis is over from which the Australian economy can start to rebuild," Mr McConville said.

“These protocols are critical to giving assurance to local communities and to state and federal governments that the industry is ensuring that community safety and wellbeing is maintained while ensuring the delivery of critical energy needs.”

The oil and gas sector is critical to Australia’s current security and economic future – and APPEA and the AWU will work together to ensure that governments of all levels understand this.

The oil and gas sector is essential to Australia’s core economic, energy, social and national security needs and must be allowed to operate under any future lockdowns.

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About APPEA

APPEA is the peak national body representing Australia’s upstream oil and gas exploration and production industry. Learn more [www.appea.com.au](http://www.appea.com.au)

About AWU

The AWU represents members working in manufacturing, steel, aluminium, glass, oil and gas, aviation, agriculture and other major industries. Learn more [www.awu.net.au](http://www.awu.net.au)