

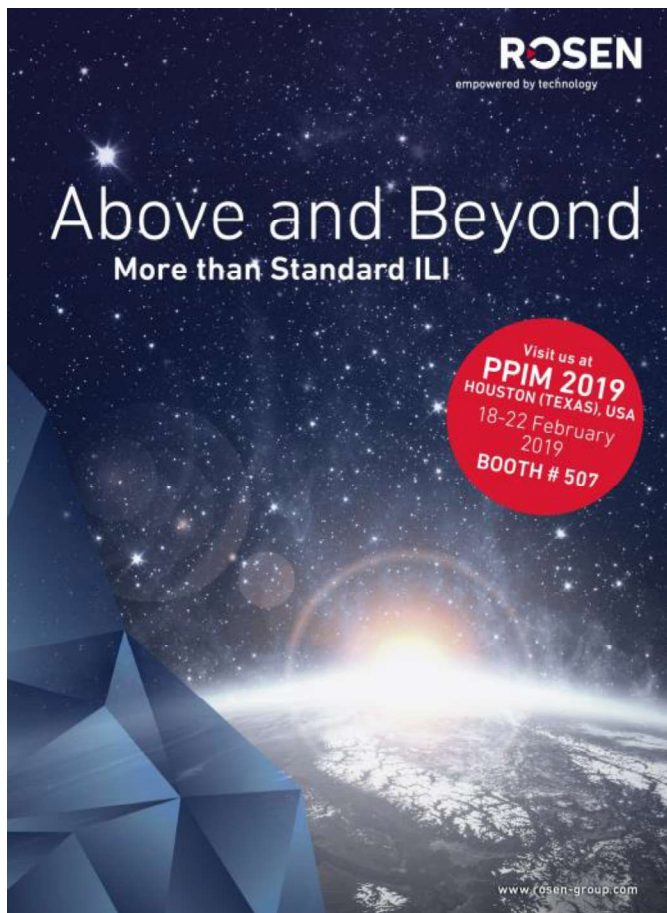
Competency Standards – what are they, how did they come about, and why do we need them?

In a nutshell:

Regulations are necessary and everywhere in the pipeline business – and they consistently state that all our engineers must be both “competent” and “qualified” to do their jobs. The problem is... we have little guidance on how to prove that our engineers are in fact competent and qualified. Same goes for our standards: most pipeline standards state that all staff working on a pipeline should be competent and qualified to do their jobs but do not explain how to demonstrate this. This means organizations in the pipeline business must define their own competency standards for engineers. This leads to difficulties: there is no benchmark to compare these standards to and no agreement on process or quality. Time for change?



Elements that comprise competency



“Competence” – briefly defined

“Competence” is a combination of skills (the ability to perform a task), knowledge (the ability to understand and explain a task), experience (the type, years, supervision committed to obtaining said knowledge) and behavior.

An individual’s competencies are assessed against a so-called competency standard. Competency standards provide a common definition of a competency and contain the required skills, knowledge and experience.

“Qualified” means a competence has been assessed (evaluated). Clearly, to be called qualified in a competency, an individual must pass an assessment.

Standardizing competence

The competencies of field operators and technicians are detailed in standards (e.g. the American standard ASME B31Q), but there are no generally recognized competency standards for engineers. The Education Systems and Services Group at ROSEN has now begun to fill this gap by creating the Competency Standards Manual for engineers specializing in pipeline integrity management.

This manual lists 51 competencies at various competency levels. Each competency standard consists of:

- An identifier.
- A title (for example “Pipeline Inspection and Surveillance”).
- A competence level (such as awareness, foundation, practitioner or expert).
- A basic description of the competency requirements and the competency gained.
- A purpose/goal of the standard.
- The specific skills and knowledge elements of the competency.
- An outcome that states what the individual with this competency should know, understand, value or be able to do once he/she has gained this specific competency.
- Any academic or professional qualifications required before this competency can be gained.
- Any pre-requisites or co-requisites needed before attempting this competency.
- Any training, mentoring and/or experience recommended to gain the competency.

The various elements of each competency are described in the manual. Competence levels, for example, are identified to have 4 stages, which include: Awareness, Foundation, Practitioner, and Expert.

The development of these competency standards took place in conjunction with the so-called Competence Club (<http://qualificationpanel.com>). An integral element of this club is the collaborative work with the independent qualification panel, which consists of a group of individuals that are all experts in their respective field and all independent from any pipeline operator. This allowed for a more holistic approach

when creating the requirements published in the Competency Standards Manual. In turn, the Competence Club provides a platform for learning and assessing the defined standards.

Just a heads-up

Of course there is even more to it than the Competency Club and The Competency Standards Manual. These are only building blocks. The 51 competencies can be grouped to create a set of requirements for specific roles within the industry. Taking this one step further, again with the help of the qualification panel, an initial list of six grouped competencies came to fruition – these are called Qualification Descriptors. Each of these descriptors has a dedicated list of competency standards. Up to this point, there has been very little guidance on how to ensure and prove staff are competent and qualified, the Competence Club, Competency Standards Manual, and the Qualification Descriptors are a beginning. ●

TDW closure gets the ProSeries™ Advantage

The D2000 Quick-Actuating Closure from T.D. Williamson (TDW) had a lot going for it: Market-leading sales and a solid track record of providing safe and efficient access to pipelines worldwide.

But the global pipeline services provider found a way to make it even better. In November 2018 TDW commercialized the D2000 with what it calls the ProSeries™ Advantage, strategically standardizing materials and processes. Now, the product operators know and trust meets more specifications, fits more applications, complies with more codes as standard and is available with a shorter lead time—just four weeks for 4-inch through 30-inch sizes.

In addition to meeting operators' needs, the D2000 also complies with the stringent requirements of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) and Department of Transportation (DOT). This is accomplished through a split-code approach that satisfies both the ASME and DOT criteria. With the ProSeries Advantage, the D2000 is:

- Available in 600-pound pressure class and both 0.5 and 0.6 design factors.
- Manufactured from NACE-MRO175-compliant material.
- Compliant with CSA Z662 Category 1 and ASME B31.4/31.8
- Standard ASME BPVC Sec. VIII DIV 1 U-Stamp on door
- Standard operating temperature range is -45°C to +121°C (-50°F to + 250°F).

The ProSeries Advantage doesn't change the way the D2000 looks or functions—for example, it can still be opened or closed in a single motion while the operator

stands safely to the side. Quality and reliability are also as high as ever, said Troy Geren, Senior Product Manager, Pigging Products.

“The D2000 is a trusted, robust and high integrity product that is preferred because of its performance and longevity,” Geren said. “The ProSeries Advantage takes it to the next level, ensuring consistent quality throughout the manufacturing process and giving operators exactly what they want, when they want it.”

According to Geren, ease of use, safety and simple maintenance have made the D2000 the leading closure on the market for years. For example, while it takes two or three people to operate most other closures, the D2000 is opened and closed by a single operator. In addition, the D2000 closure's pressure warning system signals the presence of pressure in the trap.

The D2000 is also designed for straightforward cleaning and lubrication, with important parts in plain view and readily accessible.



TDW's D2000 Quick-Actuating Closure ●

Pipeline Technology Conference announces Keynote Speakers

From 18-21 March 2019 Europe's leading pipeline conference & exhibition, the Pipeline Technology Conference, will take place for the 14th time. The conference program comprises a series of plenary sessions, panel discussions, technical sessions, side conferences, seminars, workshops and round table talks. More than 800 delegates from 50 different countries and 80 exhibitors will attend ptc 2019. The following pipeline operators will give keynote speeches at the conference: Nord Stream 2, TurkStream, TANAP, Open Grid Europe, Gascade, OMV, Shell, BPA, Eni, Petrobras. A total of 35 international pipeline operators have already confirmed their participation as delegate - many more will follow during the next weeks. For more information on the conference setup and the accompanying exhibition please visit <https://www.pipeline-conference.com>. ●