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MOU SIGNING SPARKS COMMENCEMENT OF GLADSTONE HYDROGEN ECOSYSTEM PROJECT

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Hydrogen in the Gladstone Region is one-step closer, with the historic signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for a Gladstone H_2 Ecosystem.

Sumitomo Australia (Sumitomo), Gladstone Ports Corporation (GPC), Gladstone Regional Council (GRC), Australian Gas Networks (AGN) as part of the Australian Gas Infrastructure Group (AGIG) and CQUniversity Australia (CQU) have joined forces to explore opportunities to develop a hydrogen ecosystem in Gladstone. The ecosystem will initially pursue domestic offtake and mobility solutions before moving to enable large-scale export.

GPC Acting CEO Craig Walker said Australia's National Hydrogen Strategy and Queensland's Hydrogen Strategy sets a vision for a clean, innovative, safe and competitive industry that benefits all Australians.

"Australia is uniquely positioned to be a world class hydrogen energy generator and exporter," Mr Walker said.

"With an exceptional Port and the ability for the region to develop an abundance of clean energy, Gladstone is positioned to be Australia's leading hydrogen export location by 2030."

Gladstone Region Mayor Matt Burnett said he welcomes the development to the region, supporting the scale up from domestic generation and utilisation, to large-scale generation and export.

"From a community perspective this is great news for our region," Cr Burnett said.

"We are perfectly positioned to establish Australia's first hydrogen ecosystem, and we have five parties that are fully committed to seeing this through to fruition. Gladstone has an excellent track record for development, the early opportunities in domestic gas offtake and mobility are very exciting."

The MOU, signed at Gladstone Entertainment Convention Centre, sets out a three-phased plan, commencing in 2021, with the key end goal by 2030 to see hydrogen exported from Gladstone to the world.

Yoshikazu Ishikawa, Managing Director of Sumitomo Australia Pty Ltd said the three-phased approach allowed tangible milestones, positioning Gladstone as an industry leader in hydrogen utilisation and technology.

"Sumitomo Australia Pty Ltd is pleased to be working with an esteemed group of stakeholders who share our common vision of a Hydrogen Ecosystem in Gladstone. Uniquely positioned with a world class Port, exceptional solar radiance, skills, knowledge and technology, Gladstone is a strategic location with significant hydrogen potential to benefit both Australia and Japan."

AGIG's CEO Ben Wilson said we are proud to build on our existing partnership with the Queensland Government on Hydrogen Park Gladstone (HyP Gladstone) to bring us further closer to our vision to convert our gas networks and cities to renewable hydrogen.

"HyP Gladstone is an important stepping stone to achieving our vision for full network decarbonisation with hydrogen across the regions we serve. The project aims to blend up to 10% hydrogen into Gladstone's entire existing gas network with plans to be fully operational next year" Mr Wilson said.

"AGIG is excited to be participating in this important project with these key strategic partners and are looking forward supporting Gladstone's vision to be a key hub for Queensland's domestic and hydrogen export industry, just as it is for natural gas today."

With the intention to see hydrogen utilised and broadly adopted within the region, CQU is excited for the opportunity to collaborate with major industry in the region on transitioning equipment and vehicles to hydrogen power.

Professor Nick Klomp, Vice-Chancellor and President of CQUniversity said that the University is keen to further develop its capabilities in this space through purpose-built facilities that support bespoke training, teaching and research and development.

"CQUniversity is ready to play an active role in the emerging hydrogen fuel and renewable technology sectors, and there is no better place to strengthen our capability and partnerships than right here in Gladstone.

"The University is rapidly developing its research expertise and training capability within hydrogen and advanced manufacturing, and we are committed to working with our partners to support their current and emerging workforce and technical needs," said Professor Klomp.

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