MATTHEW*

Matthew is an Electrical and Instrumentation Technician with a CERT III in Electrotechnology Electrician, and CERT IV hazardous areas qualifications. He has worked on various vessels in the offshore oil and gas industry, and spoke to the ETU about his work on a Dynamic Positioning (DP) vessel equipped for pipe-laying and heavy lifting operations. On that vessel, Matthew ran power and communication cables for communications and monitoring systems, performed isolation testing and electrical installation for J-Lay equipment, and a range of other work.

While on the DP vessel, Michael and his colleagues were supervised by a foreign qualified electrician who showed a clear lack of technical knowledge:

> *"...We'd be just doing basic stuff and like wiring up lighting to install on out in the back deck – just wiring it in series. There wasn't much to it. And this this guy had wired these up - and it was like: 'you realise that's not gonna work. That's actually gonna cause issues'."*

A significant weakness of the offshore safety regime is the way that it sets safety standards through individual safety cases for each vessel. Unlike with the WHS Act, which supports consistent requirements for high risk work licencing and consistent duties, there is no common safety standard for workers moving between workplaces. As Michael observed, this produced significant gaps in safety practice on the DP vessel:

> *"This is probably the first time that I've really noticed anything like a big skills gap - was on that DP vessel. And you kind of see that the DP vessel was kind of rushed together - like they pulled guys from different vessels, different Saipan vessels to come and to come together to get the DP running.*
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> *And you could kind of tell who those who the guys were that had come from a Saipan background and knew what their procedures and protocol were; and you can see the guys that this is their first Saipan job."*

*A pseudonym