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ABB launches ABB Ability™ Augmented Field Procedures to drive worker safety and efficiency across the energy sector

The company has developed an innovative augmenting technology aimed at digitalizing the field operator experience and improving interaction between field and control room operations.

Developed specifically to meet the needs of field operators, the technology will empower seamless integration between the field and the plant distributed control system offering improved safety, reducing the risk for human error and making field operations more efficient.

With more than 20 per cent of industrial downtime¹ reportedly due to human error, ABB Ability™ Augmented Field Procedures will enable consistency when executing manual procedures, standardizing operating procedures and maintenance or repair techniques in the field, tightening field to control room integration and digitally recording notes to ensure operational knowledge is captured and utilized.

Unlike traditional paper-based operating procedures, the technology enables interactive execution of procedures using a mobile device to guide operators through each step in a consistent, effective and safe way.

“Human error continues to be a significant contributing factor to safety issues, as well as production down time, said Chris Naunheimer, Digital Lead, Energy Industries, ABB. “Engineers spend considerable time using and interpreting data. With this solution, we intend to address these challenges and truly transform the future of work.”

Operatives will be able to access hands-free, real-time data related to plant assets, processes or procedures using industrial tablets, smart phones and Microsoft HoloLens glasses, increasing real-time collaboration and enabling immediate data entry from the user interface in the field.

Created in collaboration with industry majors, the system can be used in any industrial environment, in greenfield and brownfield sites, for start-up, routine maintenance, and shutdown activities.

Naunheimer continued: “ABB worked with customers to develop a solution aimed at making operational site procedures more consistent, data-driven and digitally led. Our solution ensures these procedures are in place for field workers performing tasks when and where they need them. This increases safety and operational efficiency and leads to significant OPEX savings for our customers.”

Supporting operators across oil, gas, chemical, process, power and water sectors, it will help transform plant operational procedures, putting the power of digitalization, mobility, and connectivity into the hands of field workers.

The solution is an example of ABB’s support of workforce management enterprise applications designed to allow workers to work anywhere and manage the system on their own.

Naunheimer concluded: “During these challenging times, it is more important than ever to balance worker safety with productivity. ABB is committed to supporting both: protect people, while enabling business continuity and continued running of essential services, through providing remote access and digital tools and solutions.”

ABB Energy Industries is dedicated to driving safer, smarter and more sustainable projects and operations, engineering innovative and integrated solutions that digitalize, automate and electrify industry. We connect our people and technologies to help customers succeed for life and communities to advance.

ABB Industrial Automation ABB's Industrial Automation business offers a broad range of products, systems and solutions for customers in the process and hybrid industries. These include industry-specific integrated automation, electrification and digital solutions, control technologies, software and lifecycle services, as well as measurement and analytics, marine and turbocharging offerings. ABB's Industrial Automation business is #2 in the market globally. With deep domain knowledge, experience and expertise, ABB Industrial Automation helps customers increase their competitiveness, improve their return on investment and run safe, smart and sustainable operations.

ABB (ABBN: SIX Swiss Ex) is a technology leader that is driving the digital transformation of industries. With a history of innovation spanning more than 130 years, ABB has four, customer-focused, globally leading businesses: Electrification, Industrial Automation, Motion, and Robotics & Discrete Automation, supported by the ABB Ability™ digital platform. ABB's Power Grids business will be divested to Hitachi in 2020. ABB operates in more than 100 countries with about 144,000 employees. www.abb.com

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¹ Vanson Bourne Global Study