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Press release

SPIE opens dedicated Overhead Line Engineering Training Centre in Cumbria

- **SPIE UK Training Centre aims to close the existing skills gap within the engineering industry**
- **SPIE UK's first training centre dedicated to Overhead Line Engineering in the UK**

**12 May 2016, London, UK** - SPIE's Distribution and Transmission business has opened a dedicated Overhead Line Engineering Training Centre in Penrith, Cumbria. Following a nationally recognised Level-3 Training Programme, it aims to tackle a recognised skills gap in the industry and has been accredited by the EU.



The centre has been opened at Newton Rigg College, part of Askham Bryan College, one of the leading land-based colleges in the UK and the largest provider of specialist land-based further education in England. The three-year placement course designed specifically for apprentices has been established in line with SPIE's UK-wide operations. Graduating students will have the opportunity to join SPIE, one of the largest Overhead Line Engineering businesses nationally.

Teaching will begin with off-the-job training in the classroom and in a purpose built and designed training field. Off-site learning exercises will take place at a number of SPIE-managed UK locations. This 36-month immersive scheme invests in training SPIE's workforce, for today and for the future.

Wes Johnson, Principal for Newton Rigg College, comments: "We are thrilled to welcome SPIE UK to the Newton Rigg campus as the venue for their new training centre, we look forward to a long and mutually beneficial relationship. There are many symbiotic features of the training at the linesman academy and that of our own land based students, in terms of practical skills for the linesman such as ATV and chainsaw use, whilst our land management students will gain a much better understanding of the electricity network supply lines that are a feature of the rural landscapes they will manage in the future."

Mike Snee, Distribution & Transmission Operations Director for SPIE UK, says: "This strategically important initiative demonstrates our leadership in the industry and commitment to reducing a widening industry skills gap. It will also boost the expertise of SPIE's workforce; our apprentices will receive the best-in-class training, and in the future will be able to provide an invaluable contribution to our nationwide Overhead Line Engineering team."

HS&E Advisor and Training Centre Manager for SPIE UK, Jack Foubister, adds: "With the first year's programme now underway we're already thrilled with the progress being made. SPIE is dedicated to the power sector and to maintaining a skilled workforce, and the work that is currently ongoing at

the Training Centre is testament to our commitment and desire to remain a leader in the Overhead Line business."

An official opening ceremony for the new training centre was held on 4<sup>th</sup> May at Newton Rigg College. David Mills, Head of Learning & Development for SPIE UK, comments: "We were delighted to officially open our new Overhead Line Engineering Training Centre. The official opening, attended by Gauthier Louette, Chairman and CEO of SPIE Group, James Thoden van Velzen, CEO for SPIE UK and Steven Nanda, Managing Director for SPIE UK's Industrial Services business, gave everyone present the chance to tour the facilities, as well as seeing our 2016 intake of apprentices in action on the training field and in the classroom. We look forward to supporting their development for the duration of their apprenticeship training and seeing them progress within our business and their future careers."

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