

Venkat Pattabathula

1982 - Graduated with master's degree in chemical engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT). A certificate from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA in 2000.

Joined as Graduate Engineer Trainee (GET) at KRIBHCO, Hazira, Surat in India and underwent two-year training at IFFCO Kalol ammonia/urea plants. Then worked as operations engineer in the commissioning of two trains of 1350 mtpd ammonia plants designed by then MW Kellogg and four trains of 1100 mtpd urea plants designed by Snamprogetti. From there, went to work for SABIC in the greenfield ammonia project of a 1500 mtpd ammonia plant, designed by MW Kellogg and EPC by Toyo Engineering. Worked as shift engineer where more than 3 million tonnes of ammonia were produced over 6 years.

Migrated to Australia and worked as a project engineer at ICI Botany in NSW and followed by another employment as Process Development Engineer at an ammonia-urea facility of Incitec Ltd in Brisbane, Australia for 6 years. Took another assignment with Agrium U.S.Inc. as a senior process engineer at Borger, TX in USA for 4 years where I was part of ammonia team of the corporation that operated with all kinds of ammonia/urea process technologies.

Joined Incitec Pivot in Australia in 2004 as ammonia technologist and got promoted as global ammonia technology manager after the acquisition of plants at Phosphate Hill and worldwide Dyno Nobel operations. Involved in a mega ammonia project of 2300 mtpd designed & engineered by KBR at Waggaman, Louisiana, USA and commissioned in 2016.

During the last 16+ years with IPL, played a key role in various manufacturing improvement projects and high-level technical support to NH₃/urea plants across the company which included several debottlenecking projects.

Major Projects

Served as project engineer, process engineer, project manager, commissioning engineer and operations engineer at various stages of major ammonia/urea projects in India, the Middle East, Australia, and North America. Also involved in numerous revamps which brought ammonia and urea plants to >150%. Part of the project team in the relocation of an ammonia plant from North America to Australia which included design reviews, hazop studies, commissioning and troubleshooting of the relocated ammonia plant.

Main areas of interest are – technology selection, process design, project management, process safety, process engineering, HAZOP studies, plant retrofits, commissioning, troubleshooting, renewable energy related H₂, NH₃ projects and energy efficiency improvements.

A chartered professional engineer (CPE) of Engineers Australia and a registered professional engineer of Queensland (RPEQ) and a life member of American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE). Elected to the AIChE Ammonia Safety Committee in 2005 and has been on the committee since then. Appointed to the Editorial Advisory Board of Chemical Engineering Progress (CEP) magazine of AIChE.

Published >130 papers with a focus on NH₃ process safety, plant incidents and technology developments. Also, written a chapter titled “Ammonia” for Kirk-Othmer Encyclopedia of Chemical Technology.

In 2020, started a consultancy firm known as “SVP Chemical Plant Services” in providing technical services to ammonia/urea industry across the globe.

Contact Information

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