

What makes protection particularly difficult for BP Texas City?

Randy Walker and Geoffrey Gioja were requested to comment on any significant differences they saw between BP Texas City and other refinery and/or chemical facilities where they have worked on safety issues. These are their observations:

1. We have never seen an organization with such a history of leadership changes over such a short period of time. Even if the rapid turnover of senior leadership were the norm elsewhere in the BP system, it seems to have had a particularly strong effect at Texas city. Between the B P/Amoco merger, then the BP turnover coupled with the difficulties of governance at an integrated site, and finally adding in the complexities of the Newco separation, there has been little organizational stability. This makes the management of protection very difficult. One of the consequences seems to be much more resignation than the "this too shall pass" attitude that exists to some degree in any organization.

That is why it is so critical that this leadership team has taken up this issue now with such courage and public visibility. That is also why so many people either said things like, "We will make the bold goals as long as Don Parus is here," as well as expressing the idea again and again that refineries are safer when the management team stays in place for five to seven years. Now, there is the organizational stability and leadership present to get through the resignation to a different operating reality.

2. We have also never seen such intensity of worry among the people "closest to the valve" about the potential for fires, explosions, and other catastrophic kinds of events. (This was especially true at the refinery.) At other facilities where we have worked, the integrity of pipes or vessels or aspects of process safety were of concern but more in the context of business conversations about the life of equipment. At these other facilities, focus on individual safety felt more appropriate to people. Here, to many people it seemed like the managers were not nearly worried enough about the "real" dangers and "too worried about seat belts", etc. People felt like individual safety was more closely managed because it "counted" for or against

managers on their current watch (along with budgets,) and that it was more acceptable to avoid costs related to integrity management because the consequences might occur later, on someone else's watch.

5000 as? ||| At the same time, the concern about equipment conditions was not just expressed by operators and others close to the equipment. It was also strongly expressed by senior members of the contract thing community, who pointed out many specific hazards in the work environment that they said you would never encounter at Shell, Chevron, Exxon, etc. The more expert interviewees (engineers, inspectors, etc) voiced the same strong concern, as did superintendants and certain leadership team members.

In our view, the organization's lack of knowledge of or tolerance of these kinds of risks must contribute to the tolerance of risks you see in individual behavior. The combination of the two must account for our last observation, which is that we have never heard so many people say they were personally afraid of injury to themselves, as opposed to feeling concerned for safety more in general terms.

Recommendations:

Concluding remarks (?)