

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and committee members. I am Graham Harris Graham. My counsel, with me today, is Philip Hilder. At the Committee's request, I will address my experiences as Vice President of Operations at Imperial Sugar Company and focus on the conditions that I witnessed at the Port Wentworth and Gramercy Imperial Sugar facilities. I will further address description of any actions that I recommended to abate unsafe work conditions. I am still employed as the Vice President of Operations for the Imperial Sugar Company.

By way of background, in 1987 I graduated with a degree in electrical and electronics engineering from, University of Strathclyde, in Glasgow, Scotland. I have multi-national experience in several different industries, including steel, pulp & paper, packaging, automation and food & drink. In more recent years, I have helped turn around distressed companies by improving their operations, efficiency, and financial performance.

I began my current position in November 2007. As Vice President of Operations, I am responsible for many areas within the company, including manufacturing, logistics, quality and customer service. Within a few weeks of joining Imperial's upper management team, I began touring its facilities in Georgia and Louisiana.

I spent five (5) days walking through the 300 acre Port Wentworth, Georgia refinery in early December 2007; the conditions were shocking. Port Wentworth was a dirty and dangerous facility. The refinery was littered with discarded materials, piles of sugar dust, puddles of liquid sugar and airborne sugar dust. Electrical motors and controls were encrusted with solidified sugar,

while safety covers and doors were missing from live electrical switchgear and panels. A combustible environment existed.

Fire protection equipment was sheathed in dust so thick it was impossible to determine if it was operable. Fire fighting huts, in faded, red paint, stored rotting hoses, fire extinguishers had not been checked in recent years, and employees could not remember the last time they participated in a fire drill or fire fighting training.

Due to the dangerous conditions, customs and practices, I recommended firing the plant manager. Mr. John Sheptor, the Chief Operating Officer at the time, and Ms. Kay Hastings, the Senior Vice President of Human Resources, agreed with my recommendation. After firing the plant manager, I instructed the Operations Manager to identify safety violations, initiate a housekeeping blitz and begin a site-wide clean up. I sent Mr. Sheptor and Mr. Robert Peiser, Imperial's Chief Executive Officer, a bulleted list of my observations and recommendations.

The following week I spent five (5) days at the Gramercy, Louisiana refinery. I found similar problems; accumulations of sugar, sugar dust, airborne sugar, unlocked electrical rooms and missing safety apparatus, to name a few. I sent another bulleted list to Mr. Sheptor and Mr. Peiser regarding my findings at Gramercy.

In mid-January, I was called to a formal meeting with Mr. Sheptor and the Ms. Hastings. During that meeting, I was told an employee complained about language I used after a near slip and fall that I had while walking through Port Wentworth's basement. I was also informed that I was excessively eager in addressing the refinery's problems. Mr. Sheptor accused me of ruining his 11-

month relationship with Port Wentworth's management team, which he supposedly developed after two site visits. I was further instructed to make a peace offering to management at Port Wentworth and Gramercy.

I visited Port Wentworth approximately two weeks before the explosion. Housekeeping efforts were much improved. Port Wentworth's Safety Coordinators had identified over 400 safety violations since December. During a meeting I congratulated the management team on their efforts; however, there was still a long way to go. I reminded the management team of the November 2007 Domino Sugar explosion, which was caused by accumulated sugar dust. I also used the Texas City BP explosion where several workers were killed to stress the consequences of a fatal explosion to Imperial, the workers, and their families. Safety and housekeeping had to be a priority.

The next day I went to the Gramercy Plant. Gramercy's management team achieved similar improvements, but there were still issues to address, especially those related to accumulated sugar, sugar dust, and other critical safety-related matters. As with my prior visits, I sent Mr. Sheptor and Mr. Peiser summaries of my observations and expressed concerns for the employees' safety, especially those at Port Wentworth.

On the evening of Thursday, February the 7th, I was informed of the Port Wentworth explosion. I flew to Georgia the next day and spent a week observing the fires being put out and watching bodies being recovered from Port Wentworth's charred remains. Tony Thomas, one of the managers I met with two weeks earlier, was the last body recovered from the site. Over the next few weeks, I attended funerals for those that died in the explosion.

Since Port Wentworth's explosion, I have not participated in senior management team meetings and/or discussions regarding the disaster, the recovery, the investigation or the reconstruction. Rather, Mr. Sheptor tasked me with addressing Gramercy's deficiencies. At Gramercy, I overhauled the safety culture, systems, processes and procedures; led a massive housekeeping blitz; corrected hundreds of safety defects, initiated monthly fire drills; and developed and practiced an emergency evacuation plan. In March, I assisted OSHA during its inspection of the refinery, promptly correcting violations and infractions.

I intend to fully cooperate with this committee and welcome the opportunity to answer any questions that the Senators may have.