

S & LP S & G *Newsletter*

ISSUE 3

AUTUMN 1994

EDITOR'S REFLECTIONS

Greetings to all Safety and Loss Prevention (S & LP) Subject Group members. Was I elected as Newsletter Editor at the AGM in Grangemouth because I failed to attend? I'm not sure but my thanks to Gary Pilkington for launching the first two editions of the Newsletter and handing on to me his file of information. In fact, as an interim arrangement, Gary and I are producing this Newsletter together, with the printing and distribution being handled by headquarters staff at Rugby.

The Newsletter will seek to bring you a variety of news items together with general information about S & LP Subject Group activities. In addition it will contain details of some interesting publications, seminars and conferences. All readers are warmly encouraged to submit copy for potential inclusion in future issues of the Newsletter. Please forward this to myself at the address at the foot of the next column.

For the moment the presentation of the Newsletter will remain mostly unchanged.

Our competition for a new Subject Group logo only attracted five entries and at their meeting on the 24 August your committee felt that none of these were sufficiently attractive to merit adoption as part of our Newsletter masthead. If you are still nurturing an inspired submission then please forward it to me.

Initially the Newsletter will be published twice yearly in Autumn (1 October) and Spring (1 March). Articles for a given issue should reach me no later than six weeks before these dates but you are welcome to send me copy for the Newsletter at any time.

In this issue I have taken the liberty of expressing some of my own thoughts on current topics of general interest in "Back Page Comment".

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— Newsletter Editor.

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MEETING REPORT

Balance Between Safety and Environmental Criteria

This was a joint meeting between the Safety and Loss Prevention and Environmental Protection Subject Groups held on July 1st at BP Chemicals, Grangemouth.. The Chairmen of both groups participated together with speakers from Zeneca, Exxon and HMIPI: 70 delegates were present.

The purpose of the meeting was to identify possible conflicts between the safety and environmental concerns in engineering projects. A significant comment by Rod Perryman was that chemical engineers must avoid giving any impression of superiority and should be sympathetic to the inevitable problems that many members of the public have in understanding complex technical issues.

The technical presentations of the morning were followed by a visit to the new £40 x 10⁶ effluent treatment factory at the BP refinery, Grangemouth.

Iain Mackay

Pressure Systems & Transportable Gas Containers Regulations 1989

The final phase of the staged introduction of these regulations should have been completed by 1 July 1994. If you use or supply steam vessels (or other pressure vessels for which pressure x volume is greater than 250 bar litres) then new requirements are placed upon you, including the need for annual inspections by "competent persons". If you need further information then Guidance on the Regulations is available from HSE, ISBN 0-11-885516-6, price £4.50. For 'phone/fax details, see "Back Page Comment."

SPARE A THOUGHT!

Have you ever thought about the duties of meeting organisers? A substantial effort is required to organise a well run Subject Group meeting. Our meetings are organised on a voluntary basis and speakers also offer their expertise free of charge. A little thought from attendees can make the organisers' job easier and enable him/her to concentrate on the job at hand.

DO:

ensure you send the completed registration form and remittance before the closing date

ensure the cheque is made out correctly

send your registration to the correct person at the right address

send an SAE if you require an acknowledgement

read the meeting details: these may answer your questions

thank the organisers and speakers if you think the meeting was a success.

DON'T:

phone the meeting organiser unless it is really necessary. Organisers have an ordinary job to do as well as their voluntary activities for the IChemE

ask for an invoice unless you really need it.

Your co-operation will be much appreciated.

A Meeting Organiser.

LEADING THE FIELD IN SAFETY TRAINING

The importance of training in the area of Safety and Loss Prevention cannot be overestimated. But who do you trust to train your employees in this key area? The IChemE believe they have the answer.

IChemE is a leading provider of safety training courses with over 20 years experience in the field. It provides a comprehensive suite of quality training courses, available through the Continuing Education Programme or as tailor-made in-company courses. All IChemE's courses are run by recognised experts in their chosen field, drawn from both academia and industry.

The courses vary from one to five days in length. Usually each course has between twelve and fifteen attendees and most courses are run with a mix of formal lecturing, tutorials and workshops, giving delegates the opportunity to learn from expert tuition and from the experiences of other course members.

IChemE aims to provide the courses you require. If there is an area where you feel there is a need for training they want to hear from you. So please call on the number given at the end. Remember IChemE is there to provide you with the services you require. Your contribution is vital in ensuring that IChemE remains at the forefront of Safety and Loss Prevention training.

Below are IChemE's courses for October to December 1994.

To receive details on any of the courses listed, or for further information on in-company training, simply fax the IChemE on +44 (0) 788 577182. Alternatively call Carol Davidson or Tony Watkins at IChemE on +44 (0) 788 578214. They look forward to hearing from you.

OCTOBER

**Understanding and Implementing
New Standards and Guidelines
in Process Safety**

Safe Handling of Industrial Chemicals

**HAZOP Study for Team Leaders
and Team Members**

NOVEMBER

Risk and Asset Management

**Preventing Mechanical Failure
and Electrical Hazards**

DECEMBER

Applied Hazard and Operability Study

Plant Reliability and Maintainability

Hazard Identification and Assessment.

PUBLICATIONS SEMINARS CONFERENCES

**24-26 Oct. 1994 (London) and
7-9 Nov. 1994 (Amsterdam)**

**Hazard and Operability Studies.
IBC. (071 637 4383)**

**10 Nov. 1994 Zeneca, Alderley Park
S&LP workshop on "Change Control"
Contact:
Mike Carpenter (IChemE) 0788 578214
or John Gillett (Zeneca) 0625 514206**

**16-17 Nov. 1994 (London)
Process Safety.
The European Dimension
IBC (071 637 4383)**

**5-6 Jan. 1995 (Edinburgh)
IChemE Research Event
(0788 578214)**

**6-9 June 1995 (Antwerp)
Loss Prevention and Safety Promotion
in the Process Industries
525th event of EFCE.**

**Process Safety Progress
(previously Plant/Operations Progress)
continues to be an invaluable source of
information. The July 1994 issue (vol 13, No
3.) contains articles on static electricity, dust
cloud flammability, reliability of interlock
systems, storage drum thermal runaway and
modelling of explosion effects.**

CHIP'S WITH EVERYTHING?

An interesting article on the proposed requirements of CHIP 2, Chemicals (Hazards Information and Packaging) Regulations by Lawrence Waterman and Karen Baxter appeared on pages 26/27 of the August 94 issue, volume 16, of Health and Safety at Work.

The proposed implementation date of CHIP 2, with a possible 6 month transition period, is January 1995. This will enable the UK to comply with the latest EC Directives as well as wider international rules, eg from the UN. Explosives and Pyrotechnics (which were exempt from CHIP 1) are to be included in CHIP 2 and a new category of "Sensitising Chemicals" is introduced (Editor's note: as one who experiences the occasional odd allergies from things as diverse as certain foodstuffs to particular washing powders, I can see it being a nightmare to define "Sensitising Chemicals".) CHIP 2 also introduces some minor changes to the required format of Material Safety Data Sheets and replaces the "Teratogenic" category of danger with that of "Toxic to Reproduction" - which should be more readily understood! Regulation 12 in CHIP 2 concerns "toxic", "very toxic" or "corrosive" materials which are sold to the public. These must be fitted with Child Resistant closures and Tactile Danger warnings.

The consultative document on the CHIP 2 regulations is available from HSE books, price £6. For 'phone/fax details, see "Back Page Comment."

BRAIN TEASER

We plan for each issue of the Newsletter to contain a puzzle which will test out the grey matter. The best answer will earn the author free registration at an S & LP one day meeting of his/her choice. Submissions of "Brain Teaser" problems (with solutions!) will be welcomed.

A man standing at the door of his house greets the postman coming up the road. "The product of the ages of my 3 daughters is 36 and the sum of their ages is the same as the number of the house opposite," he said. "Can you tell me their ages?"

The postman did some quick scribbling and then replied, "you have not given me enough information." The man considered for a moment and then said, "you are quite right: the eldest is a blond."

What are the daughters ages?

NB. Ages are to be expressed in integer values only.

GRAVEYARD HUMOUR?

Following the article "Having problems with VAT" on the back page of our last Newsletter, there was some understandable comment that it was inappropriate to joke about serious accidents.

Whilst I understand this viewpoint I don't share it wholly: there can be a place for humour but it must be sensitive and remote in time, and space, from the incident on which it is based. I was reminded of this by Professor Hermann Schreiner of FHT Mannheim who sent me an extract from the "Best of Gravestone Humour" by Louis S. Schafer, Sterling Publishing Co, New York 1990.

The following slice of history was recorded, almost sarcastically, on a tombstone in Girard Pennsylvania:

"In memory of
Ellen Shannon.
Aged 26 years
Who was fatally burned
March 21st 1870
by the explosion of a lamp
filled with R.E.Danforth's
Non-explosive
Burning fluids"

I wonder whether this was meant to be humorous? I think more likely it was a desire to expose a charlatan pedlar? At any rate, there's another lesson to learn. Never believe all you read, whoever writes it.

BACK PAGE COMMENT

It's a quiet Sunday afternoon and I'm sitting in the garden and enjoying the sun: it's 1.15 pm, more or less the same time of day as when a small group returned from lunch to the North wing of the main office block at Hickson and Welch's Castleford site on 21st September 1992. The report on the accident which, some 5 minutes later, blasted that North wing with a horrific jet fire from a still base some 55 metres distant is now published, ref. 1, and in fact I'm reading it as I write this.

It should be made compulsory reading for a wide range of people working, or planning to work, in the process industries. One of that small luncheon group, Sara Atkinson, died as a result of the fire, as did four other staff in an office/control room which was completely cut in two by the gigantic jet flame. It's very sombre reading.

The excellent HSE report on the subsequent accident investigation lists nine lessons which should be learned, or re-enforced, from this incident. Space does not permit all of these to be spelt out in full detail, but for me some of the most pertinent lessons are:

understand the thermal properties of residues

establish safe systems of work for all aspects of operation and maintenance

make a realistic assessment for the local potential for fire, explosion, and toxic release, and in light of this locate office/control rooms appropriately

give key personnel adequate resources (including time, budget, relief cover, etc.) to discharge fully their responsibilities.

With slimmed down workforces, and restructured management systems, many individuals now find themselves barely able to cope with their workload. In these circumstances the last point may be the key component leading to serious breaches of adequate safety procedures.

Reference:

"The fire at Hickson and Welch Ltd."
ISBN 0 7176 0702X, price £11.00
 available from HSE books
 via mail order.
 Phone 0787 881165 or 0787 313995.