Continuous Improvement and Existing Safety Instrumented Systems

Angela E. Summers, Ph.D., P.E.
SIS-TECH Solutions, LP
Houston, TX 77034 USA
Phone: 281-922-8324

Abstract

The historian John Lewis Gaddis defines strategy (Alden 1996) as "the process by which ends are related to means, intentions to capabilities, and objectives to resources." The goal of the process industry is no incidents, no harm to people, and no damage to the environment. This goal can only be reached by going beyond compliance and establishing safety as a strategic business value.

Safety instrumented system (SIS) design and management is a team effort requiring knowledge and skills from a variety of disciplines. A strong safety culture expects ownership and accountability at all levels of an organization throughout the process equipment life. Management should support continuous improvement to ensure existing safety instrumented system equipment is designed, maintained, inspected, tested, and operating in a safe manner. This paper will address the continuous improvement process and the effect of emerging good engineering practices on its interpretation.