Rail Ruminations for Process Safety Improvement

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Abstract

Process safety practices have undergone multiple refinements over the past few decades, but major accidents continue to occur. Most organizations strive to improve performance by strengthening existing methods or by adopting new and/or different approaches. Central to these continual improvement efforts is the practice of applying lessons learned as a means to drive out potential risk exposures. Often, lessons learned may be transferred from other industries; indeed, high-performing organizations regularly benchmark practices outside of their immediate industry.

In pursuit of continual process safety improvement, the paper examines various risk management practices in the Rail Industry, and explores how methods intended for managing passenger and public rail safety may be transferred to drive continual improvement of process safety. Rail safety has its roots in engineered safety solutions; modern practices have additionally embraced the human aspects of safety performance. Various approaches for rail safety assessment and risk management are described. Furthermore, practical applications of those approaches for the Process Industry are outlined.