The Taxonomy (Classification) of Process Safety

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ABSTRACT

The knowledge base of process safety has grown in the last ten years by leaps and bounds showing its increasing maturity, but bringing with it the perennial problem for its practitioners of finding the desired information among the myriad documents available. In this information age the problem is compounded by the excellent search engines available that can search for every word in a document. The more specialized the field, such as process safety, the more the recurring number of words. For example, searching for PHA would find tens of thousands of documents, the great majority of which wouldn’t be particularly relevant to our search. The way to narrow such searches is to define common keywords that will have a relevant meaning to the searcher and specifically include these keywords all published documents to enable the desired search.

It is proposed then to create a taxonomy (classification with dependencies) of the process safety knowledge to help solve this problem and thus gain access this knowledge that otherwise would be lost. The methodology to do this would be to propose an initial taxonomy and keywords for each section and let the process safety community help in reaching a consensus of when and what for these keywords would be used. To accomplish this a Wikipedia-type website would be established where process safety professionals would add their contributions under the proper heading. This paper will present the concept and an initial taxonomy, proposed keywords and initial definitions.