Safety Culture – Relationship to High Consequence/ Low Probability Events

Sunil Kumar G, Vinayak Paranjape, Sundararajan Rangarajan
Reliance Industries Limited,
Pataganga, Mumbai.
Email: sunil.g.kumar@ril.com

Abstract

Safety culture has been explained with different descriptions by various authors as a multifaceted subject. On rationalisation, most authors believe that safety culture of the organisation is determined by the human behavioural characteristics, technical knowledge and environment factors which leads to “Safety by Choice” rather than “Safety by Chance”.

Each high hazard processes has many inbuilt in-depth defence. This defence mechanism significantly reduces the high consequence incidents but the deficiency in knowledge & risk understanding and complacency of long spell of incident free operation by the team operating the plant leads to disasters which are of high consequence and low frequency.

We at Reliance believe that the safety performance of our High Hazard Processes depends on its Safety Culture demonstrated by the employees and management during the difficult times.

This paper is on the journey of safety cultural change of Reliance PMD plant from a “production” oriented operation to a “Safe production” (Safety by Choice) mind set. This has considerably changed the perception towards safety and improved its safety performance on high consequence and low frequency incidents through the safety programs which are implemented, practiced and improved upon on daily, weekly, monthly and yearly basis at Reliance PMD plant.