

**Effective Communication is Key to Safe Operations!**

**Shift Handover – Gaining an Accurate Understanding of Plant Status**

Oil and gas facilities are complex and hazardous systems relying on plant, equipment, and people to work together to achieve commercial goals in a safe and effective way. People need the information about the system for them to understand what is happening in the plant/ facility they are going to operate. Based on this information they determine when and what to do next. When this information is unavailable or unclear to them, failures then occur due to the wrong actions performed.

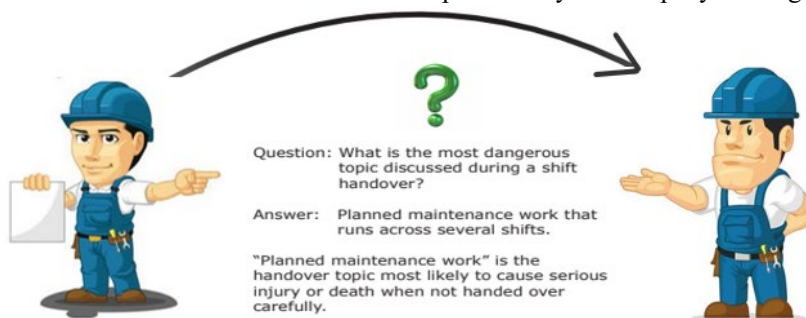


Several major accidents including Piper Alpha, BP Texas City, Buncefield and Deepwater Horizon happened due to shift communication failures.



Proper handover ensures a safe work environment continuity of operations between shifts. All critical information should be communicated from the outgoing shift to ensure that the incoming shift is well-informed and has an accurate, clear, and concise understanding of the status of all operations, works carried out by third parties, equipment bypassed or out-of-order.

Communication is often prone to failure as they can be incomplete or inaccurate; or the person on the receiving end misunderstood the meaning of the given information. It is most effective when it includes multiple methods of communication (both verbal and written), with sufficient time for clarification and is emphasized by the company as integral to safe operations.

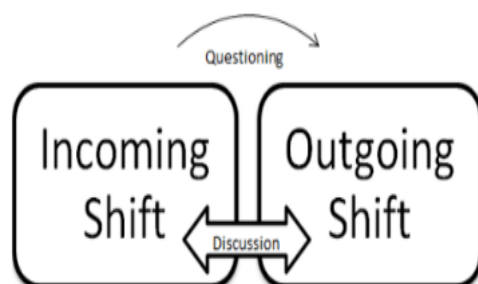


**An effective shift handover consists mainly of three elements:**

- A period of preparation by outgoing personnel.
- Handover where outgoing and incoming personnel communicate to exchange task-relevant critical information face-to-face.
- Cross-checking of information by incoming personnel as they assume responsibility for the task.

**To enhance the effectiveness in shift handover, the following arrangements should be made considered:**

- **Provision of support equipment** (structured written or electronic logs)
- **Implementing of procedures and/or standards for shift handover** indicating focussed handover elements like: Process Safety related issues including interlock bypass (if any), active work permits, plant/ equipment status, ongoing process activities, any special activity in progress, any planned activity for next shift etc.



Verbal communications (Yokogawa, 2015)

- **Allocation of time for incoming and outgoing shifts to handover face-to-face**
- **Plan and make arrangements to schedule maintenance within the shift**, or arrangements to control maintenance work that crosses shifts
- **Identifying high risk activity handovers**

References:

1. <https://www.icheme.org/media/8907/xxiv-paper-11.pdf>
2. <https://blog.yokogawa.com/blog/ensuring-quality-shift-handover> (Yokogawa, 2015)
3. [http://www.larkin.biz/data/Shift\\_Handover.pdf](http://www.larkin.biz/data/Shift_Handover.pdf)
4. Singapore Safety Case Assessment Guide Chapter 3 - Major Accident Prevention Policy (MAPP) and Safety & Health Management System (SHMS) Aspects of Safety Case Assessment (Technical Criterion 3.10)
5. Singapore Safety Case Assessment Guide Chapter 8 – Human Factors Aspects of Safety Case Assessment (Technical Criterion 8.1.3)

**An initiative of the SCIC Major Hazard Installation (MHI) Committee**

With the implementation of Safety Case regime progresses into its operational phase, this bulletin aims to promote effective sharing of information to support MHIs in a successful implementation that could deliver the expected safety performance improvement of our industry. For enquiries, please contact SCIC via [secretariat@scic.sg](mailto:secretariat@scic.sg)