

CHANGING PERCEPTIONS FOR PROCESS IMPROVEMENT BETWEEN SAFETY ANALYSIS AND SITE ORGANIZATIONS AT THE WASTE ISOLATION PILOT PLANT

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The most important lesson learned during preparation of the approved WIPP Contact Handled Safety Analysis Report (CH SAR) was the necessity to change perceptions about the objectives and intent of the safety analysis. The perception that safety analysis is a stumbling block to the progress of the project and that the Safety Analysis Organization is the enforcer or an obstacle to be overcome has not fostered cooperation between the site organizations. The change in this perception at the Waste Isolation Division has occurred gradually and in an iterative fashion and involved changes in attitudes by not only the site organizations but by Safety Analysis as well. One success has led to another and has fostered cooperation between site organizations and Safety Analysis. These small successes have helped to change the role of the Safety Analysis Organization from enforcement to partner and advisor on Nuclear Safety issues.

Benefits from this change in perception include the following:

- Cooperation between site organizations has resulted in Safety Analysis participation early in the design process. Safety Analysis was able to identify areas of concern and advise Engineering where passive design features were needed to reduce risk and/or eliminate potential accidents. This early involvement has been invaluable in the reduction of safety SSC's needed and thereby in the reduction of costs associated with the surveillance and maintenance of unnecessary SSCs.
- The establishment of good two-way communication between Safety Analysis, Engineering and Operations resulted in clearly defined objectives and goals at the earliest point and allowed efficient evaluation of the project. Ongoing Engineering and Operational input has been critical in expanding the safety envelope without impacting safety to the worker, the public and the environment.
- The use of ISMS principles by Safety Analysis to disseminate qualitative and quantitative associated risk back into the project as it progresses, and the corresponding continuous feedback from Engineering and Operations as design or process changes occur has reduced cost and promote shared ownership of the safety analysis by the entire facility.
- The end product is a truly user-friendly Safety Analysis Report which is appropriate and

sufficient for the facility. A matrix of procedures described in the SAR was identified for inclusion in the USQ procedure. This matrix makes identification of requirements and controls clear and understandable to USQ reviewers.