

Introduction

As process industry manufacturing plants continue to focus on reduced operating costs and outsourcing of functions such as maintenance and operation of plant and equipment, the risk of accidents occurring has been shown to increase, and on Seveso/COMAH sites this can lead to increased risk of major accidents, with subsequent increases in risk to human health, environmental and business continuity.

Regulatory risks can also increase due to outsourcing the operation of systems with environmental emissions such as on-site wastewater treatment or hazardous waste functions.

Organisational change risk assessment is a systematic approach that enables employers to manage the impact of organisational change on the control of safety hazards, including major accident hazards.

Case Study: Bulk API Manufacturing Facility

In 2010, AWN Consulting Ltd. was appointed to complete a risk assessment of organisational change at a Bulk API Manufacturing facility located in Ireland. The facility is classified as a 'lower tier' establishment under the Seveso II Directive.

The scope of the assessment completed by AWN addressed all safety hazards including major accident hazards.

The organisational change involved outsourcing of services at the bulk API manufacturing facility to a facilities management company. The services include maintenance of mechanical, electrical, solvent recovery and thermal oxidiser systems, and operation of a number of utility and treatment systems on-site.

An initial meeting was held with EHS management personnel in order to identify the scope of services and activities subject to organisational change and to screen out low risk activities from the risk assessment.

A workshop was held with personnel representing areas subject to change in order to identify the scope of activities and tasks to be outsourced, and potential safety issues and concerns.



An organisational change register was developed detailing roles and tasks subject to change, equipment and materials involved, and identifying hazards. A major accident hazards (MAH) register was developed and tasks with MAH potential were identified.

An organisational change risk assessment was conducted using the Human Error Assessment and Reduction Technique (HEART), and tasks subject to change were ranked according to human error potential. A report was prepared, and recommendations were made on measures to mitigate safety hazards.