An Oil and Gas operator’s journey to improving reliability in the organisation

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Objectives

Woodside is a major LNG producer with upstream oil and gas facilities and is continuing to grow substantially. This paper describes Woodside’s experience of improving production reliability using HRO principles and safety culture improvement methods. The reasons for initiating this approach ten year ago, the specific methods applied as well as successes and pitfalls will be discussed. Reliable performance of our existing operations, the safeguarding of our people, environment, assets, and reputation are vital to secure the funding to support our growth program.

Methods of implementation

The goal of improving reliability was initiated by one person and grew to a single facility focus, broadened to a divisional focus, and today is an organisational objective. A key priority was to align systems across different facilities within the Production division. Most importantly, the maintenance work process has been aligned, a single management of change system is applied to all facilities and alignment of the Permit to Work system has commenced and will be completed in 2010. An explanation will be provided of how the methods used have changed and why this is unusual. This systems focus has been complimented by using methods to promote a positive safety culture, including specific education on the concept of mindfulness at all job levels. A key principle of the journey has been making the improvements sustainable through consistency and integration, rather than adopting a program-based approach.

Results

The results include conventional lag indicators, staff perception survey results, integrity performance and production reliability. The ability to “internally” benchmark using automated data has allowed rapid identification of gaps, and “follow the leader” best practice sharing. The views of those involved in the initial work and broader implementation will be summarised to provide a range of insights into the views on the change in Woodside over time.

Conclusion

To assist other organisations thinking about improving reliability using HRO principles, the paper will discuss the most effective methods of implementation from Woodside’s experience as well as the issues inhibiting faster progress on improving reliability.