



COMAH2015 – Process safety management lecture post event report

17 March 2016 at STFC Daresbury

Organised by Process Industries Division, North West Centre

More than 30 people attended the event at the Daresbury site of the Science and Technology Facilities Council.

The programme for the evening had three parts. The event started with a presentation by Mr David Bogg about the site's facilities and titled "The STFC Campus Technology Hub - bridging the gap between concept and commercialisation". The CTH is a purpose-built engineering facility to provide a focal point where businesses, universities and research organisations can work in partnership to tackle engineering challenges.

The second part was a time-limited presentation under the requirements of the Viscount Weir Prize for new engineers. The presentation was made by Mr Martin Hooley, B Eng (Hons), IEng, Senior Mechanical Engineer of Amec Foster Wheeler Plc, at the Birchwood Centre. It was based on his paper "Dropped load – design, development and assessment of a solution" about the removal of spent nuclear fuel from a research reactor that was undergoing defueling and decommissioning. Feedback showed that the presentation was very informative and similar styles of short-paper presentations were requested at future events.

The third part was the prestigious lecture on process safety leadership in the process industries. 2015 was the tenth anniversary of the major incidents at Buncefield and at Texas City. The lecture was by Mr Ken Rivers, the Chairman of the COMAH Strategic Forum and titled:-

"COMAH2015 - your process safety leadership. What about your Company?"

The Seveso III Directive was implemented in the UK by means of the COMAH2015 regulations. The lecture aimed to underline the fact that process safety is not just for engineers. Major hazards represent critical risks to an enterprise and directors and business leaders all need to be engaged.

The lessons of Buncefield, Texas City, Deep Water Horizon and (locally) Bosley tell us that more is needed in the management of major hazards. The consequences of getting it wrong are becoming more.

How to get the commitment of business leaders is not easy. Engineers need to become linguists and be skilled in the ability to translate process safety into the

language of business. The lecture illustrated how challenging our current mind-sets can open up opportunities for fundamental improvement. Leaders create the conditions for this to happen.

Mr Rivers' presentation showed graphically that good process safety management does not happen by chance and requires constant active engagement.

The attendees provided feedback that showed that the evening greatly exceeded or was above their expectations and further similar presentations are wanted. Both papers were greatly informative. Part 2 of Mr Rivers' presentation is likely to be made during 2016-17.

J B Bartlett

Secretary

North West Centre of Process Industries Division, IMechE

12 April 2016