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This little presentation this morning is really meant to demonstrate if you can put behavioural safety into the situations we had you can put it into any organisation. Most people put behavioural safety into single plants, where it's quite easy to put in, but we had a different problem, we had to put in a program all over the place.

The other title of this presentation is entitled 'So you think you have a problem?' and that's first of all showing you the scale of that. (Shows map). Our workplace is 245 kilometres squared in each direction. It would take about 8 hours to drive between 7 installations in it. We also had more highland installations there. Some of the statistics from West of Scotland Water are that there are 1,600 work-places, there are 30,000 kilometres of sewers and water basins that can be working at any time from the pumping stations. We also have 21,000 Septic tanks. We have 2500 employees to cater for 2.35 million customers. And we work in an area of 20 thousand odd kilometres. So it was not easy, especially when your workers are 2 or 3 people working groups going about the place, to actually set something up.

Luckily we did not try to set this up all at the same time, we started with a pilot scheme. This was at a wastewater treatment function. This had about 173 individual works. That still left about 21,000 places where we did not actually work but we did collect the sewage and work there from time to time. What we quickly learnt was that you really had to understand what the business was about. It's amazing how many people you speak to in our business who don't really understand how it operates in the front end, and what people actually do at the front end to make that business work. We had to spend a lot of time getting to grips with that. I had been a manager so I knew what was going on, but even I did not know one or two of the working practices. And what we quickly learnt was that it was employees who were important, we forgot about the workplaces and started trying to fit our solution around the employees rather than the workplaces.

What we realised quickly was that there are 3 different types of employees. There are those which are dedicated to a single site. There are people in groups of 2, 3 or 4 who work over maybe half a dozen smaller plants, and were generally all over the place. And then we had the fully peripatetic, that's people like tanker drivers, the guys who done maintenance repairs. They could be out doing anything at any time anywhere practically. So we had to find a solution to that. We couldn't implement this in a traditional manner, which is picking people from out there, teaching them behavioural safety, then to be behavioural safety coordinators. Finally, having them do observations whenever they have the time. That just would not work.

So what we decided to do was to have a small number of dedicated behavioural safety coordinators who would be doing that full time. We had a look at the costing of that, and if we had of taken the time to train enough people to cover this area as opposed to training 2 or 3 to do it full time it actually worked about the same. Not only that if you think you wasting money on there wages all you needed was a 0.3 or 0.4 reduction in accident ratios to pay for there wages and the implementation of that.

We initially trained about 10 people and split them into 2 groups. 3 or 4 of them went around and did observations all around the region, for the remote and peripatetic workers. The rest of the group of 10 were actually kept in the bigger workplaces.

**Practical implementation**

What we also quickly learnt was that when you have a complicated situation like we had, planning is absolutely essential. There is no point turning up at a small works and hoping somebody is going to be there, and that they are going to do any work that is going to be worth observing. We actually have a huge wall chart with a plan with all the different works

and all the different sites, so we knew what people were doing in all these different places in any given time. So when we turned up we could maximise our visits. We scheduled our visit to coincide with a maximum range of work tasks. Look at the housekeeping things there. We concentrated with housekeeping checks because efficiency was really the key. That was with the smaller sites. The larger sites did not really pose a problem, you could run them like you would any other behavioural safety observation process. The fully peripatetic ones, what we had to do was get the guys together with say a tanker squad, and send them down to go round all the different sites. And as they went round, eventually they would cover all the different sites, people and areas. So we got round in that way. They were really a difficult group of people, because they popped up anywhere. But what we found with the process was that we caught them as we went along. And we had a list of people who we hadn't quite managed to see, so we saw them individually by looking at they're working plans and them going out and meeting them.

### **Progress and setbacks**

So how did we get on with all of that? - Surprisingly well actually. We quickly established our baseline figures, our coordinators set up a really effective in house database programme. We had some really quick hits with some of the housekeeping stuff. Housekeeping turned out to be a really key thing in terms of winning over the hearts and minds of people. We had employee and union acceptance with very little problem. They bought into it from the beginning. We showed them other peoples processes, how it worked, where it worked etc, and we never had that problem. We quickly established that with our database we had a large pack of information that we could base our improvements on - but not just that.

When we spoke to the HSE we realised what we had was a massive back up of what we had going on in our place concerning safety. How safely people were working. How we were finding out faults. How we were out securing those faults etc. So they were behind us 100%.

The setbacks we had were mainly external to the process. There were massive changes going on in the water industry. It was a bit like what happened down south years before that. We were being reorganised and restructured practically on a daily basis. What happened was that with the 10 people we initially trained, within 3 months 8 of them were actually promoted into other posts. We worked out what was going on. We had invested so much time in them, given them a greater understanding of the business and good presentation skills, that when they went for an interview they actually stood out. And they were just getting jobs there and then. So you get a benefit from this process by feeding extra value to your employees as well.

We did meet some resistance, and basically it came from some of the lower managers. Some of them were really good, they would look at housekeeping reports and statistics etc, and think 'this is great; I have been trying to get some of these things fixed for years. I can take these reports and they will help me to get these things changed and implemented' and they got really into it. But some of the manager's thought 'this is yet another thing for me to do, you guys are getting at me'. And we had to spend a lot of time trying to work around them.

It's surprising also the quarters where you find some of the resistance. Some of the professional safety coordinators were worried that this was people trying to take over there jobs. They saw this as a threat to what they had traditionally done. So we had to explain what exactly we wanted from them. We were getting the professional safety coordinators away from the front end of the business, standing there watching people do there jobs and giving them advice, to doing more of the high level strategic work. We had to deal with some funny ideas from people about how things work.

I'm going to give you a quick couple of examples of the changes we did achieve because of the process. From a baseline in January 2001 to a baseline in January 2002 with something as simple as manual handling we went up from 60% to over 85% based on our percentage safe checks. That was not a mere fluke; it was based on 1500 observations across different categories. So that made a massive difference to manual handling.

It was the same thing with Personal Protective Equipment. In the sewage industry wearing PPE is an essential part of the job. Again over the same period we went from a baseline of 70% safe to over 95% safe in wearing PPE. That is a massive difference. And this was the same in all the different categories for the behavioural process checks. They showed the same type of improvement throughout the business.

Housekeeping is really important and it is a good way of getting some really quick hits in the place. Over the same 12-month period we had approximately 200 separate location reports. We prioritised these into the high priority/high-risk items that we fixed immediately, and the lower priority items that we dealt with on an agreed time scale, the things that could wait a week or two. Some of these things were higher value works that needed to go to capital programming. Just to show you how successful we were over that 12-month period we actually got £0.75 million secured for improvements, allocated funds from that capital programme. So people on the front line were beginning to see what was happening there, beginning to see the improvements that were coming through, and the managers were actually taking care of the problems that they had been trying to get sorted for years.

I'd like to give you all a couple of quick examples of this. These are only small things but they are the things that make the difference and make people feel they are being looked after. A simple thing like a path that had been left to go to wreck and ruin, a week later the path had been fixed. And this was something they had been moaning about for 2 or 3 years every time a safety check was done - a simple thing like a self-closing gate. These are only simple small things but they are quick hits and people see that things are beginning to happen. There was an outside area on one site that was messy, and this was due to general untidiness, and normally the people on site would have singled that out to the managers for attention. But when the people on this site saw what was happening, and saw that we were serious and taking an interest, they responded without anybody telling them to do anything, and the situation was fixed by them themselves. And that starts to make a big difference to your morale in places. It starts to change people's behaviours concerning safety. They start to use their own initiative.

### **Benefits from process**

So what did we get from the process? Well like I said we got improved morale from it. It really did get across. People were actually stopping us and saying "when are you coming back to do some more observations? There are a couple of jobs we want you to have a look at for us". We started to get people to buy into it. The people, the managers who did not quite believe at first it was a useful process. And the ones who were keen and did see the benefit were coming back to us and saying 'this is great, we have got all these things fixed'.

The unions and the employees were into it straight away; there was no problem with them. They saw the workplaces and safety conditions getting better for the members.

Using this big database we had we were able to prioritise where we needed to give training, what type of training, and where we needed to focus our resources.

We also at that time came up in that year period a significant reduction in accident figures in this area, as opposed to the other areas of the business where it had not yet been implemented. Even in that small area the reduction in accident figures paid for several times over for anything we had spent on this process.

Also it gives you mitigation from any possible prosecution or possible action from outside sources. You can demonstrate quite clearly from the mass of data you have gathered and from the steps you have taken to put things right that you are at least trying and looking at the problems, and trying to get them fixed. The long-term benefits to the business begin to become obvious there.

### **Lessons learned**

So what did we learn from all that? Well basically that the core beliefs behind behavioural safety stay the same, and the process remains the same, but the solution for implementing it is different for everybody. If you want to get this right and for it to work for you, you really have to look at how your business functions. You really have to understand how the front line of your business works. You can't just sit in the office and say we are going to put this thing into our business. You have to get out there and see what happens at the front end, understand it - then make sure you tailor the thing to fit in there. That's how the implementation plans work.

Keep everybody that you are working with involved. Let everybody know about your successes, and just how well you are doing. If there was one thing I could of gone back and changed, that is what I would of spent a lot more time doing. I would of spent a lot more on publicity, right across the whole organisation. We tended to concentrate too much just on the areas we were working on.

It's also very easy to feel at the manager level is to think that you are implementing the process, but your not, your guiding it. One of the things you have to remember here is that this is an employee run process, and you have to try and get the employees to take ownership and actually run with it. As one of the managers used to say to me, &these guys are actually thinking on their feet, I can go home and sleep at night. I don't need to go round and make sure they are doing things safely, they are doing it for themselves now". That is a big change that he had seen over the time.

Getting the right help is crucial. As Tim (Marsh) said before, behavioural safety is not rocket science. But in getting in implemented properly, there are a thousand pitfalls, and you need really somebody who has been through it before to help you over those.

One thing I will say is 'look out behind you'. Don't just focus on process. Make sure you look right through the process. Look at the politics, the changing structures. Try and find out what attitudes people have got to safety. Even some of the safety coordinators, the safety professionals see this as a threat to their job. So you have to be very careful and know what's happening at all times at all times in your business.

After all that, as I said at the beginning, if we can implement a behavioural safety process across the area we have, in groups of 2 man squads upwards, then anybody can do it. Because that was a big challenge and I think it was the first time it had been done anywhere like that. So really I would say to you, don't get discouraged if you think you have got a problem to solve out there, to implement it.

It can be done!