



**Clare Read -
Severn Trent Water**

BEHAVIOURAL SAFETY USER CONFERENCE 2005

Chair

OK the unenviable task of following that falls to Clare Read of Severn Trent Water. Clare joined Severn Trent's health and safety team in 2001 as a senior health and safety adviser. She has been involved with the behavioural change programme since joining the team and was responsible for the HSE climate survey. Clare.

Clare Read

Thank you.

Well somebody help me what was that???

(Music was Waterfront by Simple Minds).

Oh right well that is a good start (Laughter)

OK Tim has quite happily introduced me so I won't dwell on giving you any more details. I am going to spend about the next 20 minutes unless the hook draws me slowly off the stage explaining what we do at the Finham Sewage Treatment Works which is one of our large works in the Coventry area.

Historically we have had a health and safety management system which is basically a follow day top down approach – we have got very well managed systems in place on the site which covers risk assessment, safe systems of work. We have also got exceptionally good employee involvement by our safety reps.

However, in the past not all the operators and maintainers have bought into this process. This unfortunately was clearly highlighted during a report of one incident in 2002 as having some shortcomings in our processes. But also the figures that we actually saw really did show that we didn't have that buy in from our operators and maintainers.

So I went to the health and safety team and actually suggested that we use our colleagues over the way for some training on behavioural safety. This was a "bottom up" approach, this was very different to anything we had ever seen in Severn Trent before. It was something that not only the managers had to deal with the fact that we were doing a bottom approach but it was something very different for the guys on the team.

So what did we do? We asked for volunteers from operators and maintainers to attend a course, it was a three day training course, we managed to get 8 volunteers, no management representatives, the site has got about 12 people on site plus the management staff so we did get a reasonable amount of co-operation at that point. We asked them who wanted to form a committee as a result of that training course, we got 7 committee members.

Everything was going swimmingly and lovely until we had a disagreement within one of the committee meetings and the chairperson resigned. That was a real blow for us. Really and simply because the management and the workforce didn't know what this was all about, the training course had told them about behavioural safety and taught them the theory but they actually had not been aware what they were signing up to when they went on this training course.

With hindsight we should have had more information up front of the initial training to maximise the uptake so we would actually have got a sign up from everybody on the site. This

has actually been rectified in the future roll outs, given it was the first of a number of roll out behavioural programmes we had at Severn Trent.

Something that was probably not good for us – we actually expected the committee to know how to conduct themselves in a meeting, we didn't actually give them any meeting skills training, so we were already possibly putting them up there to fail. That has been rectified we actually gave the teams some meeting skills training and this actually formed a key part of our training of our roll out behavioural programmes.

Despite all these obstacles the group refocused and proceeded to develop measures. I will explain more later, with the assistance of Ryder Marsh.

By allowing the team to develop their own measures we built up ownership within the team, in order to broaden the whole process and give ownership to the team we actually put a competition to design a logo – hence the term FBI was born.

The bonding exercise worked really, really well however, it created two work groups the ins and the outs. This was despite significant effort from open communication from the guys on the ground and from the management. We did lots of newsletters, lots of notice boards, the committee was encouraged to keep communicating with the outs despite the significant hostility and the lack of feedback, this did prove to be very worthwhile; after some time the balance changed such that the outs were in the minority, at this point more people came on board and the process was left, this was a significant learning point and helped to prepare the committee for later behavioural programme roll outs.

Despite these difficulties it was really important for the management to continue to encourage the committee of members to actually carry on and I think that came through all the way along, we had a very enthusiastic site manager at that time and he actually helped them through and guided them.

Choosing where to start in the very early stages of the process with consistent resistance to the process as you have heard, this made committee members very, very nervous about observing colleagues. So in the early stages of the process we decided to tackle housekeeping and not direct behaviours so we adopted this less controversial aspect because it was quite visible in that we could actually see the impact being seen on the site. There were no human interface worries because you were actually looking at a plot of the site not an individual.

We developed measures and created our zones, these are our zoning maps for the site at Finham. To add weight to the whole process we had them professionally designed and produced, the simpler mats would have worked just effectively it was all part of a process of encouraging people's involvement.

Measures were developed from an example given by our colleagues at Ryder Marsh, the exact contents were actually decided by the Finham Group, this meant the whole team was involved in the process and actually bought into the process, however it is important to mention that before any changes in behaviour were noted, it was the marked improvement in housekeeping around the site and the following slides show this. (Points to screen) This is an area of our site before they started the FBI process, as you can see not particularly tidy, this is after the FBI process had worked its magic. It is important to mention that one year on it is still the same, so the actual behaviours are starting to be seen culturally.

There was a tendency in the early stages for the committee to do all the clearing up. This was rectified by management involvement making sure that everybody was involved. This housekeeping process actually influenced our 'out' people they actually bought more into the process. Initially we couldn't actually do sufficient root cause analysis because we were doing it on housekeeping rather than behaviours. The root cause analysis came later when we were actually observing behaviours.

This shows an example of the housekeeping aspect, as you can see there were some learning points and we did learn some things because we did have some blips. We can actually highlight where the particular incidents happened where we had low points, one was highlighted to be a contractor matter when we actually bought new areas into the observation process.

As you can see it is important to keep up the number of observations, you drop the number of observations and the actual KPIs for the whole process drop and we saw a dip in the whole process. What we had we actually was that the committee were empowered to organise and quote for work with a recommendation for the local manager we can actually put that forward,

I only know of once instance when the local manager actually refused because there was insufficient funding, but people were told that.

After the housekeeping measures were adopted we actually looked at PPE. We had over 200 observations and we only found 2 failures, there was limited scope so we actually then looked to develop the manual handling, we worked with pristine conditions, one of our organisations that we actually use for manual handling training and actually developed an observation sheet which is actually very practically based rather than actually being technical, it is very practical so people actually know where to put their feet as they are lifting, so we actually did very practical based things and people were trained on this.

A downside to the whole process, some of those who were not involved in the process initially viewed it as a 'secret society' and looked for ways to trip the whole process up. They also muted when we were doing the PPE observations that they would not be observed, their perception was they said it was Dr Evil's plan for world domination!!!! Here a very strong leadership had to be demonstrated by the management team as well as the committee members, that was very important and I can't stress that enough it was the perseverance of both parties in the whole process.

So what is happening now? I have told you my troubled tale to get a behavioural initiative in place, bit it is working really well now and there are lots of things and lots of changes that we have seen. We have not only got increased participation and increased influence of the committee but we have seen ownership of other issues – we have had no reportable accidents for two years and the culture is now starting to be embedded at Finham. There is still a lot to be done and a team will continue to work hard as will the management team to improve the process.

So what else has happened at Finham since the start of the behavioural programme? They have had the safety climate questionnaire that is the HSE's climate questionnaire it is really, really an exceptionally good programme for stimulating conversations because there are some very direct questions in there that have stimulated conversations around the organisation.

We have also undertaken a British Safety Council Five Star Audit, sounds onerous, identified by some areas of procedural gaps within our processes on the Finham site but I am actually pleased to say that our team did really, really well and actually managed to get a 5 star so well done guys wherever you are, we were really, really pleased with that.

Currently we are actually not only looking at bottom up approaches for behavioural safety in our organisation we are actually looking at top down management training. We are actually using the John Norman safe and unsafe acts programme, that is actually currently being rolled out within our organisation and we are in the early stages of doing that.

Finally behavioural safety is one of the most worthwhile things the site has actually undertaken, we have seen the results before the programme was even embedded into the site, as you saw from the photographs of the housekeeping the big changes that we saw.

However the management team must remember that behaviours are just as important, they need to nurture the process at arms length which, from a manager's point of view the task can sometimes be very hard to do. Remember it is the committee that takes the decisions and above all else they need to manage the expectations of others outside of the site and that is really important when we are talking with regard to senior managers, managing their expectations is just as important a part of the process.

Finally thank you very much for listening and I invite questions from the audience.

Chair

And we do have time for a couple of questions.

(Question from an unknown Audience member)

I will ask a question and I don't know if you will be able to answer this – I raised the question about health as well as safety, we talk about behavioural safety but health is actually more important now than safety – have there been ways in which your programme has impacted on health issues – health outcomes?

Clare Reed

Not specifically at Finham but we have within our organisation a number of health programmes, we have got a health and well-being programme which everybody can sign up to which actually gives people tools and techniques to be able to deal with stress, exercise and those sort of things. What we also do is have an active programme looking at things outside of the organisation so actually giving people benefits outside that they can take away, so giving them driving skills that we can see the benefits within the organisation, but when you take them home you can see the benefits there as well. So there are a lot of active programmes for health but they don't actually sit specially in the programme we saw at Finham there, they sit outside the whole programme as such.

Graham Randle from Pilkington

Interestingly, you went bottom-up with Tim's organisation first and then Top-down with John Ormond second, that is an unusual combination, any comments?

Clare Reed

The reason we did that was that Finham was the first site that we have done behavioural safety and it was almost – we wanted to try it out and see the benefits we saw, we had a report of an incident at Finham, we knew that there was some gaps in our procedures but we also knew that there were some cultural issues there, some behaviours there so this was an opportunity for us to start the ball rolling. So we did a bottom up – it was a very brave decision I think but it is working well. We are a large organisation and using the John Ormond and the top down approach in other areas and we are hoping the two will actually meet in the middle and I think they will because of the way we are actually structuring it. But you know the time was right for Finham then to start their programme and we have seen the benefits.

Chair

If I could add to that I mean the situation is that new managers come in with their own favourite consultants that they've worked with before and are comfortable with. And it is a big organisation Severn Trent ... and frankly it's one of the reasons we were invited in in the first place. A no I am not entirely happy about it because of issues of continuity and so forth – but the most important thing is that the leadership training is done, and done well. And John's team will do that.