



## **Peter Warmesley Shotton Paper - Training to suit**

BEHAVIOURAL SAFETY USER CONFERENCE 2002

Basically I've been involved with our behavioural program at Shotton for the last four years. Before that I was the production manager who changed over and took on the project and now is the health and safety manager for the site.

I'll try and give you a little bit of detail about the background of the B-Safe programme and I'll give a bit more detail as we go through and better detail about the site.

Newsprint production is a continuous process built in 1985 for a modern site 365 days a year continuous. 250 employees work in a 5-shift system, around 200 employees working on a day pattern in support terms and engineering. All are quite a traditional structure according to the last speaker with line supervision with department management, area management teams. So it's quite traditional in that sense.

About 1997 / 98 we set out on this search for the 'The Holy Grail', looking for a work force led behavioural product. Like the last speaker we made the assumption that everything in the house was rosy, that all systems were working and everything we had for safety was sufficient. All that was left was people - to get them on board. We were looking for a commitment from everybody. Not ever doing things by half we thought that was easy and the obvious spin off was something, which we started to learn a little bit more about, that culture wasn't just something to do with yoghurt. It was something that kept the safety system working.

We started the behavioural safety project in September of 1998. As I say a quick summary of the program is each work area gets together in a meeting to decide a checklist for that area, on each phase, or in our case which is about a 6-month period, that workgroup will stick to that checklist for that area, give feedback and obviously try and improve their area on that checklist. It's quite flexible and every 6-month phase you can swap the Observation point to the observation method. So we started that project, and we started it site wide, going to include our resident contractors and service areas and all the shift areas.

In the process of the next 2 years we did a number of these to try and see how it was going. One of these was a safety climate survey and also an employee opinion survey, both of these much to our surprise, it shouldn't have been, only gave us average ratings and we didn't see the improvement we had hoped for over this 2-year period.

This is a performance I feel a bit shame faced about after looking at these numbers now, after our last couple of speakers, but we are talking in the order of an annual basis of 20 Lost Time Injuries. Not all are reportable some of our injuries are only 1 or 2 days but we do count all LTI's in this particular trend. From the start in the autumn of 1998, quite a decrease, we thought we were on the road to some significant improvements in safety performance. I think there are maybe a few people here who could predict we then started to bounce backup. If you like, the Hawthorne? effect switches the spot light on and after a good look for a while makes a difference, but then if you like, the culture changes hadn't kicked in and things reverted back to the way they had been. So there was a question for us, as the speaker before said "If it is not helping your accident rate is it worth it?" And there were a number of long windy committee meetings and discussions that went round and round the mulberry bush. I think the management team are pretty well convinced by the strength of the feeling by the Health and Safety Rep's as much as anything that if we gave up on the behavioural program at this point we are just going to lose as a management team as a safety team and as a group of individuals who sponsored this event. We were just going to lose credibility. That is not what we want to look forward to.

We did have a lot of discussion at that point about it is the time to make it something you've got to do? There's your job and the Be Safe observation is part of it, because up to here there have been no names and volunteers only - which has strictly been the way of doing the Be Safe

Programme. We did a pilot and did not get a great deal of success in some areas. We also looked at taking your "Post Local" and trying to get away from what the previous speaker called the "Bolt On". I just described myself really as a project manager and champion of Be Safe programme, so it was definitely seen as some sort of separate block if you like, normal working. The final conclusion to this debate was regarding I think just what to do at this point, so I'll come around and have a look at what other people are doing and see if we can find some magical formula to help us.

So what we did was we dreamt up the review process and we went to it with a small group and all sorts of options here of touring the world and 50 people looking at every single system going. We went for the minimalist, the low budget version. We talked to our in house experience - the people who have been doing the program and we also went on some visits to people who spoke last year, who gave us some impetus to go see how they were doing behavioural safety. Imco (? muffled) in Swansea, were another company who had just gone online with the Be Safe programme and we went along to see if they had moved along in their programme since we started it, or if there were better things or if anything we could do with Be Safe itself. The other one was an in-house version at George Pacific (? muffled) who had built their own program out of a number of simple measures and of observers checking their colleagues or working with team mates and giving each other feedback. This was done on a number of simple measures which can get quite interesting. I think we've taken part of bits and pieces from all these and we've tried to address issues from our Be Safe observers. One of the main areas they gave us was that they themselves and their mates did not want to be involved in the Be Safe programme. It was purely for volunteers who could come forward if they wanted to do this. Some were saying that the role of an observer was too demanding as they were in the 'direct line of fire' and there was also the issue that the Be Safe people became 'fixers'.

With a traditional structure of area managers and line managers, there was certainly a feeling that not enough involvement and not enough commitment were coming out of that group. I faithfully say that in the earlier days we laid this as a workforce led program at the feet of the work force and just said "get on with it " and we didn't really bring our middle management team into that quickly and effectively to give them partnership and the right support during observation.

Equally there were a number of areas e.g. Administration, for they saw the program didn't fit; too little too much or the wrong thing. So we looked at potential changes and we have made a few of these. We do feel as though we are getting more support. One of these things we've done there is put the measure of this support back out as a general publication. So, on a monthly basis we're giving people feedback in each area as how the support is being measured by the observers, giving us some feedback. We are looking at shorter phases, so we're looking at people not being put upon if you like, so now they are doing their work for shorter periods and hopefully a system more flexible that we can change every 3 months as well. We are looking at smaller checklists and looking at behaviour specifically. I know in the past, speakers have talked about the 5 areas for things like house keeping & PPE. We've tried to give the observers more time, i.e., maybe observing throughout the whole ship, as opposed to a 10-minute walk about. We're giving them the opportunity to look at the behaviour of the people in their work team, or visitors to their work area are actually getting involved with and making the measure more about what is happening or what people are doing and what has been left behind.

The other thing is looking at different methods for different areas and administration is a classic example where we try and look at a number of different ways of getting observers, having fewer meetings, and a different sorts of feedback, because the Be Safe programme has a fixed structure of a weekly feedback or a shift pattern feedback to the work team and to be honest, in Admin, there was feeling that things didn't move or develop in that sort of time scale. We're also trying to get a safety structure, or the way that we look at safety down to an area level. So we're looking for what we call the "Safety Action Team", in any area, starting only this year so we do not really have any experience of that, but from the Be Safe programme being seen as 'fixers' of local issues, we believe it will be a strong way of connecting 'Be Safe' in the future, to give their measure a local flavour.

Then we offer significant changes so that nothing happens in isolation. The visual commitment of management has been another strategy developed over the last 2 years. We're looking at clearer safety objectives. We're looking at leadership, which again was mentioned earlier by the previous speaker, which is clearly a big part of a successful programme. We are also looking at quite a big industry; the paper industry has had quite a lot of attention, a very bad accident rate and the increased guarding standards for our machinery are one part of the commitment to actually raising the performance of industry. I think more that is a good approach and a good inroad to getting to the new standard with our equipment - which I think is seen and goes into

the melting pot of the improved safety performance.

We are also looking at improvement in our workings with safety representatives and again that can only help the Be Safe programme, because they have been in choosing this program initially, and supporting it through this period. I think it can only help us when we are working together, and again in the area teams gives that local flavour that the Be Safe Programme is looking for.

I'll probably go back to the mill and find there has been 5 LTI's because I have been away for 4 days over Easter, but we are, from a blip back up in July 2000, we're hopefully going to get to an acceptable plateau and stay there this time. I'm not hoping for the figures of the previous speakers perhaps for the next year, but if we can continue to maintain our performance and improvement then I think that will benefit us all. So that is my experience of BSP.

## Questions

"You mentioned Trade Unions, what kind of support did you receive from the trade union?"

**Peter.** We haven't asked for involvement to be fair to them. Ours is a single union agreement signed with the AWU and we've had a good relationship on site and that's worked. We haven't really called on them and haven't had offers from the union. We have though met national and local officials and I think it is a process that we need to develop.

"How many areas have you on site?"

**Peter.** We've divided the site into around 58 areas.

"Have you found the reduced checklist a big plus?"

**Peter.** Some like it and some don't. Some feel that they're missing what they used to measure but on the whole it does simplify the role of the observer and it does make it more acceptable with people.

"How did you develop the surveys?"

**Peter.** I'm not claiming any responsibility for them. They are group surveys, which originate from our Finnish owners. Globally the company has done these employee opinion surveys, but riding on the back of a safety climate survey, they are interested in any relevant feedback.