Step Change Safety Alert Template

Alert Title

Gas release from level transmitter on HP Sep

What leaked and where from? E.g.: "Lube oil leak from compressor system open vent"

Incident Date

28/10/2013

The date on which the incident occurred, not when this form was completed

Location Type

FPSO

E.g. Floating/Fixed Production, Drill Rig, Vessel, etc.

Specific Equipment Involved

Level transmitter on HP separator

Give as much detail as possible about the equipment involved

Description of What Happened

During a shutdown a level transmitter was removed to the workshop for overhaul. The device is flange mounted, however the head of the device was threaded into the flange and was secured by grub screws.
During re- installation & start-up, a gas leak was found by a technician, who observed that the head was rotating due to the strong wind. Immediately shutdown the process and depressurised the vessel. Subsequent checks revealed 3 other devices with loose grub screws.

Be as detailed as possible. Give equipment history and approximate time(s) of actions/occurrences related to the incident

Cause of Incident

The grub screws securing the enclosed tube on the transmitter were not fully tightened. The action of the strong wind acting on the cable probably further loosened the seal to break and gas to be released. During installation the individual was unaware that the enclosed tube was not fully tight and was not aware that he had to take this action.

Incident Consequences

The Lead Ops Tech contacted the CCR immediately after investigating the leak and requested the plant to be shut down. The HP Separator was then blown down to stop the release. 0.51kg gas released.

Include the release itself and any subsequent emergency actions/dangerous occurrences

Lessons Learned

During the re-installation of this Level transmitter a check had not been made to ensure that the enclosed tube was sufficiently secure. Given that others have been found it would appear that not all instrument techs are aware of the correct procedure for fitting. Documentation was onboard for this type of transmitter which detailed hazards and fitting procedure, however this was not incorporated with the permit to work, nor were the hazards incorporated within the risk assessment.

Include a few bullet points clarifying what was learned from the incident

Recommendations/Actions

Review competency requirements for Instrument Technicians working on devices of this type with threaded connections.

Include a few bullet points stating any recommendations/actions that will be made/taken as a result of the lessons learned

Contact Details (Optional)

If you would like your submission to be anonymous, leave this section blank