Cefic/ICCA guidance for reporting on the ICCA globally harmonised process safety metrics

Safe and reliable production is one of the core values of chemical manufacturing and several directives have been put in place to accomplish just that. Amongst other objectives, these regulations oblige manufacturers to report major accidents, e.g. under directive 2012/18/EU (aka the Seveso III directive). Several databases and tools have been established by authorities to achieve a broad reporting of major accidents (e.g. the eMARS database of the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre). Reporting of accidents and following up however remain a reaction “after the fact”.

Cefic has thus adopted the ICCA Guidance for the reporting of globally harmonised process safety metrics. This guidance for the first time requires operators to report process indicators which are independent of the number of participating companies. It further requires the reporting of comparably low level incidents, or, in other words, incidents which are far below a “major” event as required e.g. by the Seveso III directive.

The criteria that determine whether a process-related event qualifies as a process safety event are based on:

- Either a loss of primary containment of a chemical
- Or a release of energy

Reporting is required if any of four criteria are met:

1) safety/human health consequences
2) direct cost due to damage from incident
3) community impact
4) chemical release quantity.

These four criteria are identical to the impact areas in the RP-754 Tier II incident standard. The thresholds for reporting are also identical in all regions, with the exception of the chemical release quantity thresholds. To address this difference, the ICCA process safety event definition will allow companies to use either the GHS-based reporting thresholds developed by ICCA for the chemical release criteria, or the UN Dangerous Goods (UNDG)-based reporting thresholds used in the RP-754 standard for Tier II incidents.
Reporting of low-level incidents can provide operators but also industry sectors or national associations with an “early warning system”, as an increase in low level incidents will inevitably lead to an increase in major incidents sooner or later.

Cefic hence believes that this guidance for process safety event reporting will enable broad-based global reporting of process safety performance across the chemical and petrochemical industries. It will provide a roadmap for regions, associations and companies that are currently not tracking process safety performance to recognise the benefits that tracking and reporting will bring. For regions, associations and companies that are already experienced in gathering process safety data, this recommendation allows for broader global alignment and focus on continuous improvement in process safety performance. The systems which are built to improve process safety performance are informed by robust process safety event data, and this is the major objective of this initiative.

Cefic and ICCA adopted this guidance in 2016, Cefic’s member associations are currently rolling out the guidance across the European chemical companies, targeting a comprehensive reporting by the beginning of 2020.

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About Cefic

Cefic, the European Chemical Industry Council, founded in 1972, is the voice of large, medium and small chemical companies in Europe, which provide 1.2 million jobs and account for 17% of world chemicals production.

About ICCA

ICCA, the International Council of Chemical Associations represents chemical manufacturers and producers around the world. ICCA Members account for more than 90 percent of global chemical sales, and more than 20 million people around the globe are employed directly or indirectly by our industry.

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