

Incident Investigation Summary

Responsible Managers I. Sarson / A. Jackson
Incident Reference No: Compass 22271/08/NG
Person Responsible for National Implementation: Paul Williams

South West Reinforcement Project - Gas leak following Pipeline Commissioning

This bulletin is issued to disseminate incident investigation findings and recommendations/ learning for consideration and (as appropriate) action by other operating units, contractors, etc.

What happened?

A gas leak was detected from a 50mm NB hydrostatic test drain point on new pipe work. The pressurised pipe had to be isolated and depressurised under an emergency Non Routine Operation Procedure to repair the leak. The drain point consisted of a weldo-flange fitting attached to the underside of the main carrier pipe and a bolted blank flange that had been re-sealed following the hydrostatic test and pipe drying operations.



Why Did This Happen?

- The blank flange attached to the drain point had not been tightened sufficiently to contain gas at pressures above 0.5 barg.
- The project Inspection & Test plan and Hydrostatic test method statement did not clearly designate specific responsibility to ensure that all joints re-made after the hydrostatic test and drying operations were of the correct tightness.

Learning points?

Project Managers must ensure by 6th October 2008

1. A tagging and check list system, to ensure all re-made joints are inspected and signed off as acceptable prior to commissioning with gas.
2. The preparation and tightening of such joints shall be witnessed by a Pipeline Inspector to confirm that the correct bolt tensioning torque setting has been applied and a new gasket/ ring has been installed.
3. Ensure the bolting procedure for low alloy steel stud bolts is specified in T/SP/E/55 is followed. Bolted joints should be prepared and tightened to the recommended sequence and torque settings given in Section C.
4. Work Method statements must clearly identify and define individual role responsibilities to ensure that all flanges that are broken or re-made following the hydrostatic test and pipe drying operations are tightened correctly as per T/SP/E/55.

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For further information regarding this bulletin please contact R. Wilkinson (01926-655067) or the Responsible Manager detailed above.