

Incident Investigation Summary

Responsible Manager Adrian Chapman
Incident Reference No: 4340/10/NG

Significant Process Safety Near Miss – NRO Little Barford Power Station

What happened?

During a planned power station shutdown, there was a requirement to deviate from the agreed procedure as it did not provide adequate isolation. In order to isolate the section of pipework, the slam shut valves on the regulator streams were utilised.

An approved deviation was submitted to confirm that the slam shut valves now formed part of the isolation and the section of pipework downstream of the site isolation valves was to remain **pressurised**. This was not communicated with the power station who had asked for it to be depressurised.

The slam shut valve isolation was not locked or tagged. It was later removed in error to facilitate the inspection of the slam shuts.



Why Did This Happen – Root Causes?

1. The isolations were not locked or tagged.
2. The NRO issued to the Competent Person had the authorised signed front sheet for 2010, but was attached to the 2009 authorised NRO.
3. The 2009 procedure was a different procedure than the one being carried out in 2010.
4. There were no records to demonstrate that the tasks within the NRO had been discussed with the Competent Person, who in this case was not the originator.

Learning Points & Actions:

1. Isolations should be clearly locked and tagged. The isolation shall only be removed when authorised.
2. The 2010 procedure was an edited version of the 2009 procedure, but did not have the NRO number recorded on all pages of the document. There is an action to improve the guidance given in SCO/94 on document control.
3. This was a routine operation at the request of the power station. The NRO deviation left the downstream pipework pressurised which was a deviation to the original request from the power station. They were not part of the formal review process for the procedure and were not made aware of the change to isolation. Action in place to review the requirement for standard isolation procedures for power station off-takes. This will consider the authorisation process and permitry required by both National Grid and the end user and associated communication paths.

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