

Human and organisational factors in end of service life and decommissioning

HUMAN AND ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS IN END OF SERVICE LIFE
AND DECOMMISSIONING

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FOREWORD

Health, safety, wellbeing and performance of those working on sites, both on and offshore, undergoing decommissioning can be adversely affected by changes in the nature of the tasks performed and the conditions under which they are performed.

Guidance on managing human and organisational factors in decommissioning, published in 2010, originated within the nuclear industry. It was kindly donated to the Energy Institute by Magnox Sites and retained its essentially nuclear plant decommissioning focus. The 2010 guidance will remain available from the Energy Institute's website for reference; however, this new version broadens the scope of the original to include material of more specific interest to other industrial sectors, in particular onshore process industry and offshore oil and gas.

Decommissioning refers to the stage in a facility's lifecycle where activities are carried out to stop production, make the facility safe and, typically, to dismantle/demolish the facility and return the site to a greenfield or brownfield state. Clearly, there are variations in this. Sometimes a facility is only partially decommissioned, or it could be 'mothballed' (where operations are temporarily suspended with a view to restarting at some future date). The human and organisational factors (HOF) issues are largely the same in each case.

The risks presented by decommissioning arise from the hazards present – toxic, flammable and radioactive materials to be handled, stored energy in systems designed to contain them in normal operations and heavy items to be moved. Some of the hazards are not obvious. The presence of these specific hazards is coupled with the often fast pace of decommissioning, the need to assemble and integrate large teams of staff and contractors in a working environment in which motivation and morale may be low, plus many other factors that need to be managed. This presents a series of HOF issues that should be managed. Failure to manage HOF issues can lead to project delays, extra costs, as well as incidents (potentially leading to injury or fatality).

These issues, and how they can be managed, are the subject matter of this publication. However, this publication does not provide details on how to decommission major hazard facilities.

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