

OQ INTEGRITY PROCESS (OQIP)

Establishing High Credibility & Validity in a Universal
Approach to Operator Qualification

Developed and created by the Industry's
OQ Integrity Coalition

Presented by:
Phil Lenn, SEMCO Energy Gas Company
(Coalition Member, Operator)



BACKGROUND

- In 2016, the Distribution Contractor Association (DCA) assembled a taskforce to investigate how the gas distribution industry can improve the OQ process by providing increased consistency with operator qualification (OQ) programs. This effort was led by representatives from the American Gas Association (AGA), American Public Gas Association (APGA), regional gas associations, operators, OQ service providers, National Association of Pipeline Safety Representatives (NAPSR), and DCA contractors. This effort established the OQ Integrity Process (OQIP) currently being pilot-tested in three states.



OBJECTIVE

- Provide a tool for Operators and Contractors to improve pipeline safety, Operator Qualification (OQ) program integrity, and transferability of OQ common core competencies
- Focus on three primary elements: People, Process, & Validation



SCOPE

- The OQIP recognizes that training and qualification records of core competencies can be attained and follow an individual. Operator-specific covered task competencies must be qualified separately. While the scope of this program is currently on gas distribution systems, the process concepts should be applicable to the liquids and gas transmission industry.
- This OQIP can be utilized as a continuous improvement process and participants may benefit from performing a gap analysis of their current OQ program. This approach should facilitate compliance with OQ programs, enhance regulatory confidence, and reduce the risk of incorrect operations.



OQIP COALITION MEMBERS



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Operator Qualification Integrity Process



OQIP COALITION MEMBERS

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Operator Qualification Integrity Process



SEMCOENERGY
GAS COMPANY



DISTRIBUTION CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION

STAKEHOLDERS



OPERATOR/REGULATOR DRIVEN EXPECTATIONS



- Regulatory Compliance
- KSA & Process Consistency
- Exceeds Minimum
- Focus on Core Competencies
- Operators O&M Specifics
- Program Effectiveness
- Verifiable via Audits & Records
- Benefits Workforce Development

PEOPLE ELEMENTS



- Trainers | Proctors | Evaluators | Auditors
- Criteria & Credentialing:
 - Education
 - Training
 - Experience
 - Qualifications & Certifications
- Quality Validation & Re-authorization
- Internal & External/Independent

PROCESS ELEMENTS



- ASME B31Q Standard & Covered Task List
- Detailed Core Competency Development
- Program Focus on universal truths
- Training Curriculum Consistency
- Testing Methodology, Integrity & Security
- Skill & Ability - Observe/Verify Performance
- Management of Change Controls



Operator Qualification Integrity Process



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VALIDATION ELEMENTS



Program Compliance Validation:

- Internal Self-Audit & Program Effectiveness Reviews
- External / Independent Audits
- Recordkeeping/Documentation



Operator Qualification Integrity Process



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DISTRIBUTION CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION

PROCESS PROGRESSION

- Engaged more Industry Stakeholders
 - Added more Operators, and Regulators
 - National Stakeholder canvas for input
 - > 500 Industry comments/suggestions
- Finalized the OQ Integrity Program Written Document from Industry comments/suggestions (Version 3.0)
- Created Pilot Programs with 3 States
 - New Mexico - New Mexico Gas Company
 - Washington - Puget Sound Energy
 - Michigan - SEMCO Energy Gas Company



PROCESS PROGRESSION cont.

- Formed Governance Team
 - In collaborative relationship with API for validating OQ training (could include traditional Service Providers, Operators, and Contractors).
 - API is looking at supporting the OQIP as part of their certification programs.
- Created logo and official website www.OQIP.org
 - Publicize Program and objectives
 - Provide frequently asked questions (FAQs)
 - Provide OQIP Process and Guidance Documents
 - Collection of Data



PILOT PROGRAM

- NEW MEXICO GAS COMPANY
 - Joined OQ Integrity Coalition - July 2018
 - Fully implemented and exceeded requirements for the OQIP
 - Converted to B31Q Task List - July 1, 2016
 - Implemented Industrial Training Services (ITS) 3rd party OQ Provider - September 2017
 - Included 5 NMGC Contractors
 - Require all NMGC Contractors to utilize ITS as OQ Provider
 - Program Effectiveness Measures Internal/Contractor

PILOT PROGRAM

- Puget Sound Energy - Washington State
 - Plan to participate with 2 Operators and 1 Contractor
 - Harmonizing some items within the 2 Operators
 - Has started preliminary integration to work through issues and transfer to next Operator

PILOT PROGRAM

- SEMCO Energy Gas Company
 - Joined OQ Integrity Coalition - April 2019
 - Plan to participate with 1 Contractor - Miller Pipeline
 - Implemented Energy World Net (EWN) as 3rd party OQ Provider- September 2017
 - Converted to B31Q Task List - November 2017
 - Conducted OQ gap analysis
 - Has began development of Operator specific curriculum for contractors OQ program - 2020 season
 - Current program contains many aspects of OQIP that are practiced with the MI OQ consortium



SUMMARY

A standardized, credible, and valid process of deploying integrity in OQ for our industry will increase OQ compliance and transferability, and also create **Synergies** that will:

- Improved pipeline safety
- Facilitate compliance with OQ programs
- Enhanced regulatory confidence
- Promote continuous improvement & program effectiveness
- Increased accountability & transparency
- Enhance workforce development & utilization



QUESTIONS

Phil Lenn

SEMCO Energy Gas Company
Director of Technical Services

Thank you

