

Recommended Practice on Subsea Production System Reliability, Technical Risk, and Integrity Management

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Contents

	Page
1 Scope	1
2 Normative References	1
3 Terms, Definitions, Acronyms, and Abbreviations	2
3.1 Terms and Definitions	2
3.2 Acronyms and Abbreviations	7
4 Document Outline and Application	10
4.1 General	10
4.2 Document Road Map	10
4.3 Project and Operation Applicability	11
4.4 Equipment Applicability	12
4.5 Life Cycle Stages	13
4.6 Company Documentation	13
5 Overview of Reliability, Technical Risk, and Integrity Management	14
5.1 General	14
5.2 Underlying Philosophy	14
5.3 Assessment and Management of Risk	15
5.4 Define Step of DPIEF Cycle	17
5.5 Plan Step of DPIEF Cycle	21
5.6 Implement Step of the DPIEF Cycle	21
5.7 Evaluate Step of the DPIEF Cycle	22
5.8 Feedback Step of the DPIEF Cycle	22
5.9 KPs for RIM	24
6 Recommended Practice for Each Life Cycle Stage	26
6.1 General	26
6.2 Configuration Management (CM)	27
6.3 Application of the DPIEF Assurance Cycle	27
6.4 Timing of the DPIEF Loop in the Asset Life Cycle	29
6.5 Design Stages	29
6.6 Manufacture, Assembly, Testing, Installation, and Commissioning (MATIC)	29
6.7 Operations	30
6.8 Field Upgrades and Field Extensions	32
6.9 Life Extensions	32
6.10 Decommissioning	33
Annex A (informative) Technical Risk Categorization (TRC)	35
Annex B (informative) Detailed Description of Reliability and Integrity KPs	40
Annex C (informative) Risk-based Scope of Work for Reliability, Integrity, and Technical Risk Management	107
Annex D (informative) Integrity Management Data Collection	136
Annex E (informative) New Technology Qualification	143
Annex F (informative) Application of Test Statistics	144
Bibliography	145

Contents

Page

Figures

1	API 17N Road Map	1
2	How API 17N Applies to a Company's Reliability, Technical Risk, and Integrity Management Documentation	13
3	DPIEF Reliability and Integrity Assurance Cycle	15
4	Assessment and Management of Risk	16
5	KPs for RIM	24
6	Summary of the Life Cycle	26
7	Application of DPIEF Cycle to the Subsea System Life Cycle	28
8	The Relative Time in the Asset Life Cycle That Each Stage of the DPIEF Loop Should Be Applied	30
9	Double DPIEF Loop in Operations	31
B.1	Procedure for Allocation of RIM Goals and Requirements	45
B.2	Reliability and Integrity Activity Effort	51
B.3	Design for Reliability and Integrity Process	54
B.4	Relationship Between Operator's DfRI and Supplier's DfRI Processes	55
B.5	Outline TQP	86
B.6	Data Collection and Usage Strategy	90
B.7	Example Output from an RCMM Audit	99
C.1	Typical Relationship Between the Operator and Supplier with Respect to Activities	115

Tables

1	Operator Business Requirements and Reliability/Integrity Implications	24
2	Project and Asset Life Cycle Focus and Considerations	27
A.1	TRC for Equipment	37
A.2	TRC for Procedures	38
A.3	Example Level of Effort Expected for Different TRC Risk Levels Throughout the Asset Life Cycle	39
B.1	Types of Reliability and Integrity Assurance Evidence	62
B.2	Suggested Constituent Parts of a RIAD	64
B.3	FMECA Summary	67
B.4	FTA Summary	68
B.5	RBD Summary	69
B.6	ETA	70
B.7	Physics of Failure Summary	71
B.8	Importance Analysis Summary	72
B.9	Qualitative Common Cause Failure Analysis Summary	73
B.10	Quantitative Common Cause Failure Analysis Summary	74
B.11	RAM Analysis Summary	75
B.12	RAS Summary	76
B.13	AZOP Study Summary	77
B.14	HAZID Summary	78
B.15	Barrier/Bowtie Analysis	79
B.16	Data Sources	92
B.17	Overview of RCMM Levels	98
B.18	Typical Instruments for Organizational Learning	105

Introduction

Reliability and integrity can have major environmental, safety, and financial impacts for all organizations involved in designing, manufacturing, installing, and operating subsea equipment. The complexity of technical and organizational challenges in subsea projects and operations requires continual attention to detail to achieve high reliability and integrity performance.

Equipment reliability is important both to system integrity and to production. For example, poor seal reliability in a well line connector may result in loss of containment with the potential for environmental damage. Valves that fail to close on command may prevent isolation and compromise safety. Valves that fail to open on command may compromise production.

Budget and schedule constraints can lead to limited information and time for making decisions. This can introduce varying levels of uncertainty that have the potential to affect equipment reliability, integrity, and associated operational risks. In particular, any potential failures that lead to loss of containment or loss of production should be thoroughly investigated and actions taken to manage the risks that such events generate.

This recommended practice (RP) provides a structured approach that organizations can adopt to manage technical uncertainty throughout the life cycle of a subsea system. This may range from the management of general project risk through to the identification and mitigation of potential equipment failure modes, affecting integrity or production.

Most organizations will find much that is familiar and recognized as good practice. Some sections of the annexes may only be of interest to the reliability and integrity specialist. The basic approach, however, is simple and consistent and when applied correctly has the potential to greatly reduce the financial, safety, and reputational risks, arising from potential failures, throughout the life cycle of subsea systems.

Although this RP is focused on subsea production equipment, the guidance is generic and may be easily adapted to address the design of subsea hardware used for drilling operations including the subsea blowout preventer and lower marine riser package.

Recommended Practice on Subsea Production System Reliability, Technical Risk, and Integrity Management

1 Scope

This recommended practice (RP) aims to provide operators, contractors and suppliers with guidance on the management and application of reliability and integrity management (RIM) engineering techniques in subsea projects and operations within their scope of work and supply. It is applicable to:

- standard and nonstandard equipment (within the scope of API 17A);
- new field developments, further development of existing fields and field upgrades;
- all life cycle phases from feasibility through design, manufacture, and operation to decommissioning.

NOTE API 18LCM^[1] gives additional guidance on general requirements for life cycle management of equipment.

This RP is **not** intended to replace individual company processes, procedures, document nomenclature, or numbering; it is a guide. For example, this RP does not prescribe the use of any specific equipment or process. It does not recommend any actions, beyond good engineering practice. However, this RP may be used to enhance existing processes, if deemed appropriate.

2 Normative References

The following normative documents contain provisions that, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this standard. For dated references, subsequent amendments to, or revisions of, any of these publications do not apply. For undated references, the latest edition of the normative document applies.

API Recommended Practice 17A, *Design and Operation of Subsea Production Systems—General Requirements and Recommendations*

API Recommended Practice 17Q, *Technology Qualification for Subsea Equipment*, Second Edition

NOTE API 17Q, Second Edition is planned for publication in 2017. Annexes E and F are included in this document to provide interim guidance and will be removed once API 17Q, Second Edition is published. For all references in the text to API 17Q, the reader should refer to these annexes until API 17Q is published.

API Recommended Practice 7E, *Recommended Practice for Development of a Safety and Environmental Management Program for Offshore Operations and Facilities*

API Recommended Practice 580, *Risk-Based Inspection*

BS 1 IEC 2 6219 2001, *Project risk management—Application guidelines*

DNV-RP-4203³, *Technology Qualification*, July 2013

IEC 60508, *Functional safety of electrical/electronic/programmable electronic safety-related systems*

¹ British Standards Institution, Chiswick High Road, London, W4 4AL, United Kingdom, www.bsi-global.com.

² International Electrotechnical Commission, 3, rue de Varembe, P.O. Box 131, CH-1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland, www.iec.ch.

³ DNV GL, Veritasveien 1, 1363 Hovik, Norway, www.dnvgl.com.