



Lessons Learned from Deepwater Horizon

Kathryn Mearns





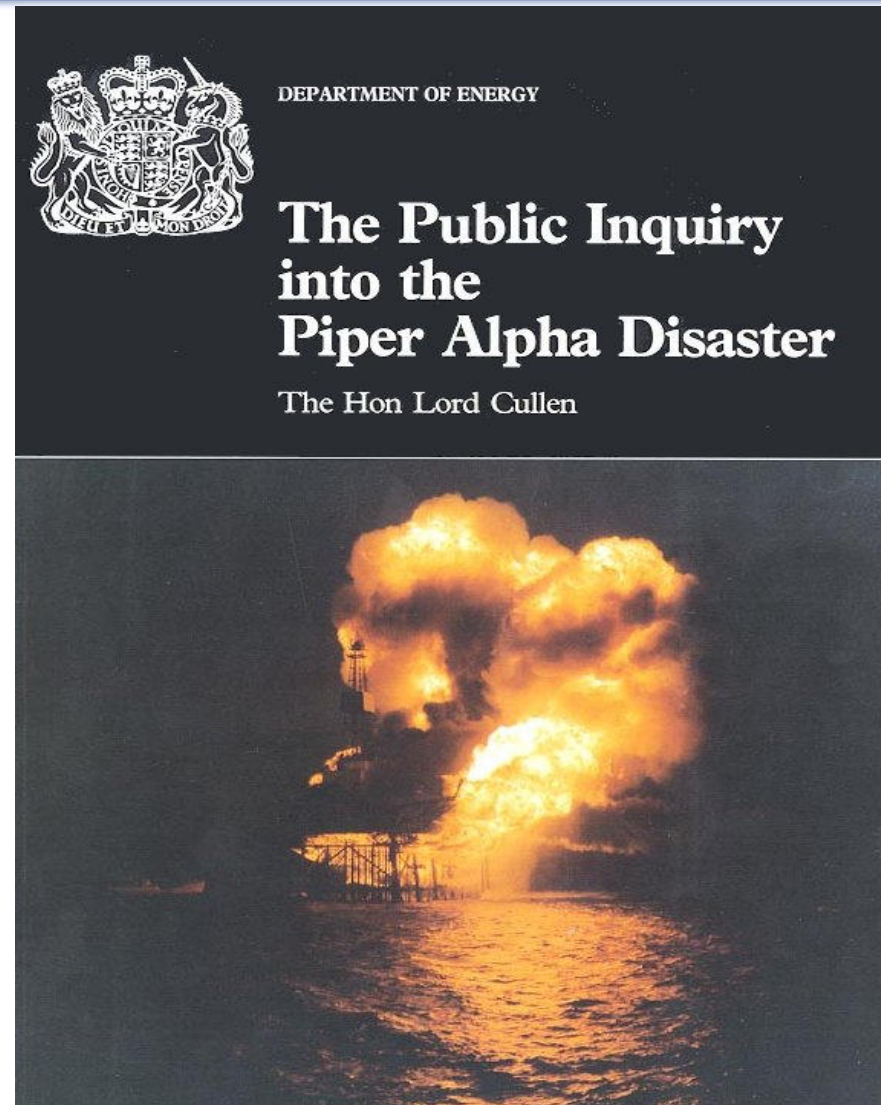


No Blow Out Preventers on Piper Alpha! Technical fixes abounded in the wake of this disaster!

But Failures of

- Communication
- Decision making (deference to authority)
- Safety Leadership
- Regulatory regime

‘It is essential to create a corporate atmosphere or culture in which safety is understood to be and is accepted as, the number one priority’. (*Cullen, 1990, p300*)





BP Texas City Oil Refinery

March 24, 2005

14 people died
100 injured

Too much focus on LTIs,
not enough on process
incidents

BP supposed to be
implementing
recommendations from
this disaster, including
tackling the organisation's
safety culture





Deepwater Horizon



“When you became CEO of BP, you promised to focus "like a laser on safe and reliable operations.”

"I clearly am the ultimate power...”

"We have begun to change the culture.”

"It is a thing that I talk about every time I talk internally or externally.”

"I wasn't part of the decision-making process... I wasn't involved in any of the decision making... I simply was not involved in the decision-making process”





Lessons to be learned

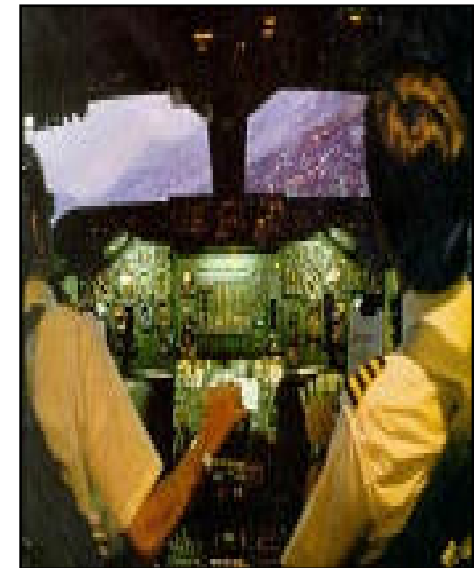
- Focus on a wide range of safety performance indicators, as much 'safety intelligence' as you can get
- Listen to workforce concerns about the integrity of the system, particularly your domain experts
- Never be complacent, regularly test your policies and procedures – are they fit for purpose?
- Regulatory oversight for safety should not be in conflict with the other regulatory objectives, e.g. production



As Senior Managers do you...

- Know obligations and risks?
- Have a process that brings systems failure to your attention?
- Respond personally and in a timely manner to systems failures?
- Independently verify from time to time?
- Feel in control of what happens in your organisation?





**THANK YOU FOR
YOUR ATTENTION**

