

The Client

The operator of a gas terminal producing approximately 20% of the UK's gas needs. Its multiple-train processing plant at the terminal receives gas from a number of northern North Sea gas fields, compresses it and feeds it into the National Transmission System.

The client undertook a comprehensive risk assessment of its North Sea operations which identified a range of risks that could give cause for concern. The gas terminal was highlighted in the resulting risk report due to its infrastructure being so critical to the organisation and the UK's gas supply.



The Challenge

Teed had worked with the client for a number of years focusing business continuity planning efforts on loss of office & IT, pandemic planning and operations support. The client recognised the need to be better prepared to deal with disruptive events that could reduce or cease gas transportation. The primary objective was to maintain security of supply to support the UK Critical National Infrastructure.

Having undertaken similar projects for other gas terminals and plants, Teed has developed tried and tested methods to enable a pragmatic approach when considering appropriate risk controls and contingency actions for this type of complex environment. Of the innumerable events that could happen, it was necessary to decide what to focus on, for example, loss of power, denial of access, high security location, ageing infrastructure.

Given the complexity and age of the plant, we had to work with what was available, for example, with the electrical control facilities in a single location, it was not feasible to have contingency power as this would require a significant investment. Also, it was too late to change the way connectivity had been set up originally to deal with communications to the asset's control systems. We had to accept the situation and work to ensure that sufficient risk controls were in place, such as identifying potential options for an alternative control room facility. This is a busy plant and as such managers would only devote time to the project if they could see the value of it.

The Solution

Teed's consultant, David Teed, agreed with the client that a series of workshop-style group discussions to consider a combination of resource loss scenarios was the most appropriate project approach. With relevant people from different, but inter-dependent, business areas round the table, it was possible to incorporate analysis and strategy/plan development within three hour sessions.

There was already a comprehensive, mature and exercised response structure in place with a defined emergency response process linking in with emergency and security services. The consultant ensured that the Business Continuity Plan for the gas terminal and supporting recovery strategies linked in effectively with the existing response organisation; for example, at the point where an emergency situation is under control and recovery actions are needed to deal with the resource loss that has impacted operations.

Checklists were included in the Plan to enable operations continuity or controlled recovery in the event of a range of resource loss scenarios including denial of access, loss of power, pipeline rupture, control room or safety system loss, cyber threat, workforce unavailability. Trigger points were also identified to enable the response team to know when to make the call to shut down operations or take other appropriate steps.

Through discussion with relevant individuals, the consultant was able to show the financial impact of different scenarios together with the risk strategy or improvement action required to reduce the likelihood or impact. This gave management the information needed to agree an appropriate level of investment to reduce risk exposure and helped to drive the ongoing business strategy and risk management activities.

The Result

Teed was able to provide the client with an understanding of the "resource loss" risk exposure for the gas terminal and to develop an appropriate Business Continuity Plan for the facility. Therefore satisfying key stakeholders that business continuity planning was in place.

A plan of action was agreed to take forward recommendations for improving resilience at the facility and the project provided a useful benchmark for the organisation to decide how best to roll out business continuity to other critical operational capabilities and assets.

Teed was subsequently engaged to undertake similar projects for the client at key gas terminals, operating facilities and warehouse hubs.