

NATF Redacted Operating Experience Report

Safety – Operating Experience, Human and Organizational Performance

About NATF Redacted Operating Experience (OE) Reports

North American Transmission Forum (NATF) operating experience reports highlight positive or negative transmission (reliability or resiliency) experiences worth sharing for learning opportunities or potential trending. The overall goal is to help each other learn without experiencing the same issues first-hand. This sharing originates confidentially within the NATF membership.

Redacted operating experience reports are posted on the NATF public website to allow the NATF and its members to more broadly share information, especially safety-related alerts and learnings, with contractors and other utilities to benefit the industry at large.

The NATF member company that submitted the initial restricted distribution OE report for this topic/event has approved the NATF to issue this redacted OE report.

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Topic

Operating Experience and Human and Organizational Performance

Description

This report is intended to provide a wide dissemination of information on safety issues, topics, and events in order to promote a safer work environment.

Learning from OE/HP:

This report highlights one of the trends identified in “Near Hit” reports regarding trailers. There were several trailer-related incidents reported. One example involved the need to modify trailers with an anti-slippage device due to mobile equipment sliding off a wet trailer while loading. In this particular report, the person reporting indicated taking corrective action by working with Supply Chain and requesting an equipment modification. A nice application of Safety by Design. Another incident involved a trailer wheel that was discovered with loose lug nuts during a trip, but the Near Hit discussed here in more detail is the report of a hitch pin that was discovered missing during transit. While driving, this person heard a metallic noise and pulled over to inspect the trailer. The person found the hitch pin missing and replaced it. This demonstrated a good catch in finding the issue before it resulted in an incident.

Another similar type report occurred last summer where a trailer had come off the hitch, disconnected from the vehicle, and traveled down the freeway. Fortunately, the trailer ran off the road without hitting anyone on the freeway. In this case, two safety mechanisms failed: the hitch pin wasn’t inserted and the chains weren’t connected.

How does this happen? You may have experienced something similar at home. Have you ever gotten home and suddenly realized you don’t remember the drive home? Or have you moved to a new home and one day found yourself driving to the old house? Why is this? This occurs because you use different parts of your brain for active thought versus habits. Some call this Systems I (habits) and Systems II (active thought) thinking. You have driven home many times and committed the route to memory, so this requires little conscious thought. The same thing can happen in your work tasks. However, there is a simple but effective technique to return you to active (System II) thinking. The technique is verbalization.

As an apprentice we were taught to speak work steps / tasks out loud. The purpose of this is because it makes you use a different part of your brain, as well as slowing your brain down to the speed your body performs at and giving you more time to process System II thoughts. This reduces errors. Verbalizing out loud can return you to active thought, removing you from the trap of passive or Systems I thinking and reducing the probability of any errors. In the case of the trailer hitch, a person would verbalize the action while connecting the hitch and then, when completed, the person would point to the hitch pin and chain and verbalize the action. This is a useful example of using active thought (Systems II) to ensure a critical action is completed. This is not a tool you use for inconsequential tasks, as it would diminish the effectiveness, plus you would look silly talking to yourself all of the time – right? Try it the next time you need to remember something you do at home (close the garage door, turn off the stove before you leave, etc.) and you will find you won’t have to think about whether you did that action or not – so those thoughts will not become a distraction later.

Lessons Learned

Increased sharing and transparency of information, learnings, tools, and safe practices provides awareness and knowledge that can be applied in real-life situations to help keep you safe. This information is intended to keep you safe by:

1. Communicating near-term emerging trends of hazards identified in reports.
2. Highlighting “Good Catches” and Safe Practices performed by employees.
3. Increasing transparency of shared learnings.
4. Providing useful HOP tools, techniques, and insights.

Actions Taken

- Information for these types of bulletins are gathered from various safety inputs (Near Hit/Safety Concern reports, injuries, job observations, facility inspections, OE learnings from external entities, etc.) and analyzed to provide information valuable to personnel working in the field.

Extent of Condition

N/A