

WILLBROS



What does “zero safety injuries” really mean?

The practical use “zero” for a Safety Leader

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Willbros Overview

Who We Are

- Global contractor specializing in energy infrastructure serving the oil, gas and power industries.
- Offerings include engineering, procurement and construction (individually or as an integrated “EPC” service offering), ongoing maintenance and other specialty services.

Services Span Energy Infrastructure Sector

Upstream / Midstream			Utility T&D	Downstream
Onshore Production	Gathering & Processing	Long Haul Transportation	Utilities & Power	Refining, Processing, & Terminals
				

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First things first... Problem Statements

For the most part, operational staff do not believe that “zero injuries” is an achievable goal.

Additionally, the commitment to “zero injuries” can set up an expectation across stakeholders that when (inevitably) not met - or in other words the standard of perfection fails – triggers “outrage”.

Note 1: Risk = probability x consequence + **outrage!** (Dr. Peter Sandman))

Note 2: Also look at the risk perception work of Slovic, U of Oregon referenced in The Science of Fear (Gardner, 2009)

Challenge Statement

How do you reconcile the public language of “we believe that zero injuries is do-able” with the reality that none of us actually achieve zero injuries???

What does a high performance safety leader say?

First, let's dispel a powerful myth about "zero"...

Safety and Gambler's Logic

How might this apply to safety?

Next, let's be honest in defining what safety is...

Think about safety in terms of reliability.

If you want better safety, reduce the exposures and/or increase the reliability of your control environment to cope when it bumps up against those exposures. This silences the “zero” - the number - argument.

So...

...if “zero” – the number - is a debunked fiction, shouldn't we dismiss it as a discredited product of public language running out of control? The equivalent of political correctness for safety?

Well, not so fast...

... “zero” – the approach – is a vital ingredient to high performance safety. The organizational position that all injuries are believed to be preventable is the cultural Rosetta Stone that unlocks high performance. It is a prerequisite for making the performance leap between **good safety** and **great safety**.

In conclusion

- “Zero” is a paradox.
- How do you manage this paradox?
- How do you message the paradox?

I will not give into the notion that what I do will get someone hurt on my watch.

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A Good Job On Time



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