Safety Clicks

Learning from others' mistakes

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# Third Party Vessels

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After the industry downturn, TDI-Brooks began to seek out partnerships with other companies in order to stay competitive and seek out new markets. One of the results of this new approach was to bid jobs using third party vessels and TDI technical crew and equipment.

We had done this before, but not extensively. As this type of partnership becomes our "new normal" it is helpful to keep in mind the additional challenges of working on third party vessels.

Working on third party vessels presents some unique challenges, and we need to adapt our mindset and approach to these projects accordingly.

**The goal of this issue of Safety Clicks is to share concerns and stimulate dialogue on how we plan and execute these projects.**

## The Biggest Challenges of Working on Third Party Vessels

At the time of this article, many of our Party Chiefs and crews are working on or have recently returned from third party vessels. They were asked to share their concerns and experiences. Their comments are shared below.

### Suitability of the Vessel

A vessel visit by a knowledgeable TDI person should occur before mobilization to identify potential issues and to ensure it is adequate for our needs.

Does it have all the necessary equipment/facilities (A-frames, winches, nav systems, lab space, freezer space, storage space, etc.). Is the equipment in good condition, and does the vessel have competent, trained personnel to operate it? If we are providing our own equipment, does the vessel have the systems to power it (hydraulics, pneumatics, electricity, etc.) and a way to install or mount it (deck space, over-the-side pole, etc.). Will internet/ email/ phone access be available?

### The Language Barrier

By far the most common issue was communication—specifically the language barrier. Even though the working language of TDI vessels is English, that is not the case on many vessels.

Key areas that were especially hard to communicate across languages on third party vessels were related to TDI's lifting gear, our technical equipment and procedures for using both.

**In cases where English is not the native language of the vessel or the company, it is crucial that both companies have bilingual personnel on the vessel for the duration of the project and on each shift.**

### Expectations and Assignment of Responsibilities

The **Project Execution Plan** will spell out the technical details of what will happen,


It's important to agree on procedures BEFORE we start work.

Cultural differences can make a difference even when communicating in the same language. **The word "no" is very rude in Chinese culture.** It is cultural practice of Chinese crews to always answer "yes" even when they are aware the correct answer is no.

In hierarchical cultures, it is unacceptable to question the decisions of a superior officer. The idea of **"STOP WORK" authority is directly opposed to cultural practices.**

**Taking initiative is discouraged in these cultures**, where leaders are expected to tell workers exactly what to do and when.

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## TOP Safety Card Hits

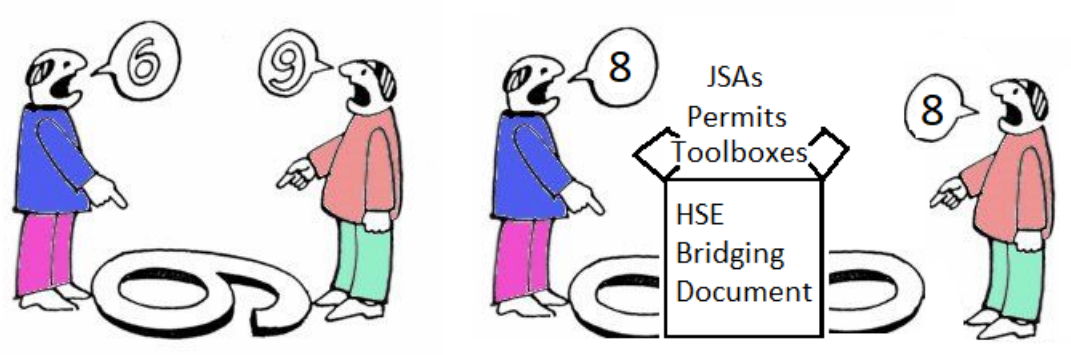
(Fleetwide last month)

| | |
|---|---|
| **Housekeeping** | **2** |
| **Safety Attitude** | **1** |
| **Tools & Equipment** | **1** |

# The Biggest Challenges of Working on Third Party Vessels

what is expected from whom and some specific procedures. **However, most of those working at the deck level will never see this document. It is up to the TDI representative on board to review the Project Execution Plan procedures and ensure they are being followed.**

Ensure that the expectations and obligations of everyone involved are made clear beforehand. Things like what PPE is required on deck (some vessels require coveralls, some don't), who is responsible for operating deck equipment (winches, etc.), who is responsible for deploying and recovering gear, who provides sample containers and lab consumables, who is responsible for sample shipping, etc., should all be agreed upon and shared with everyone involved before the job starts.




### The Safety Culture Gap

There are bound to be some differences between the safety cultures of two companies. The **Project Specific HSE plan** is created to bridge that gap at the management level and determining which safety system will be used for the job. On the vessel, these differences will continue to crop up during normal day to day operations and should be addressed in toolboxes, Permits, JSAs, Safety Observation Cards and conversations between the crews and TDI personnel.

### The **Party Chief** is in charge of conducting the Pre-start Safety Meeting, which reviews TDI procedures and policies with all affected parties.

This meeting will typically include a review of our Safety at Sea PowerPoint and will point out any **project specific modifications** to our usual safety policies and procedures.

### Safety Attitudes

A few of you might recall how TDI reacted when major oil companies told us our safety system wasn't robust enough and changes were needed before they would work with us. We complied for the sake of the contract, adopted some practices we really liked and ultimately improved our safety culture.

Use of third party vessels often puts us in the position of requiring them to improve their safety practices. People dislike change and you may get resistance on the deck level. The HSE Bridging Document and TDI Senior Management are in place to back you up when it comes to safety.

### The Leadership Challenge

TDI field and management personnel may go to third party vessels in a number of positions—HSE Officer, Lead Science Officer, Party Chief, Navigator and more. Regardless of position, they are all representatives of TDI. All personnel deployed to third party vessels should be competent, patient, and have a thorough understanding of TDI's SMS.

Take into consideration any cultural differences that would affect safety and address them with the crew. Cultures strongly defined by social class or hierarchical structure will be reluctant to follow some of our common safety practices, such as making suggestions during a JSA or using STOP WORK authority.

Remember that deployment and operation of our equipment is not routine for crew on other vessels, and those crew may not have the same level of safety awareness we do with regards to our equipment and procedures.