

**Interview of Robert Babnick – 8/30/00**

NTSB interview 8/30/00 6:45 pm  
 w/ Cliff Zimmerman - NTSB  
 Ravi Chhatre - NTSB  
 Robert Rojas - El Paso Nat Gas  
 Chris Payne - OPS  
 Augustine Lopez - OPS  
 Interview ~~summary~~ summary @ Carlsbad, NM of

Robert Babnick

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~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
 Principal Coordinator, Corrosion Services  
 Operations Services Division.

Responsibilities Functions as an advisor to  
 the operations complexes. Includes  
 risk management issues

31 years with the company  
 Same function since 1992  
 Supt for North region corrosion  
 prior 4 years  
 Permian Division Supervisor 4 years  
 Approx 15 years as a corrosion  
 tech in Farmington, NM.

Ike Weener - Mgr. of Pipeline Services

1 year college  
Electronic Tech in the Air Force  
mostly OJT during the early years  
NACE training over years -  
Frank Rizzo courses

Developed O & M manual & corrosion  
procedures for El Paso

Internal corrosion program in gathering  
line systems in the north region  
utilized coupon program.

Controlling gas quality was the main  
way of preventing internal corrosion and  
this was the way internal corrosion was controlled  
At one time there was a coupon program  
on ~~one~~ transmission line because iron  
sulfide was coming into the lines. The  
program was disbanded because it didn't  
provide any weight loss information  
useful for the prevention program

Gas quality & visual internal pipe inspections  
are the main ways used to control  
internal corrosion. Data base created  
in Dec 1999 timeframe to track  
reports.

They now have the data base available for review of corrosion reports. Prior to that, e-mails of reports were sent to the corrosion coordinators.

Prior to this week only knew of 2 internal corrosion reports: 1300 line failure - it was "maintenance passable" line in the segment where the failure occurred. 1202 line cut a valve at Blanko corrosion plant and found a pit in the pipe next to the valve with 80 mil pit on heavy wall pipe

new std is being implemented now & spells out more specific procedures to follow. This is the first internal corrosion procedure for BT loss.

Typically a light film of black oxide on the inside of the pipe but at times it is dry, sometimes there is a light "black powder" in the line that may cause an internal pipeline inspection tool inspection problem. 1300 being cleaned for smart pig<sup>2</sup> some sulfur in this powder residue.

Drip installation design was done by engineering many years ago - mostly from about the 20's through 50's. Some drips have been removed from transmission lines because of a failure when ~~a contractor~~ <sup>another company</sup> used a line & left the liquids in the line.

Jim Ferguson & Geady Paten are competent engs with a corrosion background.

El Paso's definition of corrosive gas is determined to be any gas out of spec. detailed in the standard procedure.

An advisory was issued by the company (email) to complex manager to add any areas that might be susceptible to internal corrosion to ~~the~~ risk management list for ~~monitoring~~ more indepth study of pipeline issues on that line.

Line 1300 - rupture was approx 20-30 feet long. Masson Valley type corrosion. Sample sent for mic testing with the results being negative.

He hasn't been out with a corrosion technician when he was checking pipe for internal corrosion visual inspect.

The operating complex is watching the gas analysis and they do onsite testing from samples area personnel draw.

The tape stopped before the end of the interview without the warning alarm being activated. Interview ended approx. 8 PM.

Signatures of participants

Robert Babrick

R. M. ...

Cliff Zimmerman

Chris

Art ...

Robert ...