



REASSESSMENT OF THE RESPONSE TO PIPELINE SAFETY RECOMMENDATION P92-06 – P90H0606

Background

In March 1990, Bell Canada received approval from TransCanada Pipelines Limited (TCPL) to have its cable cross under TCPL Lines 300-1 and 300-2 downstream of Main Line Valve (MLV) 302-1 near the Marionville Township Road. On 6 June 1990, a contractor for Bell Canada struck and punctured Line 300-1 with his cable plough while preparing to lay the underground cables beside that road. Natural gas was released from the pipeline but did not ignite. Residents from several nearby farmhouses were evacuated and a road block was set up. There were no injuries.

The Transportation Safety Board of Canada (the Board) determined that the pipeline ruptured when it was struck by the cable plough and that Bell Canada had not fulfilled its contractual requirement of notifying TCPL 3 working days in advance of mechanical equipment being used in the vicinity of the pipeline.

The Board also determined that there was a delay in isolating the ruptured section of line due to: TCPL's supervisory and data acquisition system not identifying the leak; confusion within TCPL with respect to the location of the ruptured line; and the manual versus remote operation of some of the isolating valves.

The Board concluded its investigation and released report P90H0606 on 15 March 1993.

Board Recommendation P92-06

Since delays in responding to emergency situations prolong public risk exposure, pipeline companies should be able to rapidly isolate affected sections of pipelines. Therefore, the Board recommends that:

The National Energy Board ensure that, in an emergency, sections of line beyond crossover points on federally regulated pipelines can be quickly and safely isolated.

P92-06

Response to P92-06 (22 June 1993)

The National Energy Board (NEB) requested all pipeline companies under its jurisdiction to provide information respecting their ability to quickly isolate a pipeline section as well as their policies and procedures in responding to an emergency. The NEB requested information on the

isolation of all pipeline sections, not just those referred to in Board Recommendation P92-06. The NEB indicated that it would issue a final report based on the results of that information.

Board Assessment of Response to P92-06 (October 1993)

Since the NEB accepted the recommendation in principle and indicated its intent to issue a report which would evaluate each company's ability to isolate a pipeline section as well as their ability to respond to an emergency, the response to Recommendation P92-06 was assessed as "*Satisfactory Intent*".

Board Reassessment of Response to P92-06 (February 1996)

Although the NEB has issued a report concluding that the practices followed by companies regarding initial response times are generally acceptable and that the valve requirements in the Canadian Standards Association Pipeline Standards are acceptable minimum requirements which most companies meet or exceed, it has not indicated any substantial action to reduce the apparent lengthy response times reported by some companies. After reviewing this report, the Board has reassessed the response to this recommendation as "*Unsatisfactory*".

Board Reassessment of Response to P92-06 (February 2006)

Since action had still not been taken to reduce response times, the Board maintained the assessment of response to this recommendation as "*Unsatisfactory*".

Additional Response to P92-06 (January 2011)

The NEB indicated that the issue identified in the recommendation is considered a threat to a pipeline system and must be included in a company's integrity management program. Pursuant to CSA Z662, pipeline companies now have in place integrity management programs to identify and mitigate threats to their systems, such as failure of components. The NEB also indicated that, pursuant to its Regulations, companies now have in place safety programs to anticipate, prevent, manage and mitigate potentially dangerous situations, such as lengthy response times, during construction, operation and emergency activities. In addition, the NEB conducts compliance monitoring programs, comprising inspections, audits and incident investigations, to verify that the integrity management and safety programs are functioning as intended. During numerous emergency situations, pipeline companies have demonstrated ability to quickly and safely isolate sections of their pipeline beyond crossover points.

Board Reassessment of Response to P92-06 (February 2011)

The Board considers that implementation and monitoring of integrity management programs should ensure that, in emergency situations, sections of line beyond crossover points on federally regulated pipelines can be quickly and safely isolated. The Board also notes that since the occurrence, during numerous emergency situations, pipeline companies have demonstrated the ability to quickly and safely isolate sections of their pipeline beyond crossover points. Therefore, the Board has reassessed the response to this recommendation as "*Fully Satisfactory*".

Next TSB Action

This deficiency file is assigned an ***“Inactive”*** status.