Camden Gas Project

Spring Farm 05
Pressure Safety Valve Incident Report
September, 2014

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1. Background

AGL Upstream Investments Pty Ltd (AGL) operates the Camden Gas Project (CGP) in the Camden district of NSW. The CGP includes the Rosalind Park Gas Plant (RPGP) (i.e., a compression facility which collects natural gas from outlying wells, compresses this gas into the Sydney gas network for delivery to gas consumers), and well facilities such as Spring Farm 05 (SF05) located within the Spring Farm 20 compound. AGL operators access the SF05 site by Gate E18 located off Richardson Road, Spring Farm. SF05 is located approximately 7 kilometres to the north west of the RPGP. The nearest residential address to SF05 is located on the north-eastern corner of Reynolds Street, Spring Farm.

On 31 August 2014, at approximately 7.05pm during the startup of the RPGP, a pressure safety valve on the gas/water separator at SF05 activated and natural gas was released to the atmosphere from the pressure safety valve vent line (the Event). The pressure safety valve on the SF05 gas/water separator is designed to relieve overpressure from the gas/water separator at the SF05 well facility.

On 1 September 2014, AGL notified the Camden Community Consultative Committee Chair, NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA), Office of Coal Seam Gas, Department of Planning and Environment, local MPs, local Councils, about the Event.

On 1 September 2014, the EPA inspected the SF05 gas well. Further to the inspection, the EPA requested that AGL provide an incident report against Condition R3.3 of the CGP Environment Protection Licence (EPL 12003) and include in the R3.3 report additional information relating to the duration of the Event, safe and proper operation, and reporting of the Event.

A briefing was provided to the Camden Community Consultative Committee on 24 September to provide information on this incident to the community.

2. Cause, time and duration of the event

Cause of Event

The cause of the Event was the presence of coal fines in the SF05 infrastructure, including the SF05 well head pressure transmitter, which resulted in inaccurate pressure readings at the Rosalind Park Gas Plant control room.

Time and Duration of Event

Based on AGL's interview with Fire and Rescue NSW, the Event took place from approximately 7:05pm (which is when the '000' operator call was received by Fire and Rescue NSW) to 8:50pm. The pressure safety valve on the SF05 gas/water separator was intermittently open during the Event for an estimated duration of 53 minutes.

3. Type, volume and concentration of pollutant discharged as a result of the Event

Type of pollutant discharged as a result of the Event

Natural gas was released from the pressure safety valve on the SF05 gas/water separator.

Natural gas is an odourless, colourless and flammable gas with no toxic properties. Natural gas is also lighter than air, and will rise and diffuse rapidly when it escapes to an open area.

Volume and concentration of the pollutant

The estimated volume of natural gas released during the Event is 10,000 scf (standard cubic feet) or 283 scm (standard cubic metres). This estimate was based on SF05 flow data and intermittent opening of the pressure safety valve on the gas/water separator.

4. Details of measures taken and proposed to be taken to prevent or mitigate against a recurrence of the Event

The measures taken and proposed to be taken to prevent or mitigate against a recurrence of the Event include:

- Installation and testing of new alarms in the Rosalind Park Gas Plant control room to provide an early warning of high pressure events at all well sites.
- Revision and implementation of revised pre-start checklist standard operating procedures.
- Review of existing Camden Gas Plant standard operating procedures and maintenance plans (including critical function testing), and where appropriate, revise to take into account the potential impact of coal fines on infrastructure. Implement revised checklist standard operating procedures and maintenance plans.
- Further assessment of the design of wellhead facilities that have the potential to produce gas with coal fines will be undertaken and implementation of corrective actions (if required).
- Assessment of The Message Centre (1300 Emergency Response telephone number) procedures.