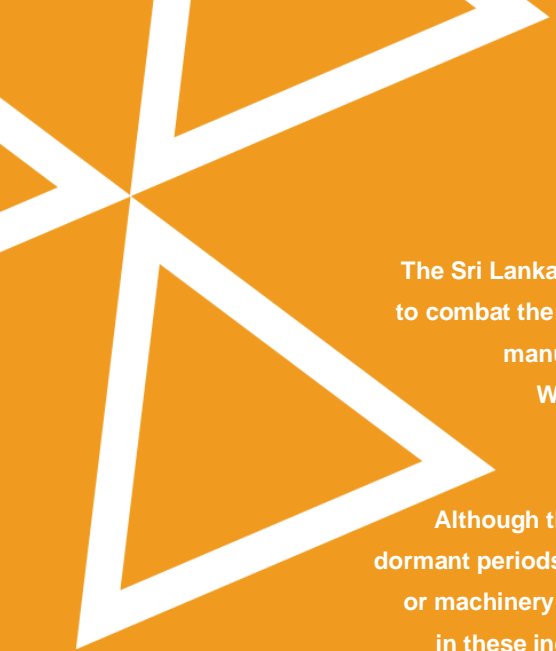


TIPS FOR OPERATIONS START-UP AFTER SHUTTING DOWN

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The Sri Lankan government declared a nationwide lockdown starting from the 16th of March to combat the spreading of the Covid-19 virus. As a result, many businesses, organizations, manufacturing plants etc. had to halt operations as a state of emergency measure. With more than 6 weeks into the lockdown of the country, many businesses are eager to start operations as immediately as possible once lockdown is lifted.

Although this urgency is understood, the start-up of manufacturing operations following dormant periods can greatly increase the vulnerability of many losses such as fire, explosion, or machinery breakdown. In this context, pre-startup safety reviews are one approach used in these industries to reduce the likelihood of loss, and some of these general principles are very valuable for other industries as discussed here.

Out of all vulnerabilities that could arise, the risk of fire is of paramount importance. Every effort should be made to ensure fire detection and protection systems are in working condition.

The following precautions can be considered:


Changes since past operations:

- Identify what is different or has changed since past operations - such as equipment, layout, raw materials, operating conditions, etc.
- Review and update risk assessments, operating procedures & training materials, business continuity management systems, and other documentation accordingly.

Staff and Resources:

- Make sure key personnel are identified and available.
- Confirm the availability of a minimum staff.
- It may be advisable to limit personnel in hazard exposed areas to those necessary for start-up.
- Discuss and implement new hazards that may arise. Also put into immediate effect a refresher training before the start-up of critical machinery & processes/emergency procedures that will need to be carried out where necessary.
- Maintain a good control and supervision of contract workers.

Machinery:

- If machinery has been left idle, check inspection/maintenance routines to OEM guidelines and consider what is needed before a restart, lubrication routines, etc.
 - Carry out thorough cleaning or sanitizing procedures as necessary.
 - Ensure utilities systems are checked and available in good order, particularly those which may have been isolated.
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- Make sure all machinery, process safeguards, alarms and interlocks are in service.
- Precise adherence to start-up operating procedures should be followed through.
- All complicated process manufacturing plants should be subjected to step by step checkups.
- Special attention to equipment with fuel-in-air explosion hazards (fired equipment such as boilers, kilns, etc.) must be provided.

Ignition Sources:

- Use and enforce procedures for hot work, smoking, portable heaters, battery powered appliances, etc.
- Ensure electrical inspection, testing and maintenance routines are up to date.

Fire Protection and Emergency Response:

- Ensure fire protection systems and special protection systems (e.g. smoke detection, fire pumps, sprinkler systems, deluge systems, water spray, etc.) are in service. Also ensure remote monitoring systems are active.
- Reassess the accuracy of fire pre-plans.
- Make sure adequate emergency responders and equipment are available.
- Alert the local fire brigade regarding the plan to restart activities, if required.

Housekeeping:

- Ensure all areas are tidy and clear, especially the removal of unnecessary combustible and waste materials.
- Conduct an intense plant visual inspection before start-up - including the buildings, machinery, utilities, storage areas, fire extinguishing appliances, emergency systems and documentation.
- Preserve good storage practices during start-up and restocking - such as clear aisle spaces, avoiding/reducing storage of idle pallets, segregating incompatible materials, following of MSDS in chemical or hazardous storages etc.

Access and Security:

- Ensure adequate security arrangements are put in place.
- Trim and remove weeds that may have grown during idle periods.
- Make certain that yard storage is minimized and kept clear of buildings.

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