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Emerson helps Solutia Upgrade Control System at Chemical Plant in Wales

Phased migration to DeltaV™ digital automation system brings increased reliability and a standard control system across all of the company's sites

Emerson Process Management has completed the second phase of a major upgrade of the control system at the Solutia chemical manufacturing plant in Newport, South Wales, migrating their existing control system to a DeltaV digital automation system. The three-phase project restructures the system architecture to a high speed, fibre based system, upgrades existing PROVUE consoles to the latest DeltaV consoles and integrates the three existing control rooms into one centralised location.

Since 1982, the Emerson PROVOX distributed control system at the Solutia plant has provided flexible and reliable control. It has been well maintained and regularly upgraded with Emerson keeping Solutia fully advised about the continued availability of spares and support. However, much of the equipment is now approaching 20 years old and the need to run the plant continuously, combined with pressure for improved product quality and reduced downtime, meant that Solutia needed to plan for the time when spares would no longer be available.

Emerson worked with Solutia on a worldwide basis to develop a System Life Plan. This involved assessing the systems investment and prioritising the needs of individual sites. The Newport plant was planned for phased migration from the current DCS to the DeltaV system. The objectives of the upgrade include increased flexibility, increased speed of communications, more robust infrastructure, increased reliability and a standardised control system across the company's manufacturing sites.

Solutia needed to restructure their system architecture in line with current needs, and wanted to take advantage of the benefits of the latest fibre optic networks. Phase 1 of the project was to upgrade from the Provox Highway 1, based on copper cable, to the much faster Highway 2 network, that uses fibre optic technology. This was implemented by two Emerson engineers working on site with four Solutia engineers.

To reduce the time the plant would be off-line, preparatory work and the installation of new hardware and associated cabling were completed in advance. The upgrade was finished within the two-day planned shutdown that was scheduled for the company to carry out major maintenance work and in-vessel inspections. The project required just 30 hours to complete, and the plant was back on line as planned. The changeover was straightforward, and there have been no further interruptions to production.

The second phase of the project was to upgrade the operator consoles that were approaching the end of their life. Solutia has one console in operation in the plant production area and is planning to install a further three, one of which will be used for systems development. All will be Windows® based.

Phase 3 of the project involves consolidating the three existing control rooms into one centralised control room. This integration will provide cost savings and improvements in efficiency. It will also ensure that all units are operated from a location well removed from major accident hazards. Completion of this phase will enable multiple production units to be run from a central location.

As part of a separate project, the boiler plant on site now has a DeltaV controller acting as an interface between a PLC and the operator station. The DeltaV controller was chosen for the interface based on its flexibility for the application, it also enables remote operation of the boiler. The interface application enabled Solutia to evaluate the potential power and flexibility of the DeltaV system.

The migration to the DeltaV system is proving to be a great success and the upgrades have all been completed within the time allowed for the shut down required for the statutory inspections. No additional plant closures have been necessary. The objectives of the upgrade are being met.

- ENDS -

Notes for the Editor:

About Solutia in Newport, South Wales

The 316 acre Solutia site is 3 miles from the centre of Newport and close to the point where the River Usk joins the Severn estuary. The plant and its 200 employees, produce over 150,000 tonnes of product annually. Product lines include organic phosphonates, intermediates and plasticisers that are used in the manufacture of washing powders, floor coverings, tyres, safety windows and windscreens.

About Emerson Process Management

Emerson Process Management (www.EmersonProcess.com), an Emerson business, is a leader in helping businesses automate their production, processing and distribution in the chemical, oil and gas, refining, pulp and paper, power, food and beverage, pharmaceutical and other industries. The company combines superior products and technology with industry-specific engineering, consulting, project management and maintenance services. Its brands include PlantWeb[®], Fisher[®], Micro Motion[®], Rosemount[®], Mobrey[®], Daniel[®], Bristol[®], DeltaV[™], Ovation[®], and AMS[™] Suite.

About Emerson

Emerson is a global leader in bringing technology and engineering together to provide innovative solutions to customers through its network power, process management, industrial automation, climate technologies, and appliance and tools businesses. Sales in fiscal 2005 were \$17.3 billion. For more information, visit www.GoToEmerson.com

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