

must develop a framework describing these elements. The framework describes how each element of the program will be carried out initially and documents expected near-term improvements to be implemented to these processes. Over time, this framework evolves into a program description as the operator learns from its experience and that of other operators, and incorporates that knowledge into an ever-improving process description. The proposed required program elements include:

- A process for identifying all potential threats to pipeline integrity in each high consequence area. Section 2.2 of ANSI/ASME B31.8S standard describes how all significant threats to the pipeline can be grouped into 9 categories. It further regroups these 9 categories of threats into three types: time dependent threats (e.g., external corrosion, internal corrosion, stress corrosion cracking); stable or static threats (e.g., manufacturing related defects (defective pipe seam, defective pipe), welding/fabrication related (defective girth or fabrication weld, wrinkle bend, etc.), equipment failure (gasket, control/relief valve, pump seal, etc.); and time independent threats (e.g., third party damage).

- A baseline assessment plan (discussed in § 192.763(e)).

- Criteria for remedial actions to address integrity issues raised by the assessment methods and information analysis, (criteria for repair are discussed in B31.8S, Section 7). These criteria recognize that the nature and timing of action related to a defect depend on the severity of the defect. Some require immediate action, some require mitigation over a prescribed period, and some must be monitored to ensure they do not represent a future threat to the integrity of the pipeline. ASME B31.8S, Section 7, also recognizes that the repair threshold an operator chooses for taking action on a recognized defect is related to the time acceptable before a follow-up reassessment is performed. If only very small defects are not mitigated in the pipe, then a longer time is acceptable before reassessment is needed. Repair criteria in Section 7 of ASME B31.8S reflect the current reality that developing assessment techniques, such as direct assessment, are not yet as mature as in-line-inspection and pressure testing. Therefore, operators choosing direct assessment must either excavate all indications, or they must reassess their pipe at shorter time intervals.

- A risk analysis that considers all available information about the integrity

of the entire pipeline, evaluates its relevance to each segment within an HCA, and estimates the likelihood and consequences of a failure. Requirements and guidance on the gathering, review and integration of risk factor data is provided in ASME B31.8S, Section 4. Acceptable approaches to analyzing the risks associated with each segment are presented in ASME B31.8S, Section 5. The purpose of this analysis is to utilize the best available information, including operating experience on the entire pipeline, to determine the susceptibility to failure of each segment to each potential threat, then to estimate the relative magnitude of the threat so assessment actions can be prioritized.

- A continual process of assessment and evaluation to maintain a pipeline's integrity: Reassessment intervals for different assessment techniques, pipe stress levels and characteristics of residual defects (e.g., predicted failure pressure, hydro-test pressure, or DA repair scope) are discussed in ASME B31.8S, Section 8, and summarized in Table 8–1.

- Identification of preventive and mitigative measures to protect the high consequence area: ASME B31.8S presents an extensive listing of preventive measures in Section 7. RSPA/OPS expects each operator to evaluate the value of instituting these practices in the light of information on threats posed to each segment and to implement applicable and cost-beneficial measures.

- A performance plan, including methods to measure the effectiveness of the program: Performance measurement is treated in the discussion of performance planning in Section 9 of ASME B31.8S, and candidate measures for each threat are presented in Appendix SP–A.

- A process for review of integrity assessment results and information analysis by a person qualified to evaluate the results and information. An operator must use qualified persons with the necessary technical expertise to evaluate and analyze the results and data from the integrity assessments, the periodic evaluation, the information analyses, etc. Qualifications for these people must be documented and records made available to verify qualifications.

- A management of change process, as outlined in ASME/ANSI B31.8S, Section 11.

- A quality assurance process, as outlined in ASME/ANSI B31.8S, Section 12.

- A communication plan that includes the elements of ASME/ANSI B31.8S, Section 10, and that includes a process for addressing safety concerns

raised by OPS, including safety concerns OPS raises on behalf of a State or local authority with which OPS has an interstate agent agreement.

- A process for providing, by electronic or other means, a copy of the operator's integrity management program to a State authority with which OPS has an interstate agent agreement.

- A process for ensuring that each integrity assessment is being conducted in a manner that minimizes environmental and safety risks.

One of the most important elements of an integrity management program is operator qualification. This proposed rule requires an operator to verify that supervisors possess and maintain a thorough knowledge of the integrity management program and its elements for which they are responsible. Individuals who qualify as supervisors for any aspect of integrity management programs must have appropriate training or experience in that area. This proposed rule requires the operator to document requirements for these supervisory individuals and others, who are responsible for gathering and interpreting the results of integrity assessments.

(e) What Must Be in the Baseline Assessment Plan? Proposed § 192.763(e)

The proposed rule requires that an operator must include in its written baseline assessment plan each of the following elements:

- Potential threats to the integrity of each pipeline segment. Candidate threats are discussed in this section under § 192.763(f).

- The method or methods selected to assess the integrity of the line pipe in the high consequence area. The integrity assessment method(s) used must be based on threats to which the segment is susceptible. More than one method and/or tool may be required to address all the threats in the pipeline segment. An operator must assess the integrity of the line pipe by: internal inspection tool or tools capable of detecting corrosion, and any other threats to which the pipe segment is susceptible; pressure test conducted in accordance with subpart J; direct assessment in accordance with the proposed requirements; or other technology that the operator demonstrates can provide an equivalent understanding of the condition of the line pipe. An operator choosing to use the other technology option must notify RSPA/OPS 180 days before conducting the assessment. RSPA/OPS expects an operator to make the best use of current and innovative technology in assessing the integrity of the line pipe.