

and then on board a local train (no glass in the windows, families complete with livestock) for a trip up the coast to another similar inspection. Four days travel; four hours of work. But then, this is not a job paid by the hour.

Next a different facility, a different kind of management, a complicated physical inventory in which six inspectors are involved. The manager is very polite. He invites you into his plant and says please do what you wish and then leave. Nothing is prepared. No staff is available to help. What is going on? Is the plant in violation of its commitments or did the last inspection team annoy the manager without even realizing it (there was no mention in the report)? What to do? For the inspector there is no easy answer. If you cancel the inspection, you waste valuable time and money. Perhaps this will give the plant time to cover up a real violation. If you continue, the results are probably going to be unsatisfactory. The Agency will not be pleased; the regulatory authority will not be pleased. A possible violator may obtain the time needed to cover up.

Fortunately, most of these situations yield to diplomacy: the manager finally agrees to co-operate and in fact everything is in order. And what if everything is not? Well, that is a situation with which inspectors hope they will never have to deal. So far that has been the case. Of course, errors are found, as happens in any audit, but these are generally resolved and most often do not involve significant quantities of material. It is like the staff of a bank working overtime to balance a one dollar discrepancy; the amount is not important but the error is.

After a week in one place for such a major inventory it is back on an aircraft for a