

legitimate operations against extensive express cover-up attempts such as external and internal plant decontamination, replacement of a number of sensitive equipments, breaking and re-fitting of joints in a rather large number, etc.

In order to resolve anomalies, the nature and timing of alterations ought to be assessed by the team. For doing so, a facility statement should be requested explaining the time (whether the alteration was done before or after information on the imminence of an inspection), nature, and purpose of the alteration. On this basis, the inspection team should attempt to

- assess the plausibility of the given statement;
- verify, to the extent possible, details given in this statement (e.g., by record evaluation, interviews, sampling and analysis of decontaminants used, visual inspection, etc.), the level of intrusion being governed by the nature and extent of the alteration detected;
- evaluate the potential consequences in case of major alterations and assuming that the statement, to the extent not verifiable any more, may have been falsified deliberately.

Based on these activities, the team may find itself in a position either to conclude that despite detected alterations no indications of an actual violation or a severe risk to that end were encountered, or that such indications exist. In the latter case, the team would proceed to inspection phase four.

The third type of plant to consider is one where no traces of schedule-1-chemicals were detected and no signs of cover-up activities were encountered either while the team still concludes that the plant, given its access to raw material and its technological lay-out and security and other features, may pose an immediate and significant risk to the objectives of the convention. The baseline for such a judgment should be the best international practice at chemical industry plants of a comparable type. Such a plant would consequently show a number of unexpected features as compared to other, and notably state-of-the-art plants.

At that stage, an inspection team might decide to do one of the following:

- assess the plausibility of the plant design and of other features encountered;
- carry out additional analytical investigations, as a back-up for the already performed analytical tests and at other sampling points;
- verify facility records, operating records, and further documentation for confirmation of the facility statement.