CHALLENGE

At Oiltanking, one of the world’s leading independent storage partners for oils, chemicals, gases and dry bulk, safe and efficient operations are the top priorities. One of the key pillars in the strategic business plan for Oiltanking is the safety of people while at work. In 2014, to achieve maximum safety, the Oiltanking Terminal Amsterdam (OTA) was looking for improvement and standardisation of their Permit to Work, Isolation Management and Risk Assessment procedures. Oiltanking Terminal Amsterdam recognised the need for a digital Permit to Work system to reinforce new working procedures and to facilitate change within the organisation.

OTA strives to be leading in all the fields that it operates in, including the establishment of new benchmarks for health, safety, security and environment (HSSE) performance and Control of Work. As part of this vision, the company strives towards a single, optimum standard for OTA and is continuously implementing upgrades and improvements to its processes. Depending on the season, projects and maintenance activities, an average of 100 up to 200 permits per week are issued, and OTA felt the need to have a transparent, structured workflow and overview.

EVISION’S SOLUTION

Although OTA used NOGEPA standards for all permit to work processes, there were small differences and inconsistencies about the processes and procedures in place at the terminal. eVision’s SMEs worked alongside Oiltanking’s frontline operational staff to determine the exact processes and reviewed all policies and risk assessments.

The software system was then configured to meet all Oiltanking requirements, capturing both local knowledge, legislation and law, and company standards, and combined this with best practice flows and rules in the system. This provided a custom look and feel to the system, with the flexibility of a tailor-made system, and the implementation speed of an out-of-the-box product.

“In the decision-making process for a solution, we specifically looked for one that would improve our isolations process, and at the same time allow us to standardise our processes and comply with local and global requirements. eVision does not only offer solutions and services that are fully aligned with our requirements, they also have a great track record in delivering robust, scalable and configurable solutions to major players in the hazardous industries.”

Roelof Zeilmaker, HSSE Manager at Oiltanking
THE FUTURE

OTA continuously improves its permit-to-work process. For example, the permit issuing desk (first located inside the central control room) was relocated, allowing Operations to issue the many permits efficiently without disrupting control room activities. Furthermore, the recently introduced role of Permit Officer allows OTA to process permits even faster, and with more consistency.

BENEFITS

In 2015, Permit Vision was implemented at OTA, replacing OTA’s paper-based system. Permit Vision digitises and integrates the Permit to Work, Isolation Management, and Risk Assessment processes, improves the overall safety and safety awareness of the crew, and gives the operational management more control and overview of all work carried out on the terminal.

The system covers and integrates work permits, as well as Job Safety Analysis (JSA). Every work permit that involves work with a high-risk potential requires a JSA, while Isolation refers to the securing of the installation where work is to be executed. The steps in the workflow are secured with the role owners’ signatures using the role-based system Permit Vision.

In the first months of the implementation, the advantages of the new system became apparent. At the time, Remco Zijsling, Chief Assistant Shift 3 / Operations concluded: “The new process is great, improvements are always welcome. In the end, it is for everybody’s safety. After a while, you notice that everyone is starting to get used to the new system and process, which makes it easier for everyone to work along. Not just for us, but also for permit holders.”

For OTA, the integrated software system set a new standard in safety, as it allows for real-time overview of what is occurring at any time. Daan van Rooijen, Manager Operations at Oiltanking: “Without eVision, we would not have made this huge step in operational safety— it has substantially improved across all aspects of our operations. Not only does Permit Vision ensure that the right people are involved in the permit process at the right time, it also provides us an oversight of all ongoing activity across the terminal”.

OTA has made some big changes to the process and although these are still ongoing, several benefits have already been gained:

- **Transparency** in the work permits, JSA and isolations
- **Digital** documentation and archiving
- **An actual overview** of planned, executed and in-progress work
- **A connection** between the work permits and JSA

“Without eVision, we would not have made this **huge step in operational safety**”

-Daan van Rooijen, Oiltanking Operations Manager