

VIS Position on Effective Vendor Manual Programs

An effective vendor manual program fully supports plant installation, operation and maintenance processes in a user friendly, up-to-date, and cost effective approach. When properly implemented, this enhances plant reliability, maximizes personnel and nuclear safety, and minimizes maintenance and engineering costs. It should be fully integrated with other plant programs to minimize cost and reduce the possibility of error. Consistent, well-maintained and accurate vendor manuals begin with:

Management Support. Executive management must give strong and continual support (commitment and budget) by designating a single program owner. Because of organizational considerations and budget requirements, the program cannot be successful without this support.

Program Ownership. Someone needs to be in charge and responsible for setting up and implementing the program. Focusing program ownership within an engineering organization with aptitude for vendor information will ensure greater success.

Definition Of The Vendor Manual Program. A program must be defined that resolves all the issues related to vendor manuals. As important as meeting regulatory aspects, the program must benefit plant users, provide them the correct information and do it in an easy and efficient manner.

Implemented By Technical Experts that provide confidence in the completed product. Selecting experienced technical experts ensures a thoroughly conceived, well-aligned program that is efficient and cost effective.

A Best Practice Program ...

1. *Controls documents at the individual vendor publication level.*

Each vendor publication should be controlled by a unique plant number to the vendor publication number, revision and date level (the plant number may utilize a prefix that identifies the document as a individual vendor document -such as VD). The vendor document information should be accessible by computer inquiry. Different revisions/dates of the same vendor document should not exist, unless they are required to support different plant configurations. In this case, the publications should have unique plant numbers.

2. *Covers plant equipment with a current and complete vendor manual.*

Equipment requiring maintenance or adjustment should be included in a vendor manual program that includes a process to periodically check for current information. The program should capture and incorporate all technical information received at the plant. The identification of the equipment that should be included in the program is determined by plant requirements. As a minimum, safety related equipment and equipment for critical systems must be included in the VM program.

3. ***Ensures that vendor manuals are reviewed by engineering for accuracy, applicability, and completeness.***

The manuals should be reviewed by engineering for accuracy, applicability and completeness. Plant specific changes to the manuals should be reviewed and controlled by engineering.

4. ***Ensures that only vendor documents controlled in the document control system are used by plant personnel.***

Vendor manuals should be controlled through the plant records management system. Uncontrolled documents received from vendors should not be referenced or used until they have been reviewed and incorporated into the VM. The plant records management system should identify the current applicable VM/VD revision level.

5. ***Is implemented by a dedicated group knowledgeable and experienced in vendor documents and that provides program ownership and leadership.***

Vendor manual maintenance is a learned through experience. Though not rocket science, it is best managed by a small, dedicated group with this experience and training.

6. ***Ensures that vendor documents received by site/plant personnel are submitted for review and incorporation into the vendor manual.***

One of the more critical parts of the program is to ensure that all vendor publications, service letters and/or advisories received by plant personnel are submitted for incorporation into the VM. This requirement prevents plant personnel from using unreviewed information, and provides greater assurance on the completeness of the VM.

7. ***Ensures that significant changes are available for immediate review by the plant.***

Significant changes that affect critical plant equipment should be identified to the plant immediately for impact evaluation and required action.

8. ***Ensures that changes are reviewed in a timely manner.***

VM changes received from the vendor should be screened up front for significance. VM changes should be reviewed in a timely manner so that changes can be incorporated into work documents to support ongoing activities. Review time frames should vary depending on the significance of the change.

- 9. Ensures that departments affected by a change are given the opportunity to review the change and incorporate into affected documents.**

The VM program should ensure that changes to VMs are reviewed by affected departments and any required changes are incorporated into the affected documents.

- 10. Incorporates plant changes resulting from internal operating experience and external operating experience.**

It is important for the plant VM to be a living document reflecting the needs and configuration of the plant. Plant programs should ensure it is updated as necessary to reflect industry guidance, operating experience and unique requirements of the installed equipment.

- 11. (For USA nuclear power plants) ensures that a vendor interface program is conducted that meets the requirements of GL 90-03 and 83-28.**

While the minimum requirements of GL 90-03 for vendor interface must be met, the vendor recontact process should be performance driven not compliance driven. That is, the program should supply the plant customer the current information needed to properly and efficiently perform work. Publications or components not requiring recontact should be captured in the program so that additional recontacts are not attempted.

- 12. Links individual vendor documents to plant equipment.**

Equipment cross-references should be developed to the VD level of information. The identification of the VTDs by component should be controlled and located in the plant equipment database accessible by all plant personnel.

- 13. Identifies the need for vendor manual information with the purchase of new plant equipment.**

A specification, addendum, or standard clause should be utilized in the purchase of new equipment that identifies to the vendor the need and requirements for vendor manual information.

- 14. Ensures that a master copy of the VMs is maintained that is not available for checkout.**

A complete and accurate set of VMs should be maintained as the original masters. Since this set cannot be used, the set should reflect the as-approved by engineering condition of the manuals.

15. *Ensures that drawings in the manual are controlled separately from the VM.*

Drawings contained in the manuals should be controlled as separate documents from the VM and only "information only" copies of the drawing included in the manuals. The number of "information only" drawings included in the manual should be minimized, and the balance should be referenced by its control number.

16. *Ensures that required information in a manual is legible.*

Information in the manuals should be legible. Where legibility is a problem, resolution should be sought by obtaining a new copy from the vendor, by reproduction means, by annotation means, or by stamping the document identifying the legibility concern.