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# Letter to the Editor

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Safety in the chemical industry has moved to centre stage ever since the Bhopal Tragedy of 1984. Safety is usually achieved by add-on equipment such as controls, alarms and trips after the plant has been designed. A concept called Inherently Safer Design (ISD) by Prof. Trevor Kletz has captured attention globally and is gaining support from the industry as well as researchers. It parallels 'Pollution Prevention' and 'Waste Minimisation' concepts in pollution control and is in tune with similar other concepts such as 'Green Chemistry', 'Sustainable Plant Design', and 'Life-time Cost Analysis', etc. Basically, it builds safety into the process development and early design stages so that the add-on safety measures are not needed or are minimised. Further, the remainder risks are more easily controlled. The leading professional bodies, such as the Institution of Chemical Engineers (IChemE, UK) and the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE, USA) are actively supporting it as are the regulators, such as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE, UK).

Realising the significant potential of ISD to provide a quantum leap in process safety, the UK Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) has funded a project on making its use more widespread and user friendly. As a step in this direction, we wish to determine the current status of ISD usage by way of a brief questionnaire. It can be obtained from our web site as follows:

For responders from industry and consulting organisations: http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/cg/isd/isd_ind.htm.

For responders from Academics, R&D Organisations and Regulatory Bodies http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/cg/isd/isd_acd.htm.

The questionnaire will take less than 10 min to complete. We would be grateful if your readers will spare the time to do so at the earliest, preferably today, and return it by e-mail, fax or post. After all, all chemical engineers have a stake in making our industry safer so that its public image as well as the profitability improves. These will also favourably impact the capital investment and R&D funding. The responders to our questionnaire will be kept posted on future developments in this project if they would so indicate in the questionnaire.

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