



Brussels, November 26, 2008

To: Asset Management Europe and Africa ExxonMobil Employees,  
Asset Management Europe OSP Employees  
Asset Management Europe and Africa Contractor Management and employees

While already assigned to my new position in the organization, I clearly wanted to spend a bit more time with you to talk Safety one last time and reflect over our journey through last 22 months.

When I took the role early 07, and looking back at our Safety results and trend back end 2006, you've all heard me asking for a true **step change**. I wanted Europe Africa Asset Management, its outsourced service providers and its contractors becoming the "place to be".

Several initiatives were launched at various levels of our organizations as well as different stages, focusing on establishing a Safety Culture and improving the Quality of the execution of our Safety processes, only to get us in that direction.

For all of last year and most of this one, it really looked like we were able to make that step change. But after early bad signals received through last summer - subject of my 2 last letters - as you probably all know by now, reality came back to hit us very hard last month in Egypt, the most awful way when one of our friend, a contractor part of our family for many years, could not make it back home in the evening and never will anymore...

I obviously cannot write this letter, without referring to this incident, and without expressing my sincere and deep sorrows for the family and friends of our colleague.

This is the most direct and horrible way to remind ALL of us that our work environment can be REALLY dangerous, that we don't do all we do in the area of Safety, for fun or whatever odd reason, but simply because we believe in it and we NEED to collectively work to preserve our environment from these things to happen..... The most horrible way too, to illustrate what I tried to express in my previous 2 letters, namely:

Complacency kills!

We should NEVER drop the ball on anything; NEVER accept routine in Safety... It simply might be lethal!

At the same time, I also do NOT want to discount all the efforts, focus and great results achieved over the past 2 years... all the things I was really proud about, until this tragic event blew all away and what I still consider a step change and achievement of solid foundations for the future.

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So, we should still look at the Safety pyramid, looking at the bottom and being extremely proud.... we should then look at the top, understand why we do all that and tell ourselves we're ALL collectively committed so it can NEVER happen again....



For this particular reason, for our Egyptian friend Hatem, we will NEVER stop, we will relentlessly fight complacency. We will think longer term but NEVER must forget the **Basics**.

If any of you is still not convinced, in the same month, in Norway, one of our contractors, while working on a car wash installation, also got an electrical shock, fortunately without further consequence. Again improper Lock out / Tag out. He was lucky,..... Hatem was not..... How many of you want to continue to push your luck?

To conclude, I am very proud of all what YOU did in laying, what I believe are, extremely solid foundations, very proud of the focus YOU were all able to put on our Safety processes across all functions and countries in Europe and Africa. The recent external OIMS assessment, conducted by a team of Safety experts from across the world, confirmed just that as well as the directions we took together.

Still many challenges and changes are lying in front of us like the new set up of the centralized ABB Helpdesk, continuous changes in the contractor base, fluctuations in the investment levels, etc. and short term, the beginning of the winter and difficult working and driving conditions in many countries.

But despite all changes, it's at the end always down to people, professionalism and team spirit. YOU have proven you can deliver all of that, I'm very proud of what YOU all achieved and more importantly how you achieved it, as a real and energized team of people, believing in what they do, professionals, dedicated to Safety.

I know you will all continue the journey, I know that I can count on your support to my successor Eric Biriotti and to my old, now his, team.

Thanks again. All the best to you and your families and my early wishes for a Safe, Happy Christmas and a great New Year .... Just NEVER drop the ball... never...