

26 March 2004

BP Pipelines – Team Leaders (Core & SWAT)

BP Pipelines – E&M District Engineers, Project Managers & Construction Coordinators

BP Pipelines – E&M Corrosion Specialists

BP Pipelines – Contractors who perform excavation work for BP or any BP-operated joint venture pipeline

OQ (Operator Qualification) Change Notice - Excavation

As previously announced in November 2003 to BP Pipelines employees, effective the 1st of April 2004, BP Pipelines (North America) will require qualifications for the OQ Covered Task “Excavation of a pipeline” (BP contractor task number 32). This means that all excavation conducted with the intent to access or expose any BP-operated pipeline (including BP-operated joint ventures) must be conducted by qualified persons in accordance with the U.S. DOT’s “Operator Qualification” (OQ) Rule.

It is not necessary to be a certified or otherwise qualified ‘equipment operator’ to qualify on this task (however, equipment operators may qualify on this task). The task qualification is designed to qualify an individual to properly direct and observe a pipeline excavation and backfilling project. In the vast majority of excavation activities on BP pipelines, operations, maintenance, or project employees of BP will be onsite during the excavation and will be qualified using an “in-house” BP qualification (OQ SYM 07). In isolated circumstances, contractors (e.g. inspection contractors or construction contractors) working for BP may need to conduct excavation activities on their own under the OQ Rule. In these cases, it will be necessary for contractors to become qualified as of April 1, 2004 using NCCER’s Module 62107-02 “Excavation and Backfilling” (consisting of classroom training and a short written examination). [BP’s Construction Coordinators have already been working with our Inspection contractors to acquire this qualification for their staff where appropriate.] As with any OQ task, for the longer term, BP believes that all contractors who market themselves as ‘excavation’ contractors (or contractors offering excavation as a service) should have their regularly-employed personnel qualified under OQ to the extent possible. We recommend that all BP ‘excavation’ contractors target to have their key people (who actually perform or ‘observe and direct’ excavation work at jobsites) qualified for the excavation task within 6 months (i.e. by 1 October 2004), regardless of whether a BP ‘excavation qualified’ person is normally onsite during this work or not.

Please note at the present time there are no plans to add Excavation to the NCCER Maintenance Assessment (150 question written exam). Therefore, the only way to achieve the qualification will be through completion of the training Module and associated written assessment. NCCER and representative SMEs (Subject Matter Experts) from API member companies are developing a Performance Verification checklist that can also be used to qualify for this task. However, it is not likely that this

PV will be available for use before May 2004. Further information on the Module and Sponsors who can offer employee training are available at NCCER's website www.nccer.org or by calling NCCER at (352) 334-0911.

Information and details on BP's OQ compliance requirements for BP contractors is available at www.bppipelines.com/OQRule.html