

Technology Vision: Information Technology & Management Systems *Occidental Petroleum Corporation*

The Health, Environment and Safety Department (HES) with the assistance of the Information Technology (IT) group looked into the possibility of converting the company's Comprehensive Action Tracking and Trending System for HES incidents, reviews and action plans from a mainframe environment into a networked PC-based environment.

Items of importance to HES were:

- Ability to transfer legacy mainframe information into the new environment
- Stability of the networked PC environment
- Ease of use for end-users with respect to data entry
- Enhanced functionality (vs. mainframe) for database queries and reporting.

The key item of importance to the IT group was that the system be built on an established software platform that was commercially supported (shrink-wrapped software would be the foundation for the database and reporting tools). After looking at numerous products, the answer was found in Lotus Notes (database) and Microsoft Access (reporting). Both products were commercial "off-the-shelf" software, and both were already familiar to a number of IT personnel and used in various locations throughout the company. Lotus Notes was capable of accepting legacy data download from the mainframe and could be made very user-friendly with appropriate use of forms. The Notes-Access combination worked well for the extensive and customized reporting requirements.

The following are the things that helped make this project successful:

- Regular communication between IT and HES
- IT staff that were knowledgeable about the mainframe legacy system
- IT willingness to use an outside contractor that was an expert in Notes and Access application development.