

University of Limerick offers masterclass with globally renowned health and safety specialists



Michael Kennedy, Director SPDS Ltd., Ron Bell OBE, Executive Director of ESC Ltd. and Peter Davern, Conference Chair, Department of Chemical Sciences, University of Limerick

Recently, the Department of Chemical Sciences (CS) and the Synthesis and Solid State Pharmaceutical Centre (SSPC), a Science Foundation Ireland funded centre, based at the University of Limerick (UL), collaborated to offer a 1-day industry-focused Master Class in Process Safety, hosted by the Bernal Institute.

The event brought together internationally and nationally recognised experts in the domain to share their knowledge and experience in the safe day-to-day running of pharmaceutical and chemical production plants.

Speaking at the event, Sally Martin, Global Vice President of Health, Safety, Security and Environment (HSSE) at Shell, said:

“For us, Process Safety is a ‘licence to operate’ issue. And, fortuitously, what we’ve learnt is that when we get process safety right, we often get other things right at the same time. The skills and discipline needed for effective process safety management are, in many cases, the same skills we need to manage other aspects of our business performance. So paying the right level of attention to process safety has a direct and positive impact on the profitability of our business.”

Conference Chair, Peter Davern (Dept. of Chemical Sciences), added:

“The significant contribution that Ireland’s PharmaChem sector makes to the country’s economy is widely recognised, and rightly so. However, we must always be mindful that what we’re dealing with here is a sector that is inherently highly hazardous; and while quality and throughput are key drivers within the sector, the bottom line is that without the daily delivery of effective process safety management the whole sector risks going up in smoke, literally!”

The Master Class involved a blend of plenary lectures and interactive workshops delivered by internationally recognised experts and specialists in process safety, Sally Martin, Shell, Trish Kerin, Director of the IChemE Safety Centre and Ron Bell OBE, Executive Director of ESC Ltd., an internationally recognised expert in functional safety. Ian Travers, Principal Process Safety Consultant at Leidos with a world expert in process safety management, Mark Gallagher, CEO of Performance Insights Ltd., a motivational speaker with over 30 years’ experience in F1 motorsport, and Michael Kennedy, Director of SPDS Ltd., and a recognised expert in thermochemical process safety.

Ian Travers, Principal Process Safety Consultant at Leidos, said:

“The Process Safety Masterclass was an exciting opportunity for people interested in risk management and business excellence in the chemicals and pharmaceutical sector to share experiences and good practice in the prevention of catastrophic incidents. The best thing about the event was the mix of people and the range of backgrounds of the delegates. This combination of new engineers and more experienced practitioners made sure that this issue is kept alive and that the next generation, who are vital in ensuring the future safety and integrity of chemical plant and processes, are inspired to improve on existing thinking and practice.”

Over 100 chemical engineers, chemists and process safety specialists/managers attended from more than 40 Irish PharmaChem-related organisations with a view to improving their awareness of and competence in process safety. For the second year running, the master class has been a resounding success as process safety is a disciplined framework for managing the integrity of operating systems and processes that handle hazardous substances by applying good design principles, engineering, and operating practices.

For further media information contact

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