**Global Significant Risks – Variance to Policy**

A Global Significant Risk (GSR) is a corporate safety policy which describes the minimum standards to be used to mitigate the risk of someone being killed when performing their work task. Due to the significance of the energy involved and severity of potential injury, it is expected that the policy will be followed for the tasks exposed to these risks.

However, there are times that the particular task cannot be performed to the minimum standards of the corporate GSR policy. This is the time to write a Variance, using the Variance Policy, GSR FCX-21. This can be found on the Corporate Health and Safety Sharepoint and has been shared with this weekly message for convenience in the discussions this week.

Why a variance? The FCX Variance policy is written to help maintain visibility to area managers and to site H&S managers of the types of tasks that cannot be performed using the minimum controls specified in the corporate policy. The Variance Policy requires those planning and executing the job to consider, before the work is to be done, how the task will be performed with the same levels of safety protection, or better, as the policy stipulates. By requiring the site area manager and the H&S manager, or their delegates, to review and sign-off on these variance requests, they are provided an opportunity to challenge and ask questions about the specified controls to be used, and to discuss if a new control should be sought and/or developed.

It is important to recognize that the Variance Policy supersedes any reference in GSRs written prior to July 2014 that reference an “Exemption”. A Variance shall be sought, not an exemption. Also, there are no permanent Variances, please be sure to review the Variance Policy completely.

**Senior Leaders:**

* How often do you review with your area managers the number of variances issued in your area of responsibility?
* Are there any which you feel could have or should have been rejected that were approved? Can a new control be developed to provide employees with improved safe performance of the specific task?

**Supervisors/Superintendents:**

* It is expected that you are familiar with the GSRs and will recognize the conditions in which a Variance will be required. How comfortable are you with this requirement? H&S are a resource to you in determining if a Variance is required.
* Do all variances specify the safety controls to be used that are as effective, or more effective as those specified in the GSR Policy?

**Employees:**

* Are the alternative controls discussed in your pre-job safety analysis or tailgate?
* Are their improved controls that you think should be considered for your safety? Will you commit to suggest these to your supervisor, superintendent, or H&S rep?