supports the subsequent updates following inspections or operational changes.

The application process and all team decisions are fully reflected in rbiAsyst, allowing for total transparency and, crucially, auditability. The team study and implementation process built into this methodology has also widened individuals' knowledge, improved a 'working together' culture across various disciplines, and captured valuable plant knowledge.

"We have now established a consistent, structured and fully auditable RBI assurance system which has allowed us to reap many benefits," says Clive Breeden, BP technology manager, materials and corrosion. Aside from the obvious targeted inspection with resultant cost benefits, there have been some real gains in terms of teamwork and re-defining process operations through the formation of multi-discipline teams.

"These teams have increased our understanding of key process variables and the impact on potential damage mechanisms. One of the important challenges for the future will be to ensure we maintain an ongoing commitment to the RBI process."

During the early project phase, the RBI assurance process was reviewed and endorsed by an independent peer group. It was also successful against subsequent audits carried out by the UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and meets the essential requirements of the *RBI Best-practice Guide* issued by the HSE.

"We believe that Hull has addressed RBI in a very comprehensive and professional way and we are investing a lot of effort into it and getting a lot out of it," Verdon-Smith adds. "It has had good buy-in and support from the manufacturing teams which has been really encouraging. We have already seen evidence that the new inspection programmes are providing increased integrity assurance."

But the Hull team warns there is no short cut to RBI driven integrity assurance of plant and equipment.

The implementation needs commitment and support from site leadership teams to be successful. The process also needs to be thorough and provide the required self-assurance to inspection and plant operations engineers.

Operational parameters defined by RBI teams must also be monitored to ensure damage mechanism rates do not increase as well as to prevent initiation of new damage mechanisms.

BP Chemicals and PP SIMTECH recently signed an agreement making available the RBI assurance process and rbiAsyst to all BP sites worldwide. This provides an opportunity for any BP site, immaterial of the industry sector, to either implement this RBI assurance process for the first time, or to help enhance their existing RBI practices.