
Question 83: What are your recommended practices and categories for benchmarking FCC units? Include as appropriate, process performance, reliability, capital efficiency and operations.

Mike Teders (Valero)

Valero participates in the Solomon survey that benchmarks the refinery process units for energy and reliability. Independent to that commercial survey, we have benchmarked our FCC's on a yield basis using a constant pricing model, accounting for the feed quality differences. The results of the yield benchmarking are used to identify underperforming assets for potential capital improvements. Most recently, we have embarked on an aggressive unit monitoring program that utilizes the refinery data historian to report over 100 key process indicators of performance and reliability in a central data base.

The goal is to prevent unplanned downtime by monitoring key variables such as cyclone velocity and air distributor pressure drop. Valero has a separate energy stewardship program that each refinery uses to monitor energy efficiency on a unit-by-unit basis. We also utilize the catalyst supplier to review operating, yield and catalyst data to identify any issues as early as possible.

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