

**Enhancing logistics operations through strategic vigilance
-Case of Sonatrach-
تحسين العمليات اللوجستية من خلال اليقظة الإستراتيجية - حالة سوناطراك-
Améliorer les opérations logistiques grâce a la vielle stratégique
-Cas de Sonatrach-**

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Abstract:

Strategic vigilance in its various dimensions is a continuous process consisting of anticipating threats and opportunities, that is, reducing the risk situation that can help the organization succeed in its logistical operations, The importance of strategic vigilance lies in helping the organization enhance its logistical operations, and this is what we will discuss through this research in how to improve Logistical operations through strategic vigilance.

Key words: Logistics operations, Vigilance, Strategic vigilance, Sonatrach.

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ملخص:

اليقظة الإستراتيجية بأبعادها المختلفة هي عملية مستمرة تتكون من توقع التهديدات والفرص، أي تقليل حالة المخاطر التي يمكن أن تساعد المنظمة على النجاح في عملياتها اللوجستية، فأهمية اليقظة الإستراتيجية تكمن في مساعدة المنظمة على تعزيز عملياتها اللوجستية وهذا ما سنتطرق إليه من خلال هذا البحث في كيفية تحسين العمليات اللوجيستية من خلال اليقظة الإستراتيجية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: العمليات اللوجيستية، اليقظة، اليقظة الإستراتيجية، سوناطراك.

Résumé:

La vieille stratégique dans ses différentes dimensions est un processus continu consistant à anticiper les menaces et les opportunités, c'est-à-dire à réduire la situation de risque qui peut aider l'organisation à réussir ses opérations logistiques, L'importance de la vieille stratégique réside dans le fait d'aider l'organisation à améliorer ses opérations logistiques ; et c'est ce dont nous discuterons à travers cette recherche sur la manière d'améliorer les opérations logistiques grâce à La vieille stratégique.

Mots clés: Operations logistiques, Veille, Veille stratégique, Sonatrach.

Plan:

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Introduction:

The transformation of the world as a result of the globalization phenomenon towards a knowledge economy have made the nature of the environment dynamic and characterized by volatility and instability, forcing modern organizations to adopt new directions or tactical means to meet the challenges of this environment with logistics operations, These include the Strategic Vigilance, which combines vigilance in business strategy management and competition, on the one hand, analyses a range of political, social, economic and customer data, competitors and suppliers on the other, and is a tool for studying the future and building new visions of the organization .

The main question of this research is: **How to enhance logistics operations through strategic vigilance?**

1) Theoretical frame:

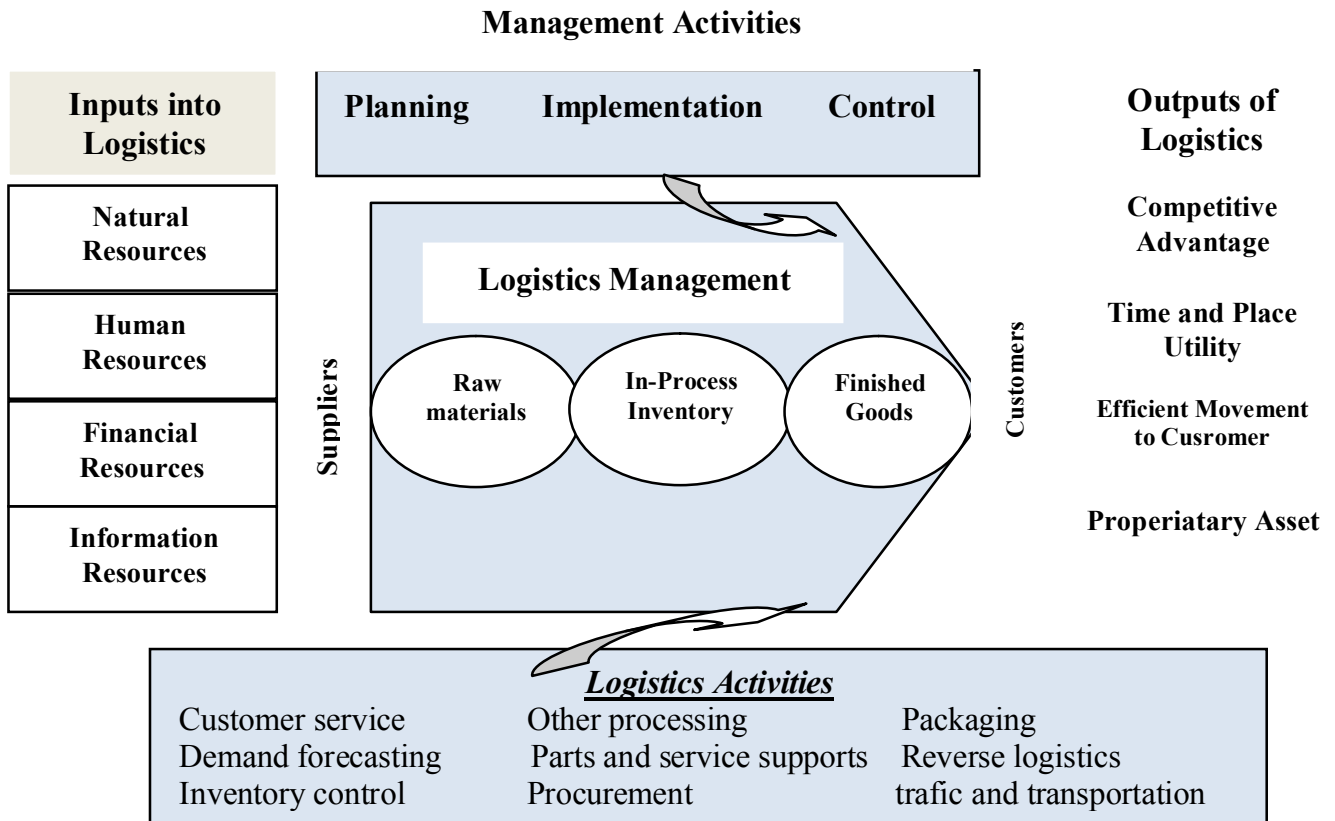
In the midst of the transformations of living at the local, international, and the challenges posed by the hub as a result of the so-called phenomenon of globalization from physical economics to economics based on information, science and the increasing use of technology, The organization must build a modern strategy adapted to the current situation. To adopt this strategy, it must work to track and follow up information. To this end, it has become necessary for organizations to recognize that information has a strategic value equivalent to any resource on which they depend in the performance of their activity based on vigilance in business strategy management and competition.

1-1) Introduction to logistics operations:

There are several definitions and concepts of logistics operations ,the most important of which is the definition of The American Council of Logistics Management defines logistics as "the process of planning, implementing and controlling the efficient, cost effective flow and storage of raw materials, in process inventory, finished goods and related information from point of origin to point of consumption for the purpose of conforming to customer's requirements"¹.

"Logistics is the process of strategically managing the logistics is the process of strategically managing the procurement, movement and storage of materials, parts and finished inventory through the organisation and its marketing channels in such a way that current and future profitability are maximised through the cost-effective fulfilment of orders"².

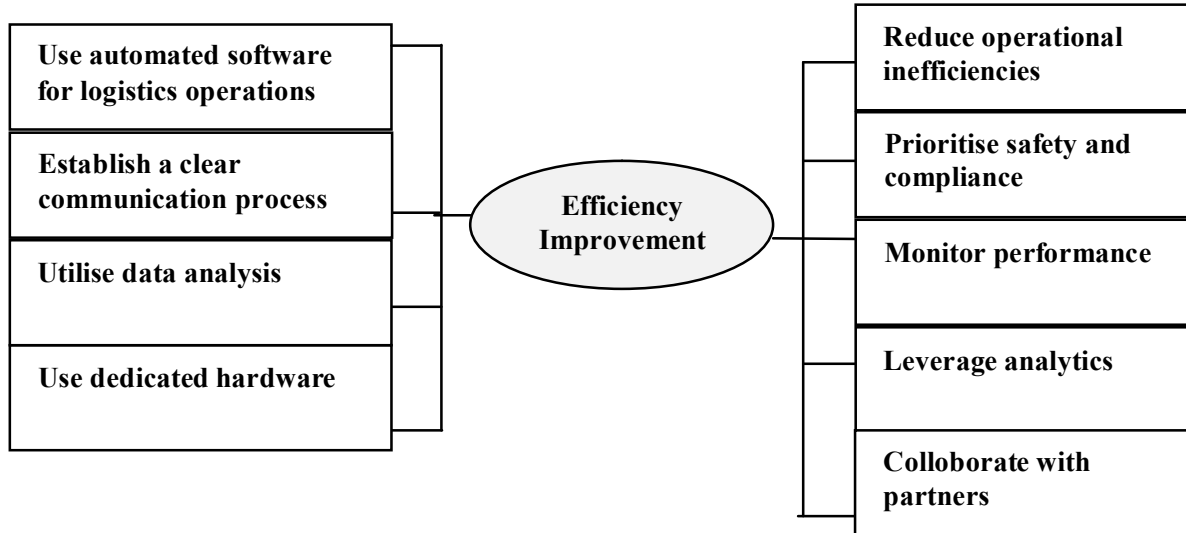
Figure 01 - Operations Management of Logistics



Source: Slide geeks presentation outline demonstration: operations management of logistics and supply Chain
<https://www.slidegeeks.com/communication/product/operations-management-of-logistics-and-supply-chain-ppt-powerpoint-presentation-outline-demonstration>

Effective logistics management is key for any business that wants to succeed in today's competitive market whether optimising costs or increasing customer satisfaction³ (see figure 2).

Figure 02 - Improving Logistics Efficiency



Source:

Spotos transportation management, 10 practical ways to improve logistics efficiency

<https://spotos.eu/blog/10-practical-ways-to-improve-logistics-efficiency>

1-2) Strategic vigilance:

There are several definitions and concepts of Strategic Vigilance , the most important of which is the process of converting information gained in the context of environmental monitoring in order to detect and collect the most accurate weak signals related to threats and opportunities as soon as possible⁴.

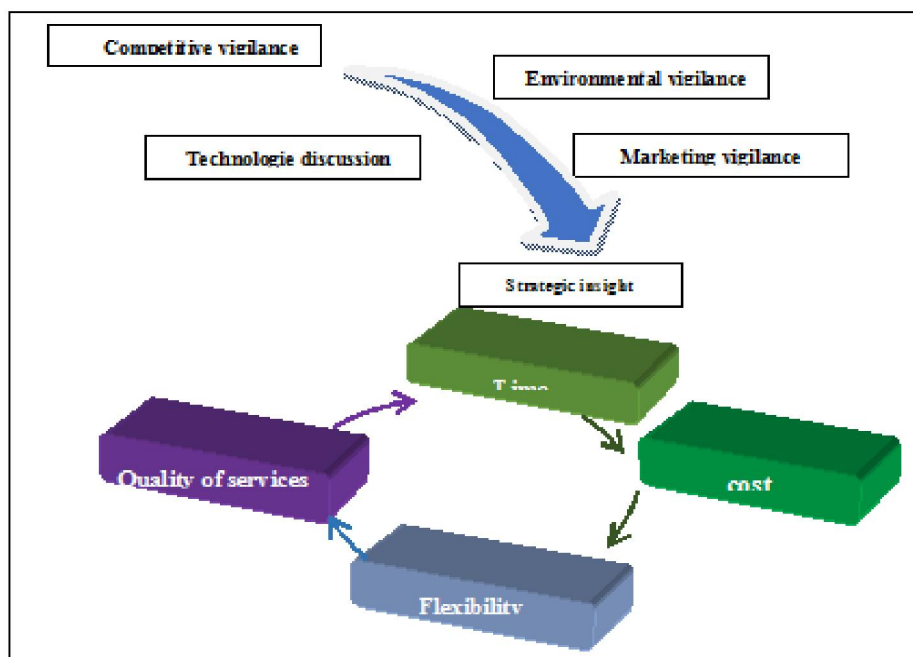
strategic vigilance as a system that helps support decision-making by monitoring and analysis of the scientific, technical and technological environment and current and future economic influences, focusing on information⁵.

Referred to strategic vigilance as the organization's visual and hearing sense, a surveillance radar at all times and in all directions to track useful information⁶.

The concept of strategic vigilance is relatively recent, as in the case of economic intelligence (Marter 1994) as a scientific field.

For both Jakobiak and Du (Jakobiak et Doc, 1992), strategic vigilance is considered to be: Monitoring and analysis of the environment is followed by a good dissemination of targeted, selected and structured information, useful in making strategic decisions⁷.

Figure 03 - Strategic vigilance as a process



Source: Fadhiela SLMAN & Ali FAKHRI (2018), «The role of strategic vigilance in the operational performance of the banking sector: Field Research in a sample of private banks», *European journal of business and management*, vol. 10, n° 21, pp 1-18,
<https://www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/EJBM/article/view/43267/44581>

Humbert LESCA defines it as: "The ongoing collective process, undertaken by a group of individuals in a voluntary manner, they track, track and therefore use expected information on changes likely to occur in the external surroundings of the enterprise, with a view to creating business opportunities, reducing risks and general uncertainty"⁸.

A- Importance of strategic vigilance:

The importance of strategic vigilance lies in the following⁹:

- **increase innovative and creative capacity**, and continuously improve products, contributing to gaining new customers ;
- **give the organization a position of strength** for having proactive predictive information in the environment in which it operates. Helps managers formulate competitive strategies and monitor their suitability with the environment until their results are achieved and competitive performance continues;
- **the success of performance** because strategic vigilance is the important source of information on all economic, political, social and legal developments and everything that affects their strategic performance;
- **the organization is familiar with** modern equipment and technologies, and technically advanced organizations with the aim of keeping pace.

B- Objectives of strategic vigilance:

Through strategic vigilance, the organization seeks to achieve a set of goals that can summarize in several points, as follows¹⁰:

- achieving comprehensive efficiency in strategic information systems and in the fields (marketing, commercial, technological and environmental) ;
- achieving a high level of processing various information according to the organization's status, which helps to make decisions;
- analysis of the technical, practical and technological environment of the organization.
- choosing the appropriate projects that are profitable for the organization;

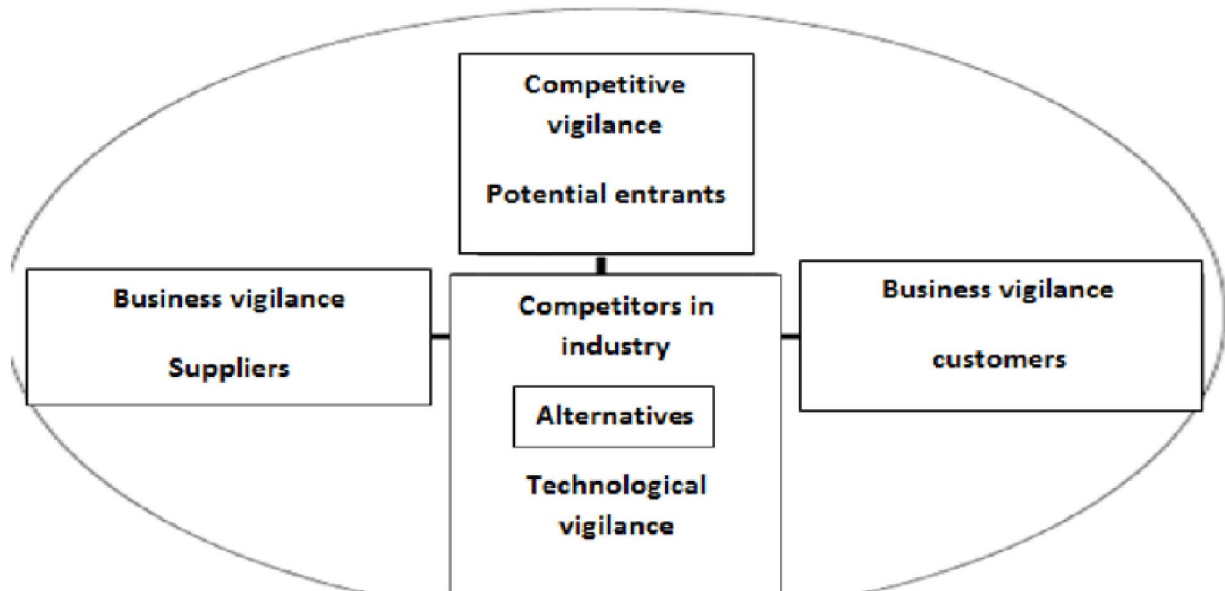
- determining the best practices that bring positive advantages to the organization and its strategies, thus ensuring that it faces competitors within its sector of work;
- developing performance and gaining a competitive advantage by comparing the organization's performance with that of its competitors;
- evaluating of the organization's current competitive position in relation to competitors;
- exploiting opportunities of the organization and reducing as much as possible the threats and risks and preparing to confront them.

C- Strategic vigilance dimensions:

Strategic vigilance is one of the basic pillars for managing information resource systems in the organization, which enables it to be effective, able to compete with other organizations and able to determine a good position in the market¹¹.

Strategic vigilance can also have one or more facets called: Technological vigilance, business vigilance or commercial vigilance, competitive vigilance... etc., due to the nature of the information in question, it is similar to the processing of signals. Strategic vigilance is therefore a tool to assist in the strategic decision process¹². There are four types of strategic vigilance (see figure 04)

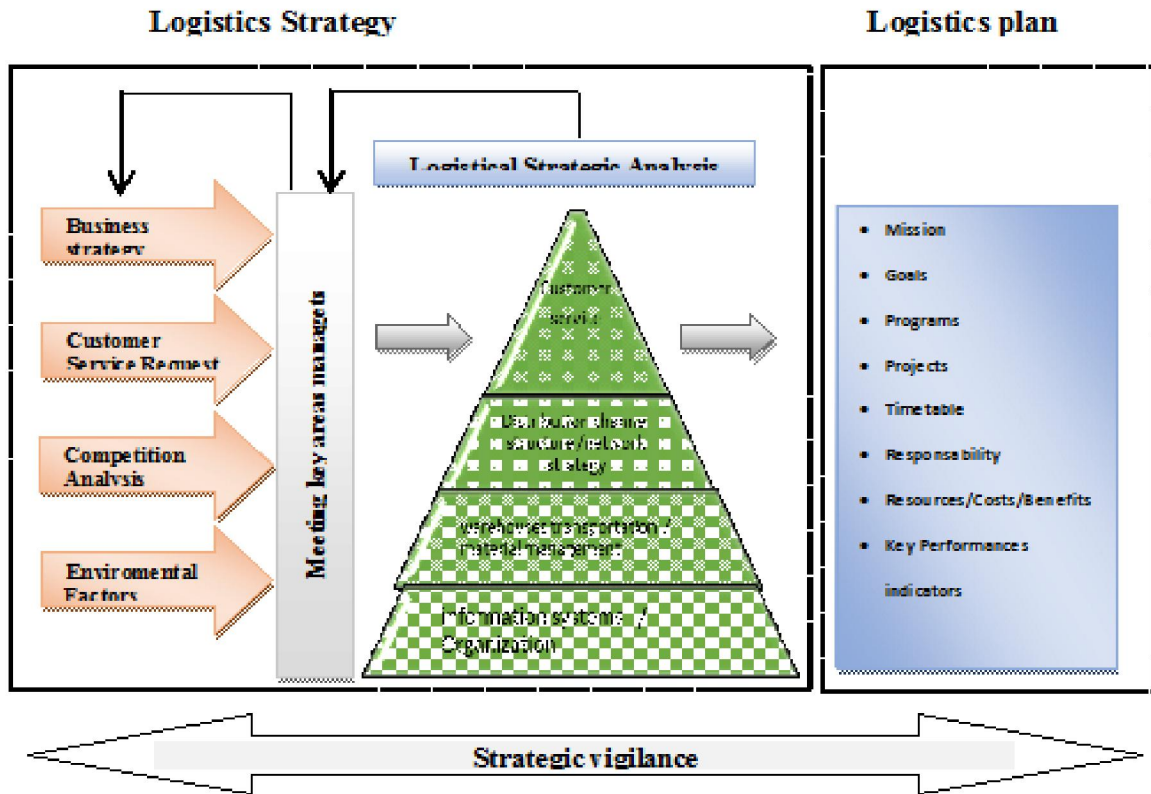
Figure04 - The dimensions of strategic vigilance



Source: *Fadhiela SLMAN & Ali FAKHRI*, op. cit, p. 19.

In addition to this different dimensions, strategic vigilance is one of the basic pillars that can be an added value to logistics operations by managing information resource systems in the organization, which enables it to be effective, able to compete with other organizations and able to determine a good position in the market. (see figure 05)

Figure 05 - Strategic vigilance and logistics



Source: Miroslav RAKYTA, Peter BUBENIK, Vladimira BINASOVA, Branislav MICIETA & Katarina STAFFENOVA (2022), «Advanced Logistics Strategy of a Company to Create Sustainable Development in the Industrial Area», University of Zilina, Slovakia, pp. 1-36.
<https://ideas.repec.org/a/gam/jsusta/v14y2022i19p12659-d933997.html>

2) Case study of Sonatrach:

This case study aims to study the importance of strategic vigilance in Sonatrach and how can enhance logistics operations through strategic vigilance.

2-1) Study methodology:

In view of the different scientific approaches used by researchers, which are naturally in line with the quality of the subjects to be studied, we must choose a curriculum appropriate to the nature of the topic as well as the time allocated to this study. In this regard, we have relied in our study on the descriptive curriculum.

A- The tools adopted in conducting the study:

Observation: we have used the method of observation in this study, annexed to the interview, as well as individually. We have adopted this tool in order to draw the pulse of the employees of the institution in question and their awareness and awareness of the topic of strategic vigilance.

Interview: Based on this tool, the researcher can use his personal skills and his own abilities to verify the authenticity of the information previously obtained or to find out details and explanations of certain phenomena and facts. In this context, we interviewed the head of the planning department of the directorate of planning and studies, as well as some of the frames in this section.

B- Sample Interview:

The original community for the interview dealt with a set of tyres spread across the institution's administrative departments. This sample includes 08 highly qualified individuals in the institution in question, with the aim of revealing the reality of the phenomenon studied, and they are distributed as follows*:

- 01 Head of planning;
- 01 Head of technology vigilance and report;
- 01 Head of economic studies department;
- 01 Head of organization department;
- 01 Planning section framework;
- 01 Engineer of the planning department;
- 01 Information consultant;
- 01 Administrative aid of the department of organization.

* heads of various departements of Sonatrach downstream activity Oran.

2-2) Study presentation:

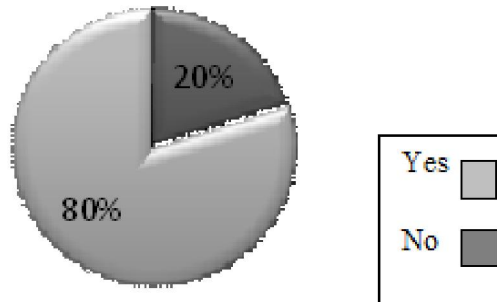
We asked ten (10) questions as follows:

Table 01 - Questions and answers

Number	Question in short	Answer
1	Does the enterprise track developments in its field of work in particular and what is happening in the world in general?	Yes
2	Have you ever heard the term strategic vigilance	Yes
3	Is there awareness of the system's existence?	Yes
4	Is the institution available on a strategic vigilance cell? And does she have her own section?	Yes
5	Have the most important stages of the vigilance information been determined according to a particular model?	Yes
6	Is the Internet used? And where to use it as a tool to help get vigilance information?	Yes
7	Is Internet information credible? How is it ascertained?	No
8	Are there competencies under certain conditions required to activate this type of vigilance?	Yes
9	Is there anyone who supervises these actors?	Yes
10	Are there any possibilities that have been allocated to use to activate the vigilance system?	No not yes

Source: Prepared by researchers based on previous responses.

Figure 06 - Representation of response ratios obtained



Source: Prepared by researchers based on previous answers and using Excel.

A- Analysis of the responses obtained:

We will analyze the results of the questions posed depending on the observation on the one hand and detail some answers from the sample study and interview on the other.

We have asked ten (10) questions:

1. *Does the enterprise track developments in its field of work in particular and what is happening in the world in general?*

Yes, of course, the Sonatrach Foundation as a whole and the downstream activity also follows the various developments in the world, whether in its field of operation or various other areas, whether political, economic or social... Everything that would affect the institution directly or indirectly.

2. *Have you ever heard the term strategic vigilance?*

Of course, the Sonatrak Foundation is interested in everything that is new and what would improve its work and keep up with its counterparts in the world. The sensitive situation of the Sonatrak Foundation compels it to pay attention to everything that is modern, especially in the field of information, whether it be directly or indirectly, and the system of vigilance is one of the institution's concerns.

3. *Is there awareness of the system's existence?*

Yes, the downstream activity is currently building a new vigilance cell, which has necessitated an awareness-raising process aimed at organizing and

subsequently activating the cell's activity. Or at the level of the parent institution, they are well aware of the importance of the strategic vigilance system and its fundamentals.

4. Is the institution available on a strategic vigilance cell? And does she have her own section?

Yes, the downstream activity is currently available on two vigilance cells, which are specific to documentary vigilance and are located at the level of the Directorate of Automated Information and Information Systems and in the Department of Documentation and Archives, as I mentioned earlier.

Another type of vigilance has recently been introduced for downstream activity level: technological vigilance, which is relatively recent for downstream activity, with its own section called the Technological Vigilance and Report Department, Département de la veille stratégique et arrivant, currently under the heading of Quality Management or Quality Directorate. (06) individuals including the head of the department who is one of the most qualified and experienced engineers in the field of technology.

This new section is concerned with monitoring and monitoring everything that is new and new in the field of technology used both at the level of industrial areas and everything related to the means of work and production and at the level of departments and everything related to communication technologies, media and applications needed to facilitate the performance of the work as well as to activate the Internet more and benefit from it.

It will also conduct seminars to highlight this topic and clarify its strategic dimensions and future outcomes. It will also pose a problem by providing the necessary means, whether human, financial or material, to implement this system and to determine the most important phases of the system, as well as the most important details needed to build an effective technological vigilance system parallel to those of the world's largest comparable institutions.

Currently, the Economic Studies Section, using the current modelling section of the Directorate of Studies and Planning, continues to exercise part of the strategic vigilance process but indirectly. This section is based on conducting

environmental surveys and providing the necessary information on the perimeter of the downstream activity, whether at the level of the internal or external environment, And so he makes a standard comparison or so-called panchmark to improve performance. and study investment opportunities and risks to be discussed at a preliminary arbitration session at the downstream management level.

5. *Have the most important stages of the vigilance information been determined according to a particular model?*

Yes, through the study carried out by the head of the technological vigilance department and the report, he seeks to identify the most important stages needed to implement the vigilance system in accordance with the specialization of the branches of the activity as well as the regional branches and directorates of the downstream activity. Currently the vigilance system has not been activated, but as part of the study by the head of the technological vigilance department, the model he will roll out when reviewing the research work he is doing is based on the Lesca theory (2003) which includes the following stages: targeting, tracking, selecting, memory, sending, distributing, and moving. Determining the need for information here requires determining the type and nature of tasks underlying downstream activity.

The following will show how the system of documentary vigilance is going:

At the downstream activity management level, it is executives who submit their requests for information to the head of documentary vigilance.

B- Selection of information (targeting):

Query is a keyword or a set of keywords that can be basic (a general keyword, often alone, generates a lot of movement, such as oil and gas and exchange market indices... etc.) or secondary (basic associated query with one or more other keywords for example: British Petroleum... etc)

In fact, research makes it possible to identify an image of the answer one wants to get. Hence the need to choose the keywords to return the required

answers. So it is very important to spend time carefully choosing these keywords.

B-1- Information collection and analysis:

Europresse's database collects economic and financial articles from various press sources or websites, after which the information requested is sent to the Director of the Information and Documentation Analysis Centre, who in turn transmits them to the relevant officials. This data is determined according to specific queries.

B-2- Publishing search results:

This last step consists of automatically transmitting existing information to search applicants. Old and new employees, as well as enclosures, benefit from available books, magazines, studies and previous education reports as a source of information.

6. Is the Internet used? And where to use it as a tool to help get vigilance information?

Yes, the Internet has become a necessity in any institution, They are used in some matters related to updating the world In addition to some of the official websites of the Foundation, as well as general information about its customers and its clients, it also allows contact with clients and some sites relevant to the work of the Institution. It also provides information through the Institution's own subscriptions with some electronic magazines, research sites and other.

7. Is Internet information credible? How is it ascertained?

No, it does not rely on the Internet as a close source of information but only as an aid, as information obtained through the Internet is always validated by relying on more formal and credible sources.

8. Are there competencies under certain conditions required to activate this type of vigilance?

Yes, of course, conditions need to be established that will be determined later depending on the current study based on the project to build a technological vigilance cell that will determine the levels and qualifications of the operators of this process. The rest of the employees of the institution and at the various

levels of management and structures of the enterprise are not dispensed with, as the nature of vigilance forces the cooperation of all the individuals involved in the enterprise.

9. Is there anyone who supervises these actors?

Yes, this process takes place under the supervision of the head of the head of the department of technological vigilance and report.

10. Are there any possibilities that have been allocated to use to activate the vigilance system?

No, they have not yet been identified at the present time (at the study stage), not in terms of material capabilities, not of mankind, nor of financial resources, but so far they are a project being studied and work on determining the requirements for doing so.

Conclusion:

The organizations possession of a strategic vigilance system allows them to gain competitive advantages. The system provides an opportunity to keep abreast of developments in the organization's environment and to monitor various movements in all areas gives them high confidence in the issue of decision-making. Through our Sonatrak downstream activity field study, the latter needs to give more importance to strategic vigilance system and contributing to the pool's need for necessary information on downstream activity and branches and some benchmarking comparisons within a specific framework, Through our study we tried to draw some conclusions that would answer the problem that we put forward at the beginning of the research, we found that: Sonatrach Downstream is available on its own information systems, which provide it with the necessary information needs, whether internal or external, to ensure its functioning on a regular basis.

At the downstream level, strategic works were cancelled and attributed to a higher level in the enterprise, including strategic vigilance, to activate new vigilance systems, including documentary vigilance at the level of all branches and activities of the complex, and to develop others as technological vigilance at the downstream level due to the need of the latter, which corresponds to the nature of the branch's activity.

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