



PRESENTATION BY:

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Introduction



The case involving B.F. Goodrich is considered one of the biggest and most famous whistleblower cases in literature, following the publication of the case by Kermit Vandivier, a key employee involved in the incident. In 1967, the Goodrich Tire and Brake Plant was ordered to supply tires and brakes for the new Air Force light-attack aircraft. It was the work of John Warren, who engineered the faulty 4-disc brake.

It was then passed on to Seale Lawson who was fresh out of college, but knew that the brake was faulty. When he notified Robert Sink, the lead supervisor, he said to continue with the tests and not undermine the authority of Warren. Vandivier, being a data analyst, knew that the brake's apparatus was incongruent, but was forced to present the A7D design anyway.

This led to disastrous ends, and Vandivier was later coerced into revealing the scandal.

Ethical Issues



- The company knew that they had faulty brakes
- They purposely falsified reports that said they passed brake regulations
- Many innocent pilots could have been harmed
- Forced Kermit Vandivier to lose his job



Known Relevant Facts



- BF Goodrich had a full year to design and test their brakes
- Only the final month was allotted for the testing phase, a period far too short
- Tested dozens upon dozens of designs, and none were entirely successful
- Air Force specifically contracted them because of their 4-disc design
- The report was written and given to LTV
- No notification of any malfunctions was given to the buyers
- Vandivier blew the whistle when a pilot almost got injured, he told the FBI who got congress involved



Unknown Relevant Facts




- Warren designed the faulty 4-disc brake and assigned Lawson to finalize and test it
- Lawson told Warren that it should be a 5-disc brake but Warren told him to continue
- After the 14th failed test, Lawson told Robert Sink and Russell Van Horn who said, quality the brake “no matter what”
- Management directors explicitly called for the approval of faulty products
- They told Vandivier to write the report who refused and was backed up by his supervisor Gretzinger who appealed it, but was ignored
- They knew the brakes would likely not work

How might the situation have been different if the ethical issues were addressed earlier?



- The engineers falsified the evidence because they were nearing the end of their deadline.
- Had the testing and report on qualifications been done earlier, more time could have been given for the engineers to resolve the technical flaws
- Alternatively, given the tight situation they were in, Goodrich could have asked the Air Force for an extension on the order which would give them the necessary time to retest correctly
- BF Goodrich gave public image a higher priority than safety or quality assurance, an ethical downfall which caused the situation



What conclusion was reached in the case?
Does your group agree? Why or why not?

Kermit Vandivier



Each person in this case valued their job and being employed over the lives of the pilots who would use this brake. Even though engineers knew it was a the design was faulty, middle management purposefully miscalculated and lied in their report to make the deadline.

Management cared more about completing the design that had achieved them the lucrative LVT contract rather than making adjustment for it to be safer. For this, we believe they were in the wrong.

THANKS FOR
LISTENING!

