

Office of Health, Safety and Security (HSS)
Focus Group Meeting
January 20, 2011
Meeting Overview

The primary purpose of the January 20 HSS Focus Group Meeting was to review the most recent status of health, safety and security improvement activities, and to identify 2011 strategic path forward.

Introductory Remarks: Glenn Podonsky, Chief Health, Safety and Security Officer for the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), emphasized the importance of the upcoming January 25 Roundtable Meeting as an opportunity for union leadership to communicate worker priorities to DOE senior leadership. He spoke about the focus of the current Administration in energy efficiency improvements and investments in innovative technologies that will ultimately create jobs and strengthen America's competitiveness. While Secretarial focus will be on these strategic, global, and technological advancement goals, the Department is discussing plans to establish a high level position to ensure focus on DOE operations to include worker health, safety and security matters.

Status Overview of 2011 Strategic Initiatives

National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) Worker Dialogue: HSS reported that issues identified by front line workers were aligned with those that have been brought forth by their union representatives, which are indicative of good vertical integration – workers are well represented by union leads. Key points derived from the NAPA Worker Dialogue Analysis Report:

- Workers favored in-person vs. computer based training, and worker trainers were identified as providing the most effective training because they are viewed as a source of credibility having first hand experience.
- Workers support joint labor management participation in training and favor greater centralization and standardization of worker training records to facilitate mobility.
- Lack of certainty about health and safety regulations governing work at DOE sites and lack of adherence to reporting processes were identified as a condition with multiple contractors. Although reported, these issues were not pervasive but warrant follow-up.

2011 Path Forward:

- To develop sub-forums to address practical solutions to create greater standardization and centralization of training records and support efficiency and reciprocity.
- To focus on a process to work with the Line Programs for a consistent means of bringing requirement standardization to DOE sites.

Action: HSS will solicit feedback from the union representatives on interest in the conduct of future internal worker dialogues and if so, the dialogue topics of interest. *HSS Outreach to follow-up.*

Aging Workforce Initiative: HSS is working with the University of Maryland (UMD) School of Social Work through the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education, in conjunction with Harvard Medical School's Department of Health Care Policy and the Integrated Benefits Institute, in a study to understand the relationship between employee health, safety and

productivity and how these relationships specifically impact DOE workforce reliability, and how health and productivity management can contribute to the recent DOE Aging Workforce Initiative. Accomplishments include:

- Obtained support and endorsement of the study by Occupational Medicine Programs at DOE's Hanford Site, and Sandia and Argonne National Laboratories.
- Obtained approvals by the DOE Centralized Institutional Review Board (IRB) as well as by UMD IRB.
- Established agreements with Sandia and Argonne to identify and target workers for the study.
- UMD researchers have been working with International Association of Fire Fighters and HAMMER Training Facility leadership to obtain support and union worker participation
- HSS has been working with DOE's Office of Environmental Management to enable participation by workers at Hanford.

2011 Path Forward:

- Surveys/data collections are being conducted at Sandia and Argonne in January and February 2011.
- Work with labor unions leads to focus data collection and analysis for three job classifications that are at-risk from the effects/impacts of stress and aging. The classifications are: Fire Fighters, Security Personnel and Metal Trades Workers.
- Expand the survey to include additional DOE sites for individual, comparative reports – enabling benchmarking and development of best-practices.
- Use these studies to promote worker health programs as part of the implementation of 10 CFR 851, *Worker Safety and Health Program*.
- Harvard and IBI are partnering with UMD to analyze the survey.

Action: Electronic versions of Harvard's Health and Productivity Questionnaire (HPQ) and the sample HPQ Report from the Integrated Benefits Institute to be provided to HAMMER. *HSS Chief Medical Officer to follow-up.*

DOE Safety and Security Reform:

- 60 percent (64 of 107) of the HSS directives have been completed or released into DOE-wide review. Of these, HSS has completed revision, re-certification, or cancellation of 36 directives (or 34 percent).
- HSS continues to reach out to stakeholders to include the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, National Laboratory Directors Council and labor unions.

2011 Path Forward

- HSS projects over 90 percent of all HSS directives will either be completed or into DOE-wide review with all HSS directives into DOE-wide review by May 13, 2011.
- HSS highly encourages union engagement in directives review and input.

Action:

- Union representatives expressed appreciation for the opportunity to review the safety and security reform planning documents that were forwarded in September 2009. However, it was again proposed that HSS highlight those directives with health and safety impact/content reflective of what has been identified and addressed through the HSS/Union workgroups. For example: the workgroup recommendation that DOE identify and implement baseline safety and health training across the Complex. *Action: HSS Office of Health and Safety to follow-up.*
- Unions are asked to provide HSS with a contact list of their respective safety experts who will lead union directives review. Unions proposed a similar review process as is conducted in a Code of Federal Regulations review. *Action: Union Leads to follow-up.*

Training Assessment Pilots:

- The DOE National Training Center (NTC), in partnership with the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) and HAMMER, conducted a series of safety training collaboration workshops. The purpose of the workshops was to identify safety training efficiencies and challenges being faced at the DOE sites.
- Participation included Federal management, site contractors, and union representatives.
- The four workshops were held at the following four sites: 1) Oak Ridge Office (ORO)/Y-12 Site Office (YSO), 2) Savannah River Site, 3) Los Alamos National Laboratory, and 4) Idaho National Laboratory.
- Primary worker training issues identified in the workshops were in the areas of training standardization, portability, and redundancy.

2011 Path Forward

- The culmination of results from the four safety training collaborative workshops is the development of a strawman model for a collaborative approach to integrated safety and health training at DOE sites.

Action: Strawman model for collaborative approach to integrated safety and health training at DOE sites to be developed February 2011. Plans for pilot implementation at ORO/YSO in April-May 2011 timeframe. *NTC Lead has the lead.*

Safety Concerns:

- United Steelworkers (USW) expressed concerns with under reporting related to safety incentive programs such as the Voluntary Protection Program/behavioral based safety programs.
- HSS reported safety culture as one of the top priorities of the Integrated Safety Management System (ISMS).
 - A joint DOE/ Energy Facility Contractors Group-sponsored ISMS Safety Culture Task Team was formed to address this issue and identified a consensus set of safety culture principles, along with implementation practices that could be used by DOE, the National Nuclear Security Administration, and their contractors.
 - The Task Team looked at global models on operating experience from similar industries, such as the domestic and international commercial nuclear and chemical industries.
 - The focal areas of leadership, worker engagement, and organizational learning were identified.
 - The Task Team looked at training workers and managers in the use of operational experience, reporting, and effective resolution.

Action: USW and HSS Office of Health and Safety plan to further this discussion in separate follow-on meetings. *HSS Office of Health and Safety to follow-up.*

Other Area of Expressed Interest: Unions reported that the HSS/Union task groups that had been developed to address specifically identified worker health and safety improvement activities have been dormant and proposed that the task priorities are redefined.

Action: *HSS Outreach to follow-up.*