

Fact Sheet

Preliminary Notice of Violation: Sandia Sled Track Incident **June 2010**

On June 1, 2010, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) issued a Preliminary Notice of Violation (PNOV) to Sandia Corporation (Sandia) for violations of Department of Energy's (DOE) worker safety and health program regulations. Sandia is the operating contractor of NNSA's Sandia National Laboratories, with the main multi-program laboratory located in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

The PNOV cites four violations of DOE regulations governing explosives safety requirements. The violations are associated with an inadvertent ignition of a rocket motor that resulted in an occupational-related injury (recordable under Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards) at the Sandia National Laboratories/New Mexico Sled Track Test Site on October 9, 2008. The event occurred while a contractor was making final connections to a test package when stray electrical energy caused the rocket motor to ignite prematurely. A worker standing next to the rocket motor suffered burns to his hands and arms and a broken leg as a result of the event.

After a thorough investigation, the NNSA cited Sandia for failures to comply with 10 C.F.R. Part 851, *Worker Safety and Health Program*. The violations involve deficiencies in identifying and controlling worker exposures to hazards involving explosives, providing required training, and implementing effective explosive safety program procedures.

Due to these violations and a failure to satisfy performance incentives relating to safety culture, NNSA reduced Sandia's Fiscal Year 2009 contract fee. Sandia has implemented compensatory measures and institutionalized corrective actions that address the violations cited in the PNOV. No further corrective or punitive action will be taken at this time.

The Bob Stump National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003 authorizes the Department to take regulatory actions against contractors for violations of its worker safety and health requirements under 10 C.F.R. Part 851. DOE's Enforcement Program encourages contractors to identify and correct worker safety and health deficiencies at an early stage, before they contribute to or result in more serious events.

Additional details on this and other enforcement actions are available on the Internet at www.hss.doe.gov/enforce.