

DOE/Union Leadership Safety Culture Meeting
March 1, 2013
Meeting Summary

History:

- DOE's Office of Enforcement and Oversight [Independent Oversight], within HSS, conducted an independent assessment of the nuclear safety culture and management of nuclear safety concerns at DOE's Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant (WTP) in response to a Recommendation by the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board.
- As a result of the safety culture weaknesses unveiled, DOE embarked on a mission to determine the extent of the condition, and HSS was tasked to conduct independent assessments at 5 primary DOE nuclear facilities.
- DOE is currently pursuing corrective actions. A consolidated report of the Independent Reviews is being developed.

Meeting Purpose: The U.S. Department of Energy [DOE], Office of Health, Safety and Security [HSS] coordinated a meeting with Union Leadership to further open lines of communication and initiate a forum for exchange related to DOE's efforts to assess, address and advance improvements in safety culture across the Complex. Dr. Sonja Haber presented an overview of DOE's safety culture assessments and findings to allow discussions with Labor Representatives and address their questions, input and perspectives, as well as, issues, concerns and experience related to safety culture. This meeting is the first of several to follow.

Change the History, Turn the Page:

- Glenn Podonsky, Chief Health, Safety and Security Officer, gave an account of HSS's propelled efforts to address worker safety concerns:
 - accelerate efforts to strengthen collaboration that ensures workers are engaged at all levels to include the conduct of 851 implementation visits and, site-by-site awareness of roles, rights and responsibilities.
 - Address EFCOG efforts for inclusion of Union representatives in worker health and safety improvement activities.
 - Revisit the Focus Group and Work Groups to re-engage and re-direct activities to address the highest priorities of worker safety. Priorities to be established with labor/worker input.

What Has the Department Learned?

Deputy Secretary of Energy, Daniel Poneman, stopped by the meeting to address the Union Leadership and share what the Department has learned from the safety culture reviews. Mr. Poneman reported that:

- A lot of learning has taken place and that DOE has lots of work to do.
- The results of the extent of condition reviews were an eye opener and difficult news does not get better over time.

- The worker is our greatest asset. DOE relies on its workers and their input to make it work.
- The Department welcomes a questioning attitude and welcomes the concerns of the workers.
- DOE does not want to learn the same things over and over again. Important we understand the history and how we got here.
- DOE cannot afford to become complacent or lose sight of what is going on, even when performance seems good.

Key Points of Union Leadership:

Standardization:

- Site-wide standardization and site-wide training [based on the HAMMER model].
- The Unions also seek some continuity across the complex for safety culture.
- Some unions perceived that DOE felt that the SCWE training was the “silver bullet” – the one stop shop to solve the problem.

Worker Involvement:

- Unions are pleased with the worker involvement efforts of HSS over the last 6 years; and DOE over the past 6 months but seek a more consistent interface with DOE overall.
- Get people to focus on safety and health; initiative on worker rights and the voice of the worker.
- A top-down approach must be used; the workers must believe that the “top” is on board; otherwise this will just be another “flavor of the month”.
- Want clear understanding of the enforcement functions for someone who is retaliated against.

Reporting:

- The prevalence of reporting issues identified in the safety culture assessments is significant.
- There is an understanding of the issues that hold back reporting and of the complexities faced by the Department. It is important that these issues are dealt with appropriately.
- The “reality” of the situation needs to be fully identified.
- The challenge is to make the system in place now, work better.

Labor Management Forums:

- Effective labor management forums are key.
- DOE should take a look at how effective high level forums operate and establish this dialogue.
- How an agency is perceived becomes a fact and not just a perception.

Forces of Impact on Safety:

- Knowing the history of the "forces" that can ultimately block safety success is key.
- It is important to identify systems related to contractor, government and legislation, etc.
- Seems that safety governance does not have the same influence as it was designed to have on DOE through the enabling legislation. Concerns that DOE is becoming complacent with safety.
- Take a look at what Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) is doing now and their difficult road to better safety.
- If the enterprise is going to survive – it has to be more than just “tag-lines”.

ACTION ITEMS/NEXT STEPS:

1. HSS Outreach Program Office to provide meeting summary and access to pertinent worker safety information.
2. Review current MSHA initiatives as suggested by AFL-CIO – the Departmental Representative to schedule meeting.
3. HSS Outreach office to work with the Unions to identify “safety gaps”, address reporting shortfalls, and worker involvement.
4. HSS review of 10 CFR 851 implementation:
 - current initiatives
 - site implementation
 - Union involvement

ATTENDEES:

DOE

1. Daniel Poneman, Deputy Secretary of Energy
2. Glenn Podonsky, Chief Health, Safety and Security Officer
3. Mari-Jo Campagnone, Office of Health, Safety and Security
4. Tom Staker, Office of Health, Safety and Security
5. Pat Williams, Office of Health, Safety and Security
6. Eva Auman, General Counsel
7. Alison Markovitz, Director, Office of Executive Secretariat
8. Lily Alexander, Office of Health, Safety and Security
9. Stephanie Thorne, Office of Health, Safety and Security
10. Dale Govan, Office of Health, Safety and Security
11. Daniel Sigg, Office of Health, Safety and Security

Independent Consultant

1. Dr. Sonja Haber, Independent Safety Culture Expert, Human Performance Analysis Corporation

Union Attendees:

1. Peg Seminario, AFL-CIO
2. LaMont Byrd, Teamsters
3. Ron Ault, Metal Trades Department
4. Jim Frederick, United Steelworkers
5. Mike Hinthorn, Machinist and Aerospace Workers
6. Chico McGill, IBEW
7. Pete Stafford, Building and Construction Trades
8. John Beilak, Iron Workers
9. John Morawetz, Chemical Workers
10. Dave LeGrande, Communications Workers