

CHARTER FOR THE OPERATING EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Department of Energy (DOE) Operating Experience Committee (OEC) is to support line management within DOE and the DOE community in developing and sustaining effective operating experience programs so that lessons from internal and external operating experience lead to improvement in future operational and safety performance. The OEC will facilitate management and worker communications to promote the sharing of operating experiences and associated best practices for using operating experience to improve future performance.

2. BACKGROUND

The need for an effective and comprehensive Operating Experience Program (OPEX) is a key lesson from both the Columbia Space Shuttle Accident and the Davis-Besse Reactor Pressure-Vessel Head Corrosion Event. As a result of these events, the Department established a new OPEX directive, DOE Order 210.2, *DOE Corporate Operating Experience Program*, approved June 2006. This Committee supports implementation of this DOE directive and complements the OPEX process established by it.

Action 1.c of the DOE Action Plan of the Lessons Learned from the Columbia Space Shuttle Accident and the Davis-Besse Reactor Pressure-Vessel Head Corrosion Event, issued in July 2005, states: “*DOE will establish an Operating Experience Committee to facilitate management and worker communications as part of the DOE Operating Experience Program. Individuals designated by their DOE and Contractor organizations as Operating Experience [Program] Coordinators will serve on this committee.*” This Committee replaces the Society of Effective Lessons Learned Sharing (SELLS) which will be dissolved with the establishment of this Committee.

Effective safety cultures learn from experience, regardless of whether the experience is their own or that of others. A strong questioning attitude and the ability to learn from experience are attributes consistently evident in High Reliability Organizations. These organizations are learning organizations, which have implemented processes to facilitate continuous learning and improvement.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Designated members of the Committee consist of: (1) the designated DOE and Contractor Operating Experience Program Coordinators (as defined in DOE O 210.2), (2) the Director, Office of Analysis within DOE's Office of Health, Safety and Security, and (3) Chief of Nuclear Safety (CNS) and Chief of Defense Nuclear Safety (CDNS), or their designated representatives.

Associate membership in the Committee is open to all DOE federal and contractor employees, as well as to external representatives interested in sharing operating experiences and associated best practices.

4. PRIMARY FUNCTIONS

- Facilitate communications between DOE organizations and contractor organizations regarding operating experience and associated best practices for effective operating experience programs.
- Promote and facilitate continued learning about operating experience from both inside and outside the DOE community. Identify best practices that are exemplary and worthy of benchmarking by other organizations.
- Sponsor and coordinate annual operating experience conferences as forums for DOE and contractors to review key operating experiences, disseminate best practices and lessons learned for effective operating experience programs, and develop consensus work products as requested.

5. SUPPORTING FUNCTIONS

- As directed by responsible line managers, support responsible DOE and contractor coordinators in fulfilling their responsibilities and requirements, as called for in DOE Order 210.2, *DOE Corporate Operating Experience Program*.
- Provide input and feedback on expectations for and methods used in the DOE Operating Experience Program. As requested, provide input on the development and revision of DOE directives and standards regarding operating experience programs.

6. OPERATIONS

- The Director, Office of Analysis will act as the committee co-chair representing DOE. The Committee co-chair representing the DOE contractors will be selected by the designated contractor members.
- The Committee may form a steering committee and such working groups as necessary to accomplish its purpose and functions, functioning via conference calls, videoconferences, and meetings, as appropriate.
- The Committee will report to the DOE Integrated Safety Management (ISM) Champions Council, and provide such briefings and reports as requested by the DOE ISM Champions.

7. DURATION

The Operating Experience Committee can be dissolved at the direction of the ISM Champions Council. When the Committee independently determines that its continued operations are no longer necessary or beneficial, the Committee will recommend its discontinuance to the DOE ISM Co-Champions along with its basis for concluding that other existing mechanisms are adequate to sustain effective sharing of operating experience and associated best practices.