

Office of Health, Safety and Security (HSS) Focus Group Strategic Initiatives Work Group Charter

In an ongoing effort to further the improvement of health, safety, environmental, and security performance within the Department's contractor work force, DOE is engaged in the establishment of work groups to pursue health and safety improvements across the DOE Complex. These efforts support DOE's responsibility as owner/manager to protect its greatest asset: the worker. The work group supports DOE's integrated safety management system and further DOE's best interests by fostering worker involvement and partnerships to maximize continuity of operations and the success of the Department's national security mission.

DOE is establishing the Strategic Initiatives Work Group to promote excellence and continuous improvement in the implementation of worker health and safety programs across the DOE complex. The Work Group provides a collaborative opportunity for DOE to gain insights from operating contractors, the contractor work force and their representatives, and to combine the best wisdom to assure that the most efficient and effective worker health and safety program expectations, approaches and processes are in place and are well communicated. The Work Group will provide a forum for information sharing; data collection and analysis; as well as identify best practices and initiatives to enhance safety performance and safety culture across the Complex.

I. PURPOSE

The Strategic Initiatives Work Group is one of several HSS Work Groups, established to address worker health, safety, and security program improvements across the U.S. Department of Energy Complex. The Strategic Initiatives Work Group will learn, identify emerging issues, and proactively address initiatives that have the potential to improve safety and health performance at DOE sites. The Work Group's aim is to improve safety culture across the DOE complex, particularly at those sites identified jointly by operating contractors, the contractor work force, and their representatives at sites where safety and health performance is lagging in comparison to other high-performing DOE facilities.

II. OBJECTIVES

1. Provide a forum to share data and analysis in order to identify potential safety and health issues affecting the DOE complex' work force.
2. Share information and ideas concerning safety culture from multiple viewpoints to understand research, data, and information to determine if there are actions that should be considered.
3. Share specific information and ideas specifically concerning under-reporting and under-recording of injuries, illnesses, and hazards, including near misses. The Work Group will assess and review policies, programs, and practices that lead to such under-reporting and under-recording. The Work Group will determine if there is information or concerns that should be addressed.

III.SCOPE/APPROACH/LIMITATIONS

1. The Work Group Leads will establish a monthly conference call or meeting to coordinate the Work Group activities on a regular basis. The Work Group will:
 - a. Plan at least one activity per quarter for each active initiative.
 - b. Consider resource constraints as it determines a work schedule.
2. Initiatives and Issues: For each initiative or issue, Leads will canvas operating contractors, the contractor work force and their representatives for appropriate participation, establish a specific meeting plan and assign activity responsibilities. As necessary, and as resources permit, outside expertise or information sources may be requested for additional assistance.
 - a. Under-Reporting and Under-Recording:
 - (1) Use in-person meeting(s) to share research and materials.
 - (2) Develop an agreement on the definition of the items to include in the discussion.
 - (3) Discuss interpretations, implications, and operational concepts in the DOE context.
 - (4) Workers, their representatives, and contractors will provide detailed in-person overview of their concerns.
 - (5) HSS will provide summary of its concerns and approaches to encourage open reporting.
 - b. Safety and Health Information Sharing (table all activities on this initiative for further discussion at a later time) :
 - (1) Conduct an initial virtual data call, with a relatively broad net, to gather materials for discussion.
 - (2) Topics include, but are not limited to, injury/illness, occurrences, and exposures including Former Worker Reports.
 - (3) Follow up with an initial in-person meeting to survey the materials and determine what topics to pursue in more detail.
 - (4) Conduct periodic teleconferences, webinars, or in-person meetings to probe topics in more depth with the scope of each meeting to be determined by issue Leads.
 - c. Safety Culture (table all activities on this initiative for further discussion at a later time):
 - (1) Use in-person meeting(s) to share research and internal materials that address safety culture, initially focusing on building trust between workers and management and encouraging of worker/management interfaces and communications.
 - (2) Discuss interpretations, implications and operational concepts in the DOE context.
 - (3) Present and discuss information on safety culture assessments, when available, for DOE sites.
3. Potential meeting approaches might include:
 - a. Providing access online, even a virtual collaborative workspace;
 - b. Telephonic meetings, perhaps combined with webinars; or in-person meetings.
4. The Work Group will document each activity and distribute minutes after review by the Work Group Leads.

5. Limitations: The purpose of the charter is to assure that the implementation of DOE's existing policies and rules are fully informed and in the best interest of the Department. Policy decisions are the sole responsibility of the Department as the owner/operator. Specific terms and conditions of employment or any pending negotiations or bargaining cannot be discussed.

IV. ORGANIZATION

1. Work Group Leads:
Pat Worthington (HSS)
Steve Domotor (HSS)
James Frederick (United Steelworkers)
Norman Barker (EFCOG)
2. Work Group Lead Alternate: Pete Stafford (Building and Construction Trades Department, Center for Construction Research & Training)
3. Work Group Members:
HSS: Tom Staker, Brad Davy, and Earl Carnes
Unions/Stakeholders:
Dianne Whitten (Hanford Atomic Metal Trades Council)
Gerald Ryan (Operative Plasterers' and Cement Masons' International Association)
Steve Jones (Atomic Trades and Labor Council)
Stephen Wallace (NNSA)
4. Work Group Leads are responsible for ensuring the communication of efforts among their respective staffs and memberships.
5. Work Group activities will be conducted on an agreed-upon basis to support discussion and activities to address pertinent issues to lead to quantifiable accomplishments.
6. Work Group Leads will operate in consultation with DOE's General Counsel (GC-63 and GC-51).