

memorandum

National Nuclear Security Administration
Los Alamos Site Office
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544

DATE: AUG 01 2007
REPLY TO:
ATTN OF: SET:5FB-002
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Site Office Self-Assessment of the Federal Technical Capability Program

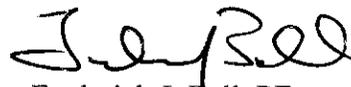
TO: Donald L. Winchell, Jr., Manager, LASO

This memorandum transmits the Los Alamos Site Office (LASO) Federal Technical Capability Program (FTCP) Self-Assessment Final Report for your review, acceptance and action. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Policy DOE P 426.1, *Federal Technical Capability Policy for Defense Nuclear Facilities*, requires DOE to develop and maintain a technically competent workforce to accomplish its mission in a safe and efficient manner. DOE Manual 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, provides guidance for implementing the requirements of the Policy. The FTCP provides for recruitment, deployment, development, and retention of Federal personnel with demonstrated technical capability.

The *Federal Technical Capability Manual* requires periodic self-assessment of the effectiveness of the implementation of the Manual and the Technical Qualification Program utilizing a defined set of Objectives and Criteria. The assessment documented by this report is the first periodic review conducted at LASO to meet this requirement. The assessment results are intended to establish a base-line on which to develop and improve the program so no final grade was assigned; however, only six of the twelve Objectives were identified as being met.

Please review the attached report and indicate your acceptance by signature below. After your acceptance, I will begin development of a corrective action plan to address the findings and observations identified in the report for your review and approval.

If you would like to meet with the assessment team for a formal out-briefing, or have any questions on the conduct of the review and the attached report, please don't hesitate to contact me.


Frederick J. Bell, PE
LASO FTCP Agent


Donald L. Winchell, Jr. 7/31/07
Donald L. Winchell, Jr., LASO Revitalization Manager

Attachment

cc w/attachment:

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K. Boardman, OOM, LASO
F. Bell, SETL, LASO
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D. Lee, SET, LASO



**U.S. Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
Los Alamos Site Office**

**Federal Technical Capability Program
Self-Assessment**

April 23 - 27, 2007

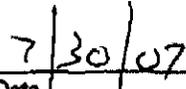
Final Report

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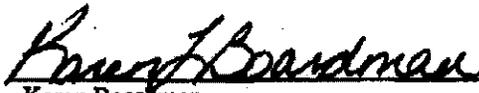
TEAM MEMBER APPROVAL



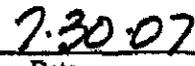
Fred Bell
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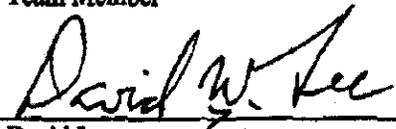
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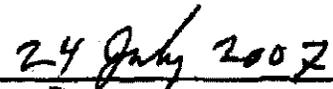
Karen Boardman
NNSA/LASO
Team Member



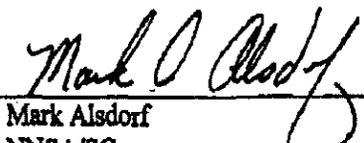
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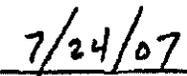
David Lee
NNSA/LASO
Team Member



Date



Mark Alsdorf
NNSA/SC
Team member



Date

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Policy DOE P 426.1, *Federal Technical Capability Policy for Defense Nuclear Facilities*, requires DOE to develop and maintain a technically competent workforce to accomplish its mission in a safe and efficient manner. DOE Manual 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, provides guidance for implementing the requirements of the Policy. The Federal Technical Capability Program (FTCP) provides for recruitment, deployment, development, and retention of Federal personnel with demonstrated technical capability.

A self-assessment of the National Nuclear Security Administration / Los Alamos Site Office ((NNSA / LASO) FTCP) was conducted April 23 - 27, 2007. The review team conducted an in-brief and exit briefing with members of the NNSA/LASO management team. The review team identified findings, observations, and noteworthy practices described in the report.

NNSA/LASO FTCP Assessment Summary

The basic framework for the FTCP is in place at LASO, however, implementation of the FTCP was found to be immature and not fully compliant with several program requirements. An overall score for the NNSA/LASO FTCP was not assigned since this effort was intended as a baseline program evaluation to guide program development, though; individual objectives were evaluated as indicated below. The results, though disappointing, were not unexpected since LASO first initiated implementation of a Site Office Technical Qualification Program (TQP) with assignment of a TQP coordinator, development of an implementation procedure, identification of roles and responsibilities, and active management participation with the Federal Technical Capability Panel in October 2006. The review team's assessment scores for each major element of the NNSA/LASO FTCP are shown below. The individual objectives were rated as Met or Not Met. Definitions of these scores are in Section 3.0. A complete list of the Findings, Observations, and Noteworthy Practices is included in Appendix A.

<u>Objective</u>	<u>Score</u>
FTC-1 Executive Commitment and Line Management Oversight	Met
FTC-2 Recruitment of Technically Capable Personnel	Met
FTC-3 Staffing and Deployment	Met
FTC-4 Development of Technically Capable Personnel	Not Met
FTC-5 Retention of Technically Capable Personnel	Not Met
TQP-1 Demonstration of Competence	Not Met
TQP-2 Definition of Competency Levels	Met
TQP-3 Plans and Procedures	Not Met
TQP-4 Tailoring of Qualification to Work Activities	Not Met
TQP-5 Crediting of Existing Technical Qualifications	Met
TQP-6 Transportability throughout the Department	Met
TQP-7 Demonstrated Compliance and Continuous Improvement	Not Met

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Policy DOE P 426.1, *Federal Technical Capability Policy for Defense Nuclear Facilities*, requires DOE to develop and maintain a technically competent workforce to accomplish its mission in a safe and efficient manner. DOE Manual 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, provides guidance for implementing the requirements of the Policy. The Federal Technical Capability Program (FTCP) provides for recruitment, deployment, development, and retention of Federal personnel with demonstrated technical capability.

Recruitment, deployment, and retention are largely management activities that are integrated into the human relations and leadership functions. Development of federal personnel is accomplished through several programs with development of technical competence accomplished through the TQP requiring involvement of all technical staff, their chain-of-command, business and centralized NNSA and DOE training organizations. The *NNSA TQP Plan* establishes the process that NNSA uses to ensure its federal technical employees possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform their assigned duties and responsibilities.

The Safety Engineering Team Leader (SETL) has been assigned as the FTCP Agent for LASO and is responsible for carrying out the associated responsibilities as identified in the *Federal Technical Capability Manual*. The Assistant Manager for Site Operations is assigned responsibility for implementing the TQP for LASO. The NNSA Service Center Learning and Career Development Department (LCDD) provides technical and program management support.

The *Federal Technical Capability Manual* requires periodic self-assessment of the effectiveness of the implementation of the Manual and the TQP utilizing a defined set of Objectives and Criteria. The assessment documented by this report is the first periodic review conducted to meet this requirement. The assessment results are intended to establish a base-line on which to develop and improve the program. Future assessments are to be completed to measure progress towards implementing a fully effective and compliant program and to assist with continuous improvement. A future assessment where the program is evaluated as fully implemented will be used as the Application for Accreditation and request for a Federal Technical Capability Panel review.

2.0 CONDUCT OF THE REVIEW

A team of four NNSA personnel conducted the NNSA/LASO FTCP self-assessment. The review team members were:

- Fred Bell, FTCP Agent, NNSA/LASO
- Karen Boardman, DOE FTCP Chairperson, NNSA/SC
- David Lee, TQP Coordinator, NNSA/LASO
- Mark Alsdorf, TQP Manager, NNSA/SC

The review team conducted interviews with LASO management and technical staff, and performed document reviews. The documents reviewed by the team and the interviews conducted

are listed in Appendix C. The review team developed Criteria Review and Approach Documents (CRAD) and lines of inquiry for the objectives identified in DOE Manual 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*. The CRAD are identified in the approved assessment plan included as Appendix B with the specific objectives and criteria repeated in Section 4.0 below.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Met – The objective evaluated meets the intent of the FTCP per DOE Manual 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*.

Finding – A noncompliance with requirements.

Noteworthy Practice – A positive statement that highlights good practices, well-written procedures, or other positive aspects of the program that could be used as a model for other similar programs across the DOE complex.

Observation – A needed (but not required) program improvement to support implementing a requirement or program element. Observations are deviations from best management practices or program guidance.

Not Met – The objective evaluated does not meet the intent of the FTCP per DOE Manual 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, or it is missing significant program elements or implementation.

4.0 NNSA/LASO FCP ASSESSMENT RESULTS

An overall score for the NNSA/LASO FTCP was not assigned since this effort was intended as a baseline program evaluation to guide program development, though; individual objectives were evaluated as indicated below. It is a positive development that LASO has initiated a Site Office TQP and begun active participation with the Federal Technical Capability Panel; however, long-standing weaknesses were identified in each of the Manual focus areas of recruitment, deployment, development, and retention that are currently receiving management attention and appear to be improving but will require continued management attention beyond the TQP to satisfactorily resolve. The individual objectives were scored as either Met or Not Met as shown below. Definitions of these scores are in Section 3.0. A complete list of the Findings, Observations, and Noteworthy Practices is included in Appendix A

<u>Objective</u>		<u>Score</u>
FTC-1	Executive Commitment and Line Management Oversight	Met
FTC-2	Recruitment of Technically Capable Personnel	Met
FTC-3	Staffing and Deployment	Met
FTC-4	Development of Technically Capable Personnel	Not Met
FTC-5	Retention of Technically Capable Personnel	Not Met
TQP-1	Demonstration of Competence	Not Met
TQP-2	Definition of Competency Levels	Met
TQP-3	Plans and Procedures	Not Met

TQP-4	Tailoring of Qualification to Work Activities	Not Met
TQP-5	Crediting of Existing Technical Qualifications	Met
TQP-6	Transportability throughout the Department	Met
TQP-7	Demonstrated Compliance and Continuous Improvement	Not Met

**4.1 Objective FTC-1, Executive Commitment and Line Management Ownership.
Line management is actively involved in all aspects of technical employee
recruitment, retention, development, and deployment.**

Criteria

1. Line managers are aware of the requirements and administrative flexibilities associated with recruiting, hiring, and retaining high-quality technical employees.
2. Senior line management supports the continuous technical development and improvement of employees.
3. Supporting organizations (personnel, training, contracts, finance, etc.) recognize line managers as customers and effectively support them in achieving and maintaining technical excellence.
4. The applicable Level One or field level Functions, Responsibilities, and Authorities Manual (FRAM) clearly defines Federal line management responsibilities in the area of technical capability.
5. Achieving and maintaining technical competence is reflected in the goals and objectives of the organization and the position descriptions and performance evaluation plans of senior managers.
6. Technical capability programs and processes are institutionalized through Policy, Orders, Standards, and procedures.
7. Management uses the results of previous FTCP assessments as a tool to improve the program.

Discussion of Results

The grade for this objective is MET based on documentation of responsibilities, line management understanding of requirements and demonstrated recruitment, hiring and retention activities. There was one Observation identified for this objective.

The LASO FRAM, Revision 2, approved January 5, 2007 defines Federal line management responsibilities in the area of technical capability. The technical qualification program is not specifically listed under the Site Office Manager's responsibilities, but does appear under the Office of the Manager, Senior Safety Advisor. There are inconsistencies in how responsibilities for technical qualifications flow down within the FRAM. Under the FRAM section entitled "Assistant Managers and other direct reports to the Manager" supporting the technical qualifications program is identified. Specific responsibilities are clearly identified for the

following organizations: Office of Quality Assurance; Assistant Manager for Safety Operations; Facility Representative Team; Safety Basis Team; Safety Engineering Team; and Assistant Manager for Business and Assessment. However, other organizations that have personnel in the technical qualification program have no responsibilities specifically listed. Federal line management responsibilities in the LASO FRAM regarding technical capability are not clear, is OBSERVATION FTC-1.1.

Achieving and maintaining technical competence is reflected in the LASO Management System approved on October 1, 2006. LASO has implemented a process that formally analyzes every federal position for inclusion/exclusion into the FTCP. Position descriptions of the LASO Site Office Manager and Technical Deputy require Senior Technical Safety Manager (STSM) qualification. FTCP assessments have not been conducted prior to this self-assessment, which will provide the baseline conditions of the LASO program for management action. See Finding TQP - 7.1.

Line managers are aware of the requirements and administrative flexibilities associated with recruiting, hiring, and retaining high-quality technical employees. Managers have used tools such as excepted service, permanent change of station payments, relocation bonuses, retention incentives, and flexible work schedules to recruit, hire, and retain technical employees as the budget allowed.

Supporting organizations recognize line managers as customers and effectively support them in achieving and maintaining technical excellence. The NNSA Service Center Office of Human Capital Management (OHCM) has assisted LASO in applying tools such as Advance in Hire which allows an agency to hire an external candidate at a rate higher than the normal entry level based on superior qualifications. Another recruitment tool allows an individual to receive credit based on directly related external experience for the purposes of accruing annual leave in the 6 or 8 hour category vice 4 hour entry level category. Both of these tools have been used for recruitment of external hires at LASO.

Senior line management supports the concepts of continuous technical development and improvement of employees; however, formal training and attendance at professional conferences for career enhancement and development opportunities are not widely utilized due to budget constraints (See TQP-1, Demonstration of Competence, Observation TQP 1-1). The Acting LASO Site Office Manager has initiated a series of professional seminars to provide an additional training venue and has provided detail opportunities to technical staff.

LASO Management Procedure, MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program, was recently issued to implement the TQP at LASO and incorporate DOE Order 360.1B and *NNSA TQP Plan* requirements. Specific comments on this procedure are included under Objective TQP-3, and Findings TQP-1.2, 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4 address specific deficiencies identified with the procedure.

FINDINGS

None

OBSERVATIONS

OBSERVATION FTC-1.1: Federal line management responsibilities in the LASO FRAM regarding technical capability are not clear.

NOTEWORTHY PRACTICES

None

- 4.2 FTC-2, Recruiting Technically Capable Personnel. An effective process is implemented to attract highly competent technical personnel to fill key positions in the Department.**

Criteria

1. Excepted Service Authorities are considered as a tool to attract highly competent technical personnel to fill key safety positions.
2. Intern programs, such as the CIP, are recognized as an effective method to attract technically competent personnel to the Department.

Discussion of Results

The grade for this objective is MET based on the utilization of excepted service authorities and the NNSA Future Leaders Program as methods to attract technically qualified personnel to LASO. Excepted service authorities have been used extensively at LASO. Recently additional EK positions were transferred from DOE to NNSA/LASO to recruit six critical technical positions. Career ladder positions (GS13/14) have also been established to provide greater flexibility for recruiting technical positions where excepted service positions were not available.

LASO actively participates in the NNSA Future Leaders Program (FLP). Three interns will graduate from the FLP in June 2007 and be assigned to permanent technical positions. Another intern will graduate and be converted in June 2008. Additional FLP slots will be requested from the FY2008 class.

Opportunities are made available within the site office for detail assignments and details to outside organizations are supported. LASO has also supported participation by technical personnel in the NNSA Mid Level Development Program.

FINDINGS

None

OBSERVATIONS

None

NOTEWORTHY PRACTICES

None

- 4.3 FTC-3, Staffing and Deployment. Technical staffing plans are developed, maintained, and used as the basis for recruiting, developing, and deploying personnel to ensure that critical safety positions are filled with technically competent people.**

Criteria

1. Technical staffing plans are developed and maintained to identify critical safety positions and other key technical positions within the organization.
2. Technical staffing plans form the basis for recruiting, developing, and deploying technical personnel in the organization.
3. Employees in critical safety positions and other key technical positions possess the requisite education, training, experience, and background for their positions.
4. The STSM Program is effectively implemented in the organization. The STSM describes how STSM candidates are selected and compensatory measures used when responsible individuals lack STSM qualification.

Discussion of Results

The grade for this objective is MET based on the utilization of staffing plans to manage recruitment and deployment of technical personnel and improvements in implementation of the STSM Program, however, the formality of the implementation of the STSM Program is inadequate. Three Findings and three Observations were identified for this objective.

Many different staffing analyses have been completed in recent years that have been used to determine what positions are required to be staffed in the Site Office and to prioritize the filling of vacancies. Staffing plans completed include:

- The LASO Functional Analysis and Staffing Plan
- The LASO Managed Staffing Plan
- Critical Safety Functions identified in accordance with the Defense Nuclear Facility Safety Board (DNFSB) Recommendation 2004-01 Implementation Plan (IP)
- The FTCP Workforce Analysis
- The Facility Representative Program Staffing Analysis
- Individual functional area analyses such Nuclear Safety Specialists, Safety Subject Matter Experts, Project Managers, etc. that contribute to the above listed analyses.

These staffing plans are developed then reviewed by Senior LASO Management and authorized staff positions apportioned to the different technical areas based on the need to accomplish required functions and best mitigation of risk. When authorized staffing numbers did not appear to be adequate to perform the required site office functions, requests for additional staffing were

made through the DOE line management chain. These requests resulted in an increase in FTE ceiling from that identified in the LASO Managed Staffing Plan to that which was approved by Memorandum L. F. Brooks to E. L. Wilmot, Pilot of the New National Security Administration Oversight Model at Los Alamos, dated March 10, 2006. It is difficult to determine adequacy of the approved staffing ceiling since LASO has not been successful in reaching full staffing for several years.

The vacancies identified as a result of the staffing plan analyses are prioritized and the hiring process managed through the use of the LASO Tracking Matrix for Personnel Actions. Critical Technical Positions are being filled consistent with the prioritization identified in this matrix and with the needs identified in the FTCP 2006 Workforce Analysis and Critical Safety Functions identified in accordance with the DNFSB Recommendation 2004-01 IP. Examples of positions filled include a Criticality Safety Engineer, Fire Protection Engineer, Nuclear Safety Specialist, STSM positions identified, and several other vacancies are posted and in process of being filled.

Development of staffing plans is specifically required by DOE Standard 1063-2006, Facility Representatives, for the Facility Representative Program and DOE Manual 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, for critical technical capabilities. These staffing analyses have not been consistently completed or completed on time. The Facility Representative Program Self-Assessment completed in March 2007 identified that the FR Staffing Plan was not approved. Also the FTCP Workforce analysis for calendar year 2005 was not completed. The FR staffing plan is currently in draft and under review by the Site Manager and the FTCP staffing analysis has been completed for calendar year 2006 so this deficiency is not identified as a finding.

Employees in critical safety positions are verified to possess the requisite education prior to being selected for the position through the personnel selection process; however, not all employees have completed the technical qualifications program for their assigned functional areas. Notable examples include nuclear safety specialists (NSS), the criticality safety (CS) program manager, and system safety oversight (SSO) staff. Several factors contribute to this deficiency but the primary reason is that these positions are filled by newly assigned staff who are currently working towards qualification. Qualified staff shortfalls in NSS and CS are compensated for by mentoring and direct support from qualified NNSA Service Center staff. SSO staff are qualified or qualifying in specific functional areas but a program to establish who is required to have specific functional area qualification (FAQ) standards for SSO has not been established. A FAQ has not been formally assigned to the SSO Program Manager addressing the specific SSO elements identified in DOE Manual 426.1-1A. LASO has not established a System Safety Oversight qualification program as required by DOE Manual 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, is FINDING FTC-3.1. For additional discussion on the SSO Program, see Objective TQP-3 and related Finding TQP-3.2.

The LASO STSM program is not well defined and not well implemented. There was a recent effort (November 2006) to define those positions required to be staffed with STSM qualified personnel and qualification standards were issued to those who were permanently assigned in the positions. There were many assigned in an acting status at the time, those positions are gradually being filled permanently and qualifications standards issued. Since that time, a new Site Manager has been assigned in an acting role and the positions requiring STSM qualification has been redefined. In November of 2006, 13 positions were assigned as requiring STSM qualification, currently 8 are assigned with the other positions being encouraged to qualify, but not required; only one position was not common to both lists. The methodology used to make the

determination is based on consideration of the guidance provided in DOE Manual 426.1-1A, but the process and position evaluations are not documented. LASO has not set clear guidance and expectations for the identification and filling of Senior Technical Safety Manager positions as recommended by DOE Manual 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, is OBSERVATION FTC-3.1.

Of seven position descriptions reviewed for positions that are identified as requiring STSM qualification, only one identified specific requirements for STSM qualification, another identified that STSM qualification may be required. Similarly, vacancy announcements are inconsistent in their identification of STSM requirements. Senior Technical Safety Manager Position descriptions do not clearly identify positions as STSM positions as required by DOE Manual 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, is FINDING FTC-3.2.

Of the eight positions currently assigned to be STSM, three acting managers are qualified and the FTCP agent is qualified. Four permanently assigned managers are not yet qualified. Of the eight manager positions identified by the Site Office Manager as requiring Senior Technical Safety Manager Qualifications, only four managers are currently qualified, is OBSERVATION FTC-3.2.

Compensatory measures for a Deputy Manager who is not required to be STSM qualified but who acts for the Site Manager have been formally established in the position description and are well implemented. A qualified STSM reviews all technical correspondence and evaluates safety aspects of technical actions taken by the Deputy Manager. Assistant Managers in STSM positions who are not currently qualified understand the need for STSM review of technical correspondence with safety implications and appear to ensure that review is accomplished, however, no formal expectation or process to ensure compensatory measures are in place has been established. LASO has not formally implemented compensatory measures for managing Senior Technical Safety Manager (STSM) duties for those cases where the incumbent in an STSM identified position has not met the requirements defined in the STSM Functional Area Qualification Standard for all STSM positions at LASO, is OBSERVATION FTC-3.3.

The LASO FTCP Agent is not involved with the filling of positions requiring STSM qualification. The LASO Federal Technical Capability Program Agent does not concur with STSM vacancy announcements and competitive selections as required by DOE Manual 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, is FINDING FTC-3.3.

FINDINGS

FINDING FTC-3.1: LASO has not established a System Safety Oversight qualification program as required by DOE Manual 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*.

FINDING FTC-3.2: Senior Technical Safety Manager Position descriptions do not clearly identify positions as STSM positions as required by DOE Manual 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*.

FINDING FTC-3.3: The LASO Federal Technical Capability Program Agent does not concur with STSM vacancy announcements and competitive selections as required by DOE Manual 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*.

OBSERVATIONS

OBSERVATION FTC-3.1: LASO has not set clear guidance and expectations for the identification and filling of Senior Technical Safety Manager Positions as recommended by DOE Manual 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*.

OBSERVATION FTC-3.2: Of the eight manager positions identified by the Site Office Manager as requiring Senior Technical Safety Manager Qualifications, only four managers are currently qualified.

OBSERVATION FTC-3.3: LASO has not formally implemented compensatory measures for managing Senior Technical Safety Manager (STSM) duties for those cases where the incumbent in an STSM identified position has not met the requirements defined in the STSM Functional Area Qualification Standard for all STSM positions at LASO.

NOTEWORTHY PRACTICES

None

4.4 FTC-4, Development of Technically Capable Personnel. Programs and processes are effectively implemented to encourage the continuous improvement of technical personnel.

Criteria

1. The TQP is effectively implemented. (Note: This program is evaluated using the TQP objectives and criteria.)
2. Fellowship programs and other continuing education processes are effectively used to enhance the continuous improvement of technical personnel.
3. Employees are encouraged to join professional organizations, write professional papers, and pursue professional certifications.

Discussion of Results

The grade for this objective is Not Met based on the compendium of findings throughout this report that suggest that though many elements of a TQP are in place, the number of deficiencies prevents the program from being fully effective. Two Findings and one Observation were identified for this objective.

Details of the effectiveness of the TQP are evaluated in Objectives TQP-1 through TQP-7. One issue that broadly impacts the program is the lack of a methodical process within the Site Office for identifying future training needs such that they can be planned and budgeted for effective program management. Tools available such as the Individual Development Plan (IDP) process that could be used to support planning are not utilized. Further discussion on IDP use is included in Objective TQP-1. LASO has not implemented a process for methodically identifying and planning for future training needs such that a fully effective training and qualification program can be implemented as required by DOE Order 360.1B, *Federal Employee Training*, is FINDING FTC-4.1.

LASO Management Procedure MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program Management Procedure, requires the technical personnel who have completed initial qualification complete continuing training to maintain proficiency; however, no continuing training program has been established. The procedure identifies the need for required reading and topical training, but no processes are in place that implement these programs. Individual staff members request approval to attend classes that are continuing training and are approved on a funding available basis, but there is no mechanism for identifying office wide needs. Recent distributions from the NNSA Service Center TQP Manager have provided continuing training packages with broad applicability, but this material has not been utilized by the Site Office. There is not a process in place that identifies, records, and develops training on changes to relevant DOE and contractor programs and documents. LASO staff are not trained on new or revised Site Office procedures. In January 2005 LASO issued LASO Office Procedure OFO OP 1, Facility Representative Continuing Training Program, which required implementation of a continuing training program for facility representatives in response to NNSA Principle Deputy Administrator direction. Shortly thereafter, LASO revised its procedure structure and this procedure was not carried forward into the new system and implementation was discontinued. LASO has not implemented a continuing training program as required by LASO Management Procedure MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program Management Procedure, is FINDING FTC-4.2.

Many LASO technical employees are members of professional organizations and/or hold professional certifications. LASO management supports these memberships/certifications and most staff recognize the value and importance. Individual supervisors encourage staff to pursue these activities, though there is no formal of endorsement or specific recognition for attainment. The current Site Manger plans to develop a matrix documenting all staff qualifications and certifications to supplement the DOE TQP documentation to further demonstrate technical staff qualification. LASO also approves reimbursement of the costs for profession certifications and approves continuing education to maintain profession certification in employee's assigned technical field as budget allows; however, some staff have reportedly allowed certifications to lapse because they were not aware that the expense could be reimbursed. Not all LASO staff are aware that the cost of professional certifications can be reimbursed by NNSA is OBSERVATION FTC-4.1

FINDINGS

FINDING FTC-4.1: LASO has not implemented a process for methodically identifying and planning for future training needs such that a fully effective training and qualification program can be implemented as required by DOE Order 360.1B, *Federal Employee Training*.

FINDING FTC-4.2: LASO has not implemented a continuing training program as required by LASO Management Procedure MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program Management Procedure.

OBSERVATIONS

OBSERVATION FTC-4.1: Not all LASO staff are aware that the cost of professional certifications can be reimbursed by NNSA.

NOTEWORTHY PRACTICES

None

4.5 FTC-5, Retaining Technically Capable Personnel. DOE is an organization where technically competent personnel are respected and want to work.

Criteria

1. Technical personnel are assigned positions and responsibilities that allow them to effectively use their education, training, experience, and background in a fulfilling way.
2. Career path planning and succession planning are effectively used to help retain technically capable personnel.
3. Technical performance is used as a basis for performance reviews, promotions, recognitions, rewards, etc.
4. An effective process is in place to preserve critical technical capabilities during RIFs.

Discussion of Results

The grade for this objective is Not Met based on the lack of career path planning and maintaining technically qualified people. Two Findings were identified for this objective.

NNSA conducted an Employee Satisfaction Survey in 2005. The results indicated that the continuous state of change at LASO and how that change had been managed was a fundamental contributor to organizational weaknesses and ultimately employee dissatisfaction. Evidence to support this statement included the significant number of acting technical managers as of January 2007 and the large number of technical vacancies due to either attrition or internal movement of employees without internal successors or active recruitment efforts. LASO has not implemented career path planning and succession planning to effectively retain technically capable personnel is FINDING FTC-5.1.

LASO conducted a Strategic Pause in 2006 to align the organization and develop procedures to implement federal oversight of the new LANS Contractor Assurance Program. A significant number of technical staff were reassigned prior to January 2007. While these reassignments provided opportunities to apply knowledge and abilities to new functional areas, the overall number of technical personnel at LASO qualified in their assigned functional areas dropped. As discussed in FTC-4, Development of Technically Capable Personnel, Finding FTC-4.1, the lack of a methodical process for identifying and planning for future training needs with the increased number of personnel on new qualification standards has created a significant backlog in training and qualification requirements.

LASO requested and received approval of a group retention incentive in 2000 for employees in the Technical Group. This retention incentive has been approved each year through 2006. The request for annual review and recertification of this group incentive for 2007 was sent to NNSA Headquarters for approval on February 27, 2007 and is pending evaluation.*¹

Technical performance is measured and recognized at LASO in annual performance plans, promotions and awards. The Acting Site Office Manager personally recognizes employees who achieve technical qualification by presenting certificates at All Hands meetings. All employees that receive a fully meets expectations during their annual performance appraisals receive the LASO retention incentive. LASO management has also nominated technical employees for the Facility Representative of the Year and the NNSA Safety Professional of the Year.

LASO has made extensive use of excepted service authorities with a majority of the technical staff converting to excepted service positions. The excepted service provides some means for management to preserve critical technical skills during a RIF. Prior to the availability of excepted service, competitive areas and levels had been used to preserve technical skills in case of a RIF; however, the competitive levels for General Schedule (GS) employees were not reestablished after the NNSA reorganization in December 2004. Finally, the NNSA has begun the development of a pay-banding demonstration project for all GS employees with a scheduled implementation date of January 2008. Information on how a RIF would proceed under the new pay-banding model is not currently available. The NNSA does not have an integrated process for preserving technical capability between the excepted service and GS positions in case of a RIF, is FINDING FTC-5.2.

**1 Since completion of this review, the request for retention allowance has been disapproved and the allowance will be phased out for those receiving the allowance over a three year period.*

FINDINGS

FINDING FTC-5.1: LASO has not implemented career path planning and succession planning to effectively retain technically capable personnel.

FINDING FTC-5.2: The NNSA does not have an integrated process for preserving technical capability between the excepted service and GS positions in case of a RIF.

OBSERVATIONS

None

NOTEWORTHY PRACTICES

None

- 4.6 TQP-1, Demonstration of Competence. The program clearly identifies and documents the process used to demonstrate employee technical competence.**

Criteria

1. At a minimum, personnel providing management direction or oversight that could impact the safe operation of a defense nuclear facility have been identified as TQP participants.
2. IDPs, training plans, technical qualification records, or other related documents are updated to reflect the activities required for each individual to satisfy competencies.

3. A formal evaluation process is in place to objectively measure the technical competency of employees. The rigor of the evaluation process is commensurate with the responsibilities of the position.

Discussion of Results

The grade for this objective is NOT MET based on the lack of current IDPs and a site training plan, as well as inconsistently applied final qualification evaluation activities. Two Findings and two Observations were identified for this objective.

A comprehensive review of every federal position assigned to the Los Alamos Site Office revealed that each has been formally analyzed for inclusion/exclusion into the TQP. A position evaluation form for each position is on file in the TQP Coordinator's office signed by the position's supervisor and validated by the site FTCP agent. The 2007 LASO Annual Workforce Analysis and Staffing Plan also identifies the site's technical staffing requirements and the path forward for meeting those requirements.

Individual Development Plans (IDPs) have not been updated in recent years by senior management direction. Funding constraints and high staff workload drove the site manager to direct site personnel to forego the requirement to annually update IDPs as required by DOE O 360.1B, *Federal Employee Training*. Additionally, the LASO TQP Management Procedure, MP 02.04, describes the IDP process, but it has not been consistently followed. IDPs are not consistently developed as required in DOE O 360.1B, *Federal Employee Training*, is FINDING TQP-1.1.

There is no site office training plan. Each DOE element is required to have a training plan per DOE O 360.1B, *Federal Employee Training*. DOE interprets elements to include site offices; however, discussions between NNSA and DOE reveal differing opinions on the definition of "element." These discussions should result in a clarification of training plan development applicability and its effects on LASO. Currently, NNSA LCDD produces an annual training plan that includes all NNSA sites and has been used in the past to meet this requirement. However, the requirement for an element training plan or how it was potentially being met was unknown to the site TQP Coordinator. This requirement may be met through the NNSA LCDD FY 2006 Training Plan, but no documentation of this determination has been produced. A site training plan has not been developed as required in DOE O 360.1B, *Federal Employee Training* is OBSERVATION TQP-1.1.

The TQP Coordinator maintains a qualification training file on each TQP participant consisting of applicable TQP documentation and forwards copies of this information to LCDD to forward to the Enterprise Training Services department for inclusion in the individual's permanent training file. However, the currency of qualification records and other related documents are dependent on TQP participant submissions of training completion documentation.

A formal evaluation process is in place to objectively measure the technical competency of employees. However, the site TQP Management Procedure, MP 02.04, does not clearly establish final qualification process expectations. DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, states that "final qualification should be performed using one or a combination of the following methods: satisfactory completion of a comprehensive written examination with a minimum passing score of 80 percent, satisfactory completion of an oral examination by a

qualified STSM or a qualification board of technically qualified personnel that includes at least one STSM, or satisfactory completion of a walk-through of a facility with a qualifying official for verifying a candidate's knowledge of and practical skills related to selected key elements." The *NNSA TQP Plan* states that "the supervisor will ensure the TQP participant completes a final qualification activity; it may consist of a comprehensive written examination, an oral examination, a site/facility walkthrough, or some combination of these options." However, the site TQP Management Procedure, MP 02.04, states that "after all the competencies in the Qualification Standard are completed and documented, including a written examination if required, the supervisor may conduct an oral evaluation checkout." This policy does not clearly establish a final evaluation activity process as required in DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual* and the NNSA TQP Plan. As a result, the LASO TQP policy is inconsistently applied throughout the site office. Some supervisors document the process used to evaluate candidate knowledge, skills, and abilities through a final written examination, oral evaluation, or evaluated walkthrough; others do not document this process. Therefore, validation of the application of an appropriate level of rigor in the evaluation process cannot be confirmed. MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program Management Procedure, does not include the final evaluated activity requirements detailed in DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, and the NNSA Technical Qualification Program Plan, is FINDING TQP-1.2.

Several interviewees indicated confusion as to the level of rigor required to be applied to specific competency evaluations. Specifically, concern was expressed about how to differentiate between "familiarity," "working," and "expert" level evaluation requirements. A lack of communication of expectations and requirements has led to confusion of supervisors and qualifying officials over the appropriate level of evaluation rigor for qualification competencies is OBSERVATION TQP-1.2.

FINDINGS

FINDING TQP-1.1: Individual Development Plans are not consistently developed as required in DOE O 360.1B, *Federal Employee Training*.

FINDING TQP-1.2: MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program Management Procedure, does not include the final evaluated activity requirements detailed in DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, and the NNSA Technical Qualification Program Plan.

OBSERVATIONS

OBSERVATION TQP-1.1: A site training plan has not been developed as required in DOE O 360.1B, *Federal Employee Training*.

OBSERVATION TQP-1.2: A lack of communication of expectations and requirements has led to confusion of supervisors and qualifying officials over the appropriate level of evaluation rigor for qualification competencies.

NOTEWORTHY PRACTICES

None

4.7 TQP-2, Competency Levels. Competency requirements are clearly defined and consistent with applicable industry standards for similar occupations.

Criteria

1. Competency requirements include clearly defined knowledge, skill, and ability elements.
2. Recognized experts help establish competency requirements.
3. Related professional certification requirements are considered in the program as applicable.
4. Competency requirements are identified in the areas listed below. (Note: This does not imply that three separate documents are required.)
 - **Basic Technical Knowledge.** Competency in areas such as radiation protection, occupational safety, chemical safety, nuclear safety, and environmental regulations.
 - **Technical Discipline Competency.** Competency in a technical discipline (e.g., mechanical engineering, chemical engineering) that can be demonstrated by education, professional certification, examination, or on-the-job performance.
 - **Position Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** Competencies specific to the position, facility, or program and the office.

Discussion of Results

The grade for this objective is MET based on adherence to the NNSA TQP Plan, using professional certifications for equivalency, and requiring use of DOE-approved standards to provide a basis for the LASO TQP. One Finding and two Observations were identified for this objective.

The LASO TQP uses functional area qualification standards prepared by recognized DOE subject matter experts and approved by the Federal Technical Capability Panel. These standards provide the basis for the LASO program. Site-specific standards, when used, are developed with assistance from NNSA/LCDD. A job task analysis is performed per the *NNSA TQP Plan* and User's Guide for each site-specific standard.

Professional certifications are used as a basis for granting equivalencies when they are submitted for evaluation. However, some supervisors are unaware of the process as described in LASO MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program Management Procedure. As a result, utilization and application of the equivalency process is inconsistent. Supervisors do not consistently utilize equivalencies for professional certifications as allowed in DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, is OBSERVATION TQP-2.1.

In accordance with the FTCP Manual (DOE M 426.1-1A), Chapter III, Section 4, the LASO TQP for each Federal employee enrolled in the TQP consists of a basic technical knowledge element which is provided by the General Technical Base Qualification Standard. The employee's

technical discipline competency element is met by the employee's supervisor assigning the employee an FTCP-approved NNSA Functional Area Qualification (FAQ) Standard. In accordance with the NNSA TQP Plan, June 25, 2004, positions are evaluated for the need for site/position-specific standards. When identified necessary, the employee's site/position-specific knowledge, skills, and abilities training requirement is met by LASO utilizing the services of the NNSA Service Center LCDD to develop and issue site/position-specific FAQ.

This assessment found, however, that many of the site/position-specific FAQs that had been developed for LASO needed to be updated largely because many of the competencies specified in the site/position-specific FAQ had been duplicated or carried over from the employee's technical discipline FAQ. In other words, several of site/position-specific FAQ standards were recognized to contain more than just site/position-specific job competencies. In addition, several of the site/position-specific FAQs needed to be updated with the specification of the new LANL contractor-issued safety related publication numbers, given the fact that the LANL operating contractor had changed since the site/position-specific FAQs were first developed and the new LANL operating contractor had published a new set of safety documents. Site-Specific Qualification Standards contain outdated and/or duplicate information from the technical discipline standard is FINDING TQP-2.1.

For over a year site specific FAQs were not being developed and issued to new TQP participants. This was due to several reasons but primarily because no staff or support service contractors were assigned this function, no LASO procedure was in place to provide guidance, and no federal position was assigned to manage the TQP process. These conditions led to site-specific requirements being omitted from individual qualification requirements at LASO. A new practice requiring issuance of a site specific requirements when required be issued with the functional area standard has been established through an email with NNSA/LCDD to preclude this from recurring, but has not been in-place long enough to evaluate its effectiveness. This practice is not formalized in the LASO procedure. The LASO practice to issue site-specific standards, when required, concurrently with the functional area standard, is not identified in LASO MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program Management Procedure, is OBSERVATION TQP-2.2.

FINDINGS

FINDING TQP-2.1: Site-Specific Qualification Standards contain outdated and/or duplicate information from the technical discipline standard.

OBSERVATIONS

OBSERVATION TQP-2.1: Supervisors do not consistently utilize equivalencies for professional certifications as allowed in DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*.

OBSERVATION TQP-2.2: The LASO practice to issue site-specific standards, when required, concurrently with the functional area standard, is not identified in LASO MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program Management Procedure.

NOTEWORTHY PRACTICES

None

4.8 TQP-3, Plans and Procedures. Plans and/or procedures are developed and implemented to govern administration of the program.

Criteria

1. Senior management is committed to the TQP.
2. Written procedures that adequately define the processes and requirements to implement the TQP are in place.
3. Roles and responsibilities for implementing the TQP are clearly defined and understood by all involved.
4. The procedures that govern implementation of the TQP are understood by all involved and are being implemented as written.
5. A training and qualification records system is established for each employee in the TQP.

Discussion of Results

The grade for this objective is NOT MET based on inconsistent management commitment and an ineffective site TQP management procedure. Four Findings, two Observations, and one Noteworthy Practice were identified for this objective.

Senior management commitment to the TQP is stated to exist but is not evident in implementation. The previous site manager established a federal position, TQP Coordinator, to administer the TQP at LASO. The manager also approved the site's first TQP Management Procedure, MP 02.04, in compliance with DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*. However, this self-assessment is the only LASO assessment specifically targeting the site's TQP. DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, requires that an assessment of the TQP be performed periodically. While the term "periodically" is not defined, some assessments should have been performed since the inception of the TQP. See Finding TQP-7.1. Additionally, due to travel and/or training funding constraints and mission priorities, emphasis has been channeled away from qualification completion. Courses needed to complete qualification have not been attended or requested through IDPs due to funding constraints, adequate time to complete qualification has not been allotted, and supervisors have allowed subordinates to exceed qualification dates without consequence. Programmatic concerns took priority over qualification. As a result, LASO has the highest number of overdue TQP participants of any site office in the complex as documented in every FTCP quarterly report to Deputy Secretary of Energy since FY2004. The acting site manager stated that he directed LASO TQP supervisors to allot participants time for qualification completion, identify barriers to full qualification, and implement a strong continuing training program. He also indicated that he would verify the quality of examinations, participate in oral and review boards, and assist supervisors in resolving barriers to TQP qualification. These initiatives are in progress, however, formal direction has not been provided and this manager is temporarily assigned and expected to depart LASO in July 2007. Senior management commitment to the TQP is not evident in program implementation as required by DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, is FINDING TQP-3.1.

Also, the number of approved qualifying officials at LASO is insufficient. Specifically, the lack of nuclear safety specialist and Senior Technical Safety Manager (STSM) qualifying officials led to increased reliance on the NNSA Service Center or other sites. The number of approved LASO Qualifying Officials is insufficient to meet the needs of the site office is OBSERVATION TQP-3.1.

The site TQP Management Procedure, MP 02.04, approved on February 1, 2007, by the site manager, defines the processes and requirements to implement the TQP at LASO. However, the procedure is not consistent with the requirements established in DOE M426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, and the NNSA TQP Plan. For example, the LASO MP allows exemptions to be taken whereas DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, requires qualification standards to be completed without modification or deletion. In another example, paragraph 5.2.5 indicates that written exams are "if required"; paragraph 6.4.7 also implies that a final evaluated activity is not required. This policy conflicts with DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, as stated in the TQP-1 discussion. LASO MP 02.04 should be reconciled against the *NNSA TQP Plan* and DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, and be expanded to meet the needs of the site to include more detailed descriptions of the LASO TQP processes, explanations of evaluation rigor, and increased specification of position responsibilities. For example, the requalification process should be expanded to include the required steps and expectations of supervisors and participants. LASO Management Procedure, MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program, is not consistent with the requirements established in DOE M426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, and the NNSA TQP Plan, is FINDING TQP-3.2.

The Safety Engineering Team Leader developed an Operations Plan for 2007 that specifies the development of individual performance plans that include "individual development and technical qualification." The TQP is identified as one of the team's functional areas and assigned to the TQP Coordinator for accountability. This initiative ensures the TQP receives special emphasis with measurable goals and performance measures. Issuance of the Safety Engineering Team Operations Plan for 2007 that specifies the development of individual performance plans and provides clear expectations for program management with defined metrics is NOTEWORTHY PRACTICE TQP-3.1.

The roles and responsibilities for implementing the TQP are clearly defined in the site TQP Management Procedure (MP), however, interviews revealed that few LASO TQP participants were aware of the procedure or their roles and responsibilities as defined in LASO MP 02.04. Position roles and responsibilities detailed in the responsibilities section of the MP are not sufficiently detailed in the text. As a result, some managers are not fully aware of their TQP responsibilities. Also, numerous instances occur in the MP where a position is tasked to perform an action in the text that is not included in the responsibilities section. The LASO Functions, Responsibilities, and Authorities Manual delineates TQP responsibilities to the Senior Safety Advisor (no longer a LASO position), several specific assistant manager positions, and all assistant managers and other direct reports to the Manager. The LASO Management System document also details senior management expectations for the qualification and training of LASO staff. LASO TQP participants were unaware of the procedure or their roles and responsibilities as defined in LASO Management Procedure, MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program, is FINDING TQP-3.3.

Additionally, the LASO Safety System Oversight procedure, MP 06.02, adequately describes safety system oversight (SSO) personnel qualification requirements. Two LASO SSO implementation assessments, located on the FTCP web page, were conducted in March 2005 and October 2005 using FTCP-developed evaluation criteria and based on the requirements in DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*. As noted in these implementation assessments for the Federal Technical Capability Panel, the LASO program meets the intent of providing oversight of aging safety systems, but does not meet the requirement of DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, that “SSOs should be considered the primary function of assigned personnel.” Additionally, DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, states that “unlike FRs, who are responsible for monitoring the safety performance of DOE defense nuclear facilities and day-to-day operational status, staff members assigned to SSO are responsible for overseeing assigned systems to ensure they will perform as required by the safety basis and other applicable requirements.” SSOs “focus on the details of safety system operability implementation while FRs focus on the integrated operational aspects of these systems and programs.” The LASO proposal to use FRs in an SSO capacity appears to conflict with the intent of SSO focusing on operability implementation. The LASO SSO program does not meet the requirement of DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, that “SSOs should be considered the primary function of assigned personnel” is OBSERVATION TQP-3.2.

The TQP Coordinator advises supervisors as requested, but supervisors do not consult the TQP Coordinator frequently. As a result, the TQP MP is not being implemented as written. For example, paragraph 6.4.4 states that the TQP Coordinator “shall ensure that practical factors are included in the TAQ qualification card,” but provides no process for accomplishment. Paragraph 6.7 indicates that the LASO TQP Coordinator will be involved with requalification activities, but this is not part of the Coordinator’s responsibilities identified in paragraph 4.5. Also, supervisors appear hesitant to use the TQP Coordinator in this capacity. Additionally, the continuing training program described in paragraph 6.8 is non-existent at LASO. LASO Management Procedure, MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program, is not implemented as written is FINDING TQP-3.4.

The LASO TQP Coordinator maintains an on-site TQP file system for each TQP participant. Additionally, as required by the NNSA TQP Plan, the TQP Coordinator forwards copies of these documents to LCDD in accordance with the NNSA File Management Job Aid. LCDD forwards these documents to the Enterprise Training Services organization for inclusion in individual permanent training files.

FINDINGS

FINDING TQP-3.1: Senior management commitment to the TQP is not evident in program implementation as required by DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*.

FINDING TQP-3.2: LASO Management Procedure, MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program, is not consistent with the requirements established in DOE M426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, and the NNSA TQP Plan.

FINDING TQP-3.3: LASO TQP participants were unaware of the procedure or their roles and responsibilities as defined in LASO Management Procedure, MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program.

FINDING TQP-3.4: LASO Management Procedure, MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program, is not implemented as written.

OBSERVATIONS

OBSERVATION TQP-3.1: The number of approved LASO Qualifying Officials is insufficient to meet the needs of the site office.

OBSERVATION TQP-3.2: The LASO SSO program does not meet the requirement of DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, that "SSOs should be considered the primary function of assigned personnel."

NOTEWORTHY PRACTICES

NOTEWORTHY PRACTICE TQP-3.1: Issuance of the Safety Engineering Team Operations Plan for 2007 that specifies the development of individual performance plans and provides clear expectations for program management with defined metrics.

- 4.9 TQP-4, Qualification Tailored to Work Activities. The program identifies unique Department- and position-specific work activities and specifies the knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish that work.**

Criteria

1. An analysis has been performed to identify the related knowledge, skill, and ability elements to accomplish the duties and responsibilities for each TQP functional area or position.
2. The program includes job-specific requirements related to the rules, regulations, codes, standards, and guides necessary to carry out the mission of the office.
3. The program supports the mission needs of the office

Discussion of Results

The grade for this objective is NOT MET based on a lack of current formal position analyses and a documented process for assessing site-specific competency requirements. One Finding and one Observation were identified for this objective.

A job-task analysis of each LASO TQP position was performed when LASO positions were initially identified for inclusion in the TQP. However, these analyses have not been reviewed or updated. Since the initial analyses were performed, new positions have been established, positions have been realigned, and position responsibilities have changed. These events result in inaccurate and unreliable position task analyses. Also, because the *NNSA TQP Plan* allowed supervisors to determine if a site-specific standard was required, supervisors frequently determined site-specific knowledge, skills, and ability elements were not required for a position and a position task analysis, a critical step in the development of site-specific competencies, was omitted. Line managers were allowed to determine the appropriate functional area standard applicable to a position without identifying the requisite knowledge, skill, and ability elements required to accomplish the position duties and responsibilities. The lack of current formal position

analyses to identify the related knowledge, skill, and ability elements required to accomplish positional duties and tasks is FINDING TQP-4.1.

Job-specific requirements are determined to be satisfied by completion of the general technical based qualification standard and a supervisor-determined DOE-approved functional area qualification standard. Knowledge of DOE-related rules, regulations, codes, standards, and guides are included in these standards. However, site-specific documents are not covered. As a result, individuals in the LASO TQP do not obtain all the information necessary to carry out the mission of the site office. See related FINDING TQP-2.1.

The LASO TQP supports the mission needs of the site office, but at a rudimentary level. Accomplishment of the GTBQS and appropriate FAQs provide a foundation for mission support, but do not complete the process. TQP participants are not required to complete site-specific competencies based on an analysis of their position duties and responsibilities. While the *NNSA TQP Plan* allows site supervisors the latitude for determining site-specific qualification requirements, LASO has not established or documented a position evaluation process to assess the need for site-specific qualification competencies. No documented process exists for assessing site-specific competency requirements is OBSERVATION TQP-4.1.

FINDINGS

FINDING TQP-4.1: There are no current formal position analyses to identify the related knowledge, skill, and ability elements required to accomplish positional duties and tasks.

OBSERVATIONS

OBSERVATION TQP-4.1: No documented process exists for assessing site-specific competency requirements.

NOTEWORTHY PRACTICES

None

4.10 TQP-5, Credit for Existing Technical Qualification Programs. The program is structured to allow credit, where appropriate, for other TQP accomplishments.

Criteria

1. Credit (equivalency) is granted for previous training, education, experience, and completion of related qualification/certification programs, where applicable.
2. Equivalency is granted based upon a review and verification of objective evidence, such as transcripts, course certificates, test scores, and on-the-job experience.
3. Equivalencies are formally validated, approved, and documented.

Discussion of Results

The grade for this objective is MET based on a procedural process for granting equivalencies. One Observation was identified for this objective.

Paragraph 6.5 of LASO MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program Management Procedure, establishes the process for granting equivalencies for previous training, education, experience, and completion of related qualification/certificates, test scores, or on-the-job experience. All equivalencies are approved by the site FTCP agent after review by the appropriate supervisor. The individual requesting the equivalency must provide detailed justification through the use of a Competency Equivalence Form. Additional supporting documentation may accompany the form to substantiate the request. The immediate supervisor analyzes the documentation and may conduct individual interviews before making a recommendation for approval to the site FTCP agent who may repeat the process before granting final approval.

Approved equivalency forms are forwarded to the site TQP coordinator who notifies the supervisor and affected individual of the approval, files the forms in the individual's site training file, and forwards a copy to the NNSA Service Center (LCDD) for inclusion into the official training records.

However, qualifying officials are unaware of this process and frequently bypass it. Based on their evaluation of objective evidence, qualifying officials sign qualification cards without recommending completion of the formal equivalency evaluation process. As a result, the site FTCP agent has rarely approved a Competency Equivalence Form. LASO supervisors and TQP qualifying officials are unaware of and do not properly use the equivalency process as defined in LASO Management Procedure, MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program, is OBSERVATION TQP-5.1.

FINDINGS

None

OBSERVATIONS

OBSERVATION TQP-5.1: LASO supervisors and TQP qualifying officials are unaware of and do not properly use the equivalency process as defined in LASO Management Procedure, MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program.

NOTEWORTHY PRACTICES

None

4.11 TQP-6, Transportability. Competency requirements identified as applying throughout the Department are transferable.

Criteria

1. The program includes all competencies that have been identified as applying throughout the Department.
2. Formal documentation of the completion of Department-wide competencies is maintained in a manner that allows for easy transferability.
3. The TQP is integrated with personnel-related activities, such as position descriptions, vacancy announcements, recruiting, and performance appraisals.

Discussion of Results

The grade for this objective is MET based on LASO TQP meeting the requirements for transportability. One Finding was identified for this objective.

The LASO Technical Qualification Program Management Procedure, MP 02.04, requires participants to complete the DOE General Technical Base Qualification Standard, a position-applicable functional area standard, and a site-specific qualification standard as required by DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, and the NNSA TQP Plan. Some notable exceptions to this policy are Senior Technical Safety Manager and some environmental restoration/compliance qualifications. While these exceptions conflict with the requirements of DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, they are authorized by the NNSA TQP Plan. DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, paragraph 3.b, states that “although TQP programs may be designed to meet the unique needs and responsibilities of each organization, the following principles will be used as the basis for all TQPs. The program must clearly identify unique Department and position-specific work activities and the knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish the work. For ease of transportability of qualifications between DOE elements, the DOE General Technical Base Qualification Standard and the various DOE FAQs must be used without modification or additions. Needed additional office-/ site-/facility-specific technical competencies for the individual should be handled separately.” Additionally, in paragraph 4, it states that “each organizational element must use technical qualification standards or other appropriate means to document technical qualification requirements for the position. These requirements must be established using the systematic approach to training methodology and include the following...competencies specific to the position, facility, or program, and the office.” The NNSA TQP Plan, however, states that “the NNSA TQP uses the existing DOE Department-wide General Technical Base Qualification Standard (GTBQS) and functional area qualification standards (FAQSs) as a basis for the program. This provides for ease of transportability of qualifications across DOE and NNSA elements. The supervisor assigns each TQP participant a position qualification standard that is a combination of the GTBQS, a primary FAQS, and office-, site-, facility-, and position-specific competencies, if required.” The LASO TQP ensures applicability throughout the Department through use of the GTBQS, appropriate FAQS, and site-specific qualification standard, as required.

Standardized FTCP-approved qualification cards are provided to TQP participants as part of an initial qualification package. These cards are completed by participants and supervisors to document validation of competency attainment. When complete, copies are provided to the TQP coordinator, who forwards them with other supporting qualification materials to LCDD, who validates the process and forwards the materials to the Enterprise Training Services organization for inclusion in the individual’s permanent training file. The LASO TQP Coordinator also maintains a file for each individual in the TQP as a backup. All original documents are retained by the individual. This policy ensures transferability across the Department.

The TQP is not integrated with personnel-related activities. Position descriptions are inconsistent in referencing technical qualification program admission requirements. A spot check of vacancy announcements also revealed inconsistent application of TQP requirements. Some interviewees indicated that completion of TQP requirements was included in their performance appraisal criteria where others did not. One assistant manager indicated that though timely progress toward qualification completion was not on performance appraisals, it was used to differentiate between equal performers. There is no indication that the TQP is being used as a potential recruiting tool.

The TQP is not integrated with personnel-related activities as required in DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, is FINDING TQP-6.1.

FINDINGS

FINDING TQP-6.1: The TQP is not integrated with personnel-related activities as required in DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*.

OBSERVATIONS

None

NOTEWORTHY PRACTICES

None

4.12 TQP-7, Measurable. The program contains sufficient rigor to demonstrate compliance to the principles.

Criteria

1. The technical competency of personnel who have completed the requirements of the TQP is adequate and appropriate.
2. The program allows for continuous feedback and periodic evaluation to ensure that it meets the needs of the Department and the missions of the office.
3. The TQP provides for continuing training.

Discussion of Results

The grade for this objective is NOT MET based on a lack of formal TQP assessments and no continuing training program. Two Findings were identified for this objective.

Evaluation of the technical competency of personnel who have completed the requirements of this TQP was not within the scope of this self-assessment.

The "periodic" assessments of the TQP required by DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, have not been conducted. Paragraph 4.5.9 of LASO MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program Management Procedure, states that one of the responsibilities of the LASO TQP Coordinator is to support FTCP assessments, but this is the first self-assessment of the LASO TQP. Therefore, the LASO TQP allows for periodic evaluation, but has not conducted evaluations to determine if the LASO TQP meets the needs of the Department or the missions of the site office. LASO has not established or adhered to a policy on the conduct of site TQP assessments is FINDING TQP-7.1.

Paragraph 6.8 of LASO MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program Management Procedure, establishes the process for continuing training. It establishes continuing training methods, topics, and documentation requirements. However, it does not establish who is

responsible for implementing, conducting, or administering the program. As a result, LASO has not developed a formal TQP continuing training program. See Finding FTC-4.2.

FINDINGS

FINDING TQP-7.1: LASO has not established or adhered to a policy on the conduct of site TQP assessments.

OBSERVATIONS

None

NOTEWORTHY PRACTICES

None

APPENDIX A

FINDINGS, OBSERVATIONS, AND NOTEWORTHY PRACTICES

FINDINGS

FINDING FTC-3.1: LASO has not established a System Safety Oversight qualification program as required by DOE Manual 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*.

FINDING FTC-3.2: Senior Technical Safety Manager Position descriptions do not clearly identify positions as STSM positions as required by DOE Manual 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*.

FINDING FTC-3.3: The LASO Federal Technical Capability Program Agent does not concur with STSM vacancy announcements and competitive selections as required by DOE Manual 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*.

FINDING FTC-4.1: LASO has not implemented a process for methodically identifying and planning for future training needs such that a fully effective training and qualification program can be implemented as required by DOE Order 360.1B, *Federal Employee Training*.

FINDING FTC-4.2: LASO has not implemented a continuing training program as required by LASO Management Procedure MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program Management Procedure.

FINDING FTC-5.1: LASO has not implemented career path planning and succession planning to effectively retain technically capable personnel.

FINDING FTC-5.2: The NNSA does not have an integrated process for preserving technical capability between the excepted service and GS positions in case of a RIF.

FINDING TQP-1.1: Individual Development Plans are not consistently developed as required in DOE O 360.1B, *Federal Employee Training*.

FINDING TQP-1.2: MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program Management Procedure, does not include the final evaluated activity requirements detailed in DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, and the NNSA Technical Qualification Program Plan.

FINDINGS TQP-2.1: Site Specific Functional Area Qualification Standards contain outdated information and/or duplicate information from the technical discipline standard.

FINDING TQP-3.1: Senior management commitment to the TQP is not evident in program implementation as required by DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*.

FINDING TQP-3.2: LASO Management Procedure, MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program, is not consistent with the requirements established in DOE M426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, and the NNSA TQP Plan.

FINDING TQP-3.3: LASO TQP participants were unaware of the procedure or their roles and responsibilities as defined in LASO Management Procedure, MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program.

FINDING TQP-3.4: LASO Management Procedure, MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program, is not implemented as written.

FINDING TQP-4.1: There are no current formal position analyses to identify the related knowledge, skill, and ability elements required to accomplish positional duties and tasks.

FINDING TQP-6.1: The TQP is not integrated with personnel-related activities as required in DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*.

FINDING TQP-7.1: LASO has not established or adhered to a policy on the conduct of site TQP assessments.

OBSERVATIONS

OBSERVATION FTC-1.1: Federal line management responsibilities in the LASO FRAM regarding technical capability are not clear.

OBSERVATION FTC-3.1: LASO has not set clear guidance and expectations for the identification and filling of Senior Technical Safety Manager Positions as recommended by DOE Manual 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*.

OBSERVATION FTC-3.2: Of the eight manager positions identified by the Site Office Manager as requiring Senior Technical Safety Manager Qualifications, only four managers are currently qualified.

OBSERVATION FTC-3.3: LASO has not formally implemented compensatory measures for managing Senior Technical Safety Manager (STSM) duties for those cases where the incumbent in an STSM identified position has not met the requirements defined in the STSM Functional Area Qualification Standard for all STSM positions at LASO.

OBSERVATION FTC-4.1: Not all LASO staff are aware that the cost of professional certifications can be reimbursed by NNSA.

OBSERVATION TQP-1.1: A site training plan has not been developed as required in DOE O 360.1B, *Federal Employee Training*.

OBSERVATION TQP-1.2: A lack of communication of expectations and requirements has led to confusion of supervisors and qualifying officials over the appropriate level of evaluation rigor for qualification competencies.

OBSERVATION TQP-2.1: Supervisors do not consistently utilize equivalencies for professional certifications as allowed in DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*.

OBSERVATION TQP-2.2: The LASO practice to issue site-specific standards, when required, concurrently with the functional area standard, is not identified in LASO MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program Management Procedure.

OBSERVATION TQP-3.1: The number of approved LASO Qualifying Officials is insufficient to meet the needs of the site office.

OBSERVATION TQP-3.2: The LASO SSO program does not meet the requirement of DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, that "SSOs should be considered the primary function of assigned personnel."

OBSERVATION TQP-4.1: No documented process exists for assessing the need for site-specific competency requirements.

OBSERVATION TQP-5.1: LASO supervisors and TQP qualifying officials are unaware of and do not properly use the equivalency process as defined in LASO Management Procedure, MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program.

NOTEWORTHY PRACTICES

NOTEWORTHY PRACTICE TQP-3.1: Issuance of the Safety Engineering Team Operations Plan for 2007 that specifies the development of individual performance plans and provides clear expectations for program management with defined metrics.

APPENDIX B

LOS ALAMOS SITE OFFICE

FEDERAL TECHNICAL CAPABILITY PROGRAM SELF-ASSESSMENT PLAN

**U.S. Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
Los Alamos Site Office**



**Federal Technical Capability Program
Self-Assessment Plan**

April 23, 2007

Approved by:



Frederick Bell, Los Alamos Site Office FTCP Agent

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I. Introduction

The Federal Technical Capability Program provides for the recruitment, deployment, development, and retention of Federal personnel with demonstrated technical capability to safely accomplish the Department's missions and responsibilities. Site Offices are required to periodically assess the effectiveness of the Federal Technical Capability Program utilizing the objectives and criteria identified in DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, Chapter IV, Continuous Improvement, Section 2, Assessments. This self-assessment meets the criteria for a Local, Internal FTCP Assessment as defined by the Manual.

An effective Federal Technical Capability Program has many elements, which are described in DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*. These elements ensure adequate management support to recruit and retain high quality employees and implementation of an effective technical qualification program to develop and maintain the technical capabilities of these employees. This assessment of the Los Alamos Site Office (LASO) Federal Technical Capability Program will determine the extent to which the framework is in place to meet the objectives identified in this plan.

II. Objectives

As described in DOE M 426.1-1A, any assessment of a Federal Technical Capability Program should determine the extent to which the following objectives are being met. The objectives of this self-assessment are to ensure effective:

- 1) Executive Commitment and Line Management Oversight
- 2) Recruitment of Technically Capable Personnel
- 3) Staffing and Deployment
- 4) Development of Technically Capable Personnel
- 5) Retention of Technically Capable Personnel
- 6) Demonstration of Competence
- 7) Definition of Competency Levels
- 8) Plans and Procedures
- 9) Tailoring of Qualification to Work Activities
- 10) Crediting of Existing Technical Qualifications
- 11) Transportability throughout the Department
- 12) Demonstrated Compliance and Continuous Improvement

III. Purpose

This self-assessment is being performed to provide assistance to the Manager, LASO and

Federal Technical Capability Program Self-Assessment Plan

April 2007

the LASO Federal Technical Capability Panel Agent in assessing the current status of the Federal Technical Capability Program and to establish a baseline for developing a fully compliant program.

IV. Scope

This self-assessment will cover activities implemented for the LASO Federal Technical Capability Program. The breadth of the review will be based directly on the requirements in DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, Chapter IV, Continuous Improvement, Section 2, Assessments. Recognizing that the LASO Program was recently established as a Site Office managed program as part of the Site Office restructuring implemented October 1, 2006, the depth of the review will be limited to verification of implementation of the program elements, but not full validation of implementation effectiveness.

The breadth of this review is consistent with the draft Technical Qualification Program Accreditation Process and Criteria. However, this self-assessment report is not intended to be the self-evaluation report that serves as the application for accreditation. The accreditation process will be entered following disposition of the actions identified as necessary by this review and completion of a follow-on self-assessment.

The self-assessment will be conducted during the week of April 23, 2007. The team will include four review members.

Team Membership

- Fred Bell, LASO FTCP Agent – Team Leader
- Karen Boardman, Chair, DOE FTCP – Team Member
- David Lee, LASO Technical Qualification Program Manager – Team Member
- Mark Alsdorf, NNSA SC, Technical Qualification Program Manager – Team Member

An in-brief will be conducted on the morning of April 23, 2007. The team will conduct fieldwork from April 23 – 26, 2007. The team will hold an out-briefing with LASO management to discuss the issues, observations, and recommendations. The team will prepare a draft report by April 27 and deliver a final draft report to LASO for a factual accuracy check on or about May 4, 2007.

V. References

The following references will be used in conjunction with this self-assessment plan:

- DOE P 426.1, *Federal Technical Capability Policy for Defense Nuclear Facilities*
- DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*
- DOE O 360.1B, *Federal Employee Training*
- *Technical Qualification Program Accreditation Process and Criteria, Draft*
- LASO Management Procedure MP 02.04, *LASO Technical Qualification Program Management Procedure*
- *Los Alamos Site Office Functions, Responsibilities, and Authorities Manual*

VI. Criteria Review and Approach Documents (CRAD)

The team will use the following Criteria Review and Approach Documents to examine the implementation of the LASO Federal Technical Capability Program and to identify areas where action is necessary to come into full compliance.

OBJECTIVE

FTC-1, Executive Commitment and Line Management Ownership. Line management is actively involved in all aspects of technical employee recruitment, retention, development, and deployment.

Criteria

1. Line managers are aware of the requirements and administrative flexibilities associated with recruiting, hiring, and retaining high-quality technical employees.
2. Senior line management supports the continuous technical development and improvement of employees.
3. Supporting organizations (personnel, training, contracts, finance, etc.) recognize line managers as customers and effectively support them in achieving and maintaining technical excellence.
4. The applicable Level One or field level Functions, Responsibilities, and Authorities Manual (FRAM) clearly defines Federal line management responsibilities in the area of technical capability.
5. Achieving and maintaining technical competence is reflected in the goals and objectives of the organization and the position descriptions and performance evaluation plans of senior managers.

6. Technical capability programs and processes are institutionalized through Policy, Orders, Standards, and procedures.
7. Management uses the results of previous FTCP assessments as a tool to improve the program.

Approach

Record Reviews: Review recent vacancy announcements, hiring actions, retention allowance justification package, training requested and approved, office procedures flowing from the FRAM, position descriptions, previous FTCP assessments to determine conformance with DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, applicable sections in chapter II and IV.

Interviews: Interview technical staff, personnel and training managers, supervisors to determine an understanding of how guidance is implemented.

Observations: None.

OBJECTIVE

FTC-2, Recruiting Technically Capable Personnel. An effective process is implemented to attract highly competent technical personnel to fill key positions in the Department.

Criteria

1. Excepted Service Authorities are considered as a tool to attract highly competent technical personnel to fill key safety positions.
2. Intern programs, such as the CIP, are recognized as an effective method to attract technically competent personnel to the Department.

Approach

Record Reviews: Review personnel actions, organization staffing charts, position descriptions, attrition date, hiring actions to determine if staff with necessary skills are recruited.

Interviews: Technical supervisors, human resource staff, managers to evaluate

implementation of criteria.

Observations: None.

OBJECTIVE

FTC-3, Staffing and Deployment. Technical staffing plans are developed, maintained, and used as the basis for recruiting, developing, and deploying personnel to ensure that critical safety positions are filled with technically competent people.

Criteria

1. Technical staffing plans are developed and maintained to identify critical safety positions and other key technical positions within the organization.
2. Technical staffing plans form the basis for recruiting, developing, and deploying technical personnel in the organization.
3. Employees in critical safety positions and other key technical positions possess the requisite education, training, experience, and background for their positions.
3. The STSM Program is effectively implemented in the organization. The STSM describes how STSM candidates are selected and compensatory measures used when responsible individuals lack STSM qualification.

Approach

Record Reviews: Review FTCP workforce analysis for past several years, FR staffing analysis, Functional Decomposition Analysis, and other staffing plans to determine if they are utilized to determine and meet staffing needs. Review organization charts to determine if technical staff vacancies have been filled. Review DNFSB recommendation 2003-2 critical staffing analysis and associated departmental commitments for consistency with other staffing analyses and implementation. Identification and selection criteria for STSMs. DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, chapter III section 3 and roles and responsibilities paragraphs in sections 1, 2, and 3, and chapter IV section 1 apply.

Interviews: Technical supervisors, FTCP agent, DNFSB point of contact, human resource staff, and managers to evaluate implementation of criteria.

Observations: None.

OBJECTIVE

FTC-4, Development of Technically Capable Personnel. Programs and processes are effectively implemented to encourage the continuous improvement of technical personnel.

Criteria

1. The TQP is effectively implemented. (Note: This program is evaluated using the TQP objectives and criteria.)
2. Fellowship programs and other continuing education processes are effectively used to enhance the continuous improvement of technical personnel.
4. Employees are encouraged to join professional organizations, write professional papers, and pursue professional certifications.

Approach

Record Reviews: TQP procedure, continuing training procedures, records of qualification and continuing training completed documentation of training completed, lists of professional qualifications.

Interviews: Interview technical staff, personnel and training managers, and supervisors to determine an understanding of how guidance is implemented.

Observations: None.

OBJECTIVE

FTC-5, Retaining Technically Capable Personnel. DOE is an organization where technically competent personnel are respected and want to work.

Criteria

1. Technical personnel are assigned positions and responsibilities that allow them to effectively use their education, training, experience, and background in a fulfilling way.
2. Career path planning and succession planning are effectively used to help retain technically capable personnel.

3. Technical performance is used as a basis for performance reviews, promotions, recognitions, rewards, etc.
5. An effective process is in place to preserve critical technical capabilities during RIFs.

Approach

Record Reviews: Staffing assignments, qualification records, Retention Allowance Justification Package, attrition records, FR self-assessment report, local retention registers, performance award data, Employee Satisfaction Survey results.

Interviews: Interview technical staff, personnel and training managers, supervisors to determine an understanding of how guidance is implemented.

Observations: None.

OBJECTIVE

TQP-1, Demonstration of Competence. The program clearly identifies and documents the process used to demonstrate employee technical competence.

Criteria

1. At a minimum, personnel providing management direction or oversight that could impact the safe operation of a defense nuclear facility have been identified as TQP participants.
2. IDPs, training plans, technical qualification records, or other related documents are updated to reflect the activities required for each individual to satisfy competencies.
6. A formal evaluation process is in place to objectively measure the technical competency of employees. The rigor of the evaluation process is commensurate with the responsibilities of the position.

Approach

Record Reviews: TQP Management Procedure, TQP tracking database, IDPs, training plans, completed qualification tests, testing and qualification signoff procedures, other documentation to demonstrate rigorous verification of technical competency. DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, chapter III applies.

Interviews: Interview technical staff, personnel and training managers, supervisors to determine an understanding of how guidance is implemented.

Observations: None.

OBJECTIVE

TQP-2, Competency Levels. Competency requirements are clearly defined and consistent with applicable industry standards for similar occupations.

Criteria

1. Competency requirements include clearly defined knowledge, skill, and ability elements.
2. Recognized experts help establish competency requirements.
3. Related professional certification requirements are considered in the program as applicable.
4. Competency requirements are identified in the areas listed below. (Note: this does not imply that three separate documents are required.)
 - **Basic Technical Knowledge.** Competency in areas such as radiation protection, occupational safety, chemical safety, nuclear safety, and environmental regulations.
 - **Technical Discipline Competency.** Competency in a technical discipline (e.g., mechanical engineering, chemical engineering) that can be demonstrated by education, professional certification, examination, or on-the-job performance.
 - **Position Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** Competencies specific to the position, facility, or program and the office.

Approach

Record Reviews: Review qualification standards, profession certification records or staff biographies, qualification records to verify DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, chapter III all sections apply.

Interviews: Interview technical staff, personnel and training managers, supervisors to determine an understanding of how guidance is implemented.

Observations: None.

OBJECTIVE

TQP-3, Plans, and Procedures. Plans and/or procedures are developed and implemented to govern administration of the program.

Criteria

1. Senior management is committed to the TQP.
2. Written procedures that adequately define the processes and requirements to implement the TQP are in place.
3. Roles and responsibilities for implementing the TQP are clearly defined and understood by all involved.
4. The procedures that govern implementation of the TQP are understood by all involved and are being implemented as written.
7. A training and qualification records system is established for each employee in the TQP.

Approach

Record Reviews: FRAM, LASO TQP Management Procedure, qualification records.

Interviews: Assistant Managers, Site Manager and Deputy Managers, TQP Manager.

Observations: None.

OBJECTIVE

TQP-4, Qualification Tailored to Work Activities. The program identifies unique Department- and position-specific work activities and specifies the knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish that work.

Criteria

Federal Technical Capability Program Self-Assessment Plan

April 2007

1. An analysis has been performed to identify the related knowledge, skill, and ability elements to accomplish the duties and responsibilities for each TQP functional area or position.
2. The program includes job-specific requirements related to the rules, regulations, codes, standards, and guides necessary to carry out the mission of the office.
8. The program supports the mission needs of the office.

Approach

Record Reviews: FR Self-Assessment report, qualification standards for selected technical staff, position descriptions.

Interviews: Assistant Managers for technical programs, TQP Manager, selected technical staff, FR supervisor, SSO personnel, SSO supervisor.

Observations: None.

OBJECTIVE

TQP-5, Credit for Existing Technical Qualification Programs. The program is structured to allow credit, where appropriate, for other TQP accomplishments.

Criteria

1. Credit (equivalency) is granted for previous training, education, experience, and completion of related qualification/certification programs, where applicable.
2. Equivalency is granted based upon a review and verification of objective evidence, such as transcripts, course certificates, test scores, or on-the-job experience.
9. Equivalencies are formally validated, approved, and documented.

Approach

Record Reviews: Equivalency process, equivalency records.

Interviews: Selected technical staff, technical supervisors, TQP Manager.

Observations: None.

OBJECTIVE

TQP-6, Transportability. Competency requirements identified as applying throughout the Department are transferable.

Criteria

1. The program includes all competencies that have been identified as applying throughout the Department.
2. Formal documentation of the completion of Department-wide competencies is maintained in a manner that allows for easy transferability.
10. The TQP is integrated with personnel-related activities, such as position descriptions, vacancy announcements, recruiting, and performance appraisals.

Approach

Record Reviews: Position descriptions, vacancy announcements, qualification records, issues qualification standards.

Interviews: Interview technical staff, personnel and training managers, supervisors to determine an understanding of how guidance is implemented.

Observations: None.

OBJECTIVE

TQP-7, Measurable. The program contains sufficient rigor to demonstrate compliance to the principles.

Criteria

1. The technical competency of personnel who have completed the requirements of the TQP is adequate and appropriate.
2. The program allows for continuous feedback and periodic evaluation to ensure that it meets the needs of the Department and the missions of the office.
3. The TQP provides for continuing training.

Approach

Record Reviews: Testing documentation for technical staff, continuing training records, continuing training procedure, previous FTCP assessments, 5480.20 assessments.

Interviews: Interview technical staff, personnel and training managers, contractor training program manager supervisors to determine an understanding of how guidance is implemented.

Observations: None.

VII. Assessment Approach

The approach to be used in performing the Federal Technical Capability Program assessment will include reviewing documentation and conducting interviews.

Documentation. The following information will be reviewed, where possible, in advance of the assessment to gain insight into program implementation.

- 1) Program directive(s)
- 2) Qualification tracking data
- 3) Training records (including continuing training)
- 4) Qualification records
- 5) FTCP Annual Workforce Analysis
- 6) Retention Allowance Application Package
- 7) Requirements Driven Staffing Analysis
- 8) Written and oral examination question banks
- 9) LASO FRAM
- 10) LASO Management Procedure MP 02.04, *LASO Technical Qualification Program Management Procedure*

Interviews. Interviews will be conducted with various personnel who are involved directly and indirectly with the LASO Federal Technical Capability Program.

- 1) LASO Federal Technical Capability Panel Agent
- 2) LASO Technical Qualification Program Manager
- 3) LASO 1st Line and 2nd Line Supervisors
- 4) LASO Technical Deputy Manager, Acting
- 5) LASO Manager
- 6) LASO Deputy Manager
- 7) Sampling of LASO technical staff members

- 8) Personnel Manager
- 9) Supervisors of technical staff

VIII. Assessment Report

The results of the assessments will be documented in a final report assigning a grade to each of objective as either met or not met. The assessment team leader approves the assessment report. The format of the assessment reports is as follows.

Cover Page

Signature Page Documents concurrence by team members

Table of Contents

Executive Summary A short overview of the purpose of the review, dates of the assessment, and methodology. The executive summary should briefly describe assessment results, including strengths and weaknesses.

Introduction Provide relevant background information and describe the purpose and format of the report.

Scope and Methodology Describe the make-up of the team in general terms, describe the scope of the assessment referencing the use of the objectives and criteria, and briefly describe the methodology applied.

Definitions

Results Address the overall program and each of the objectives listed in the assessment plan, describe the status of implementation of the objective, and identify any strengths or weaknesses. Addressing each criterion for the objectives is not necessary; however, any criterion that is not achieved should be identified as a deficiency for that objective.

Attachments Include the following attachments.

- List of findings, observations, and noteworthy practices
- The Assessment Plan
- Lists of documents reviewed, interviews, and observations

APPENDIX C

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AND PERSONEL INTERVIEWED

DOE / NNSA Documents Reviewed:

- DOE P 426.1, *Federal Technical Capability Policy for Defense Nuclear Facilities*
- DOE O 360.1B, *Federal Employee Training*
- DOE M 360.1-1B, *Federal Employee Training Manual*, dated October 11, 2001
- DOE M 426.1-1A, *Federal Technical Capability Manual*, dated May 18, 2004
- DOE-STD-1063-2006, *Facility Representatives*, dated April 2006
- DOE-STD-1146-2001, *General Technical Base Qualification Standard*, dated October 2001
- DOE-STD-1151-2002, *Facility Representative Functional Area Qualification Standard*, dated April 2002
- NNSA Technical Qualification Program Plan
- FY 2006 NNSA Training Plan
- Technical Qualification Program Accreditation Process and Criteria, Approved for Interim Use, December 29, 2005
- Safety System Oversight Initial Implementation Assessment Report for Los Alamos Site Office, March 2005
- Safety System Oversight Final Implementation Assessment Report for Los Alamos Site Office, October 2005

NNSA-LASO Documents Reviewed:

- LASO Functions, Responsibilities, and Authorities Manual (FRAM), Revision 2, Approved January 5, 2007
- LASO Management System, Rev. 1, Approved October 1, 2006
- LASO Plan 02.01, Los Alamos Site Office Safety Engineering Team Operations Plan for FY 2007
- LASO Management Procedure MP 02.04, LASO Technical Qualification Program Management Procedure, Rev. 0, Effective Date: February 1, 2007

- MP 06.02, Safety System Oversight
- LASO Office Procedure OFO OP1, Facility Representative Continuing Training Program
- LASO Facility Representative Program Self-Assessment Report, March 2007
- Letter E. L. Wilmot to R. J. Schepens, Los Alamos Site Office Annual Workforce Analysis and Staffing Plan for Calendar Year 2006, dated January 29, 2007
- Memorandum L. F. Brooks to E. L. Wilmot, Pilot of the New National Security Administration Oversight Model at Los Alamos, dated March 10, 2006
- Memorandum from Jan M. Chavez-Wilczynski to Thomas D'Agostino, Subject: Request for Annual Review and Recertification of Group Retention Incentives for the Los Alamos Site Office (LASO), dated February 27, 2007
- Memorandum OFO:3FB-001, E. L. Wilmot to J. S. Paul, Completion of Facility Representative (FR) Staffing Analysis and Implementation of the FR Continuing Training Program
- Position Descriptions for Management and Technical Personnel Positions
- Vacancy Announcements for Management and Technical Personnel Positions
- NNSA Executive Resource Board Action, Approval of SES Technical Deputy Site Office Manager
- NNSA Executive Resource Board Action, Approval of six (6) EK technical excepted service positions for LASO
- Technical Qualification Program personnel training files
- Sampling of Individual TQP original training files
- E-mail E. Wilmot to F. Bell, STSM Qualification Required, November 30, 2006, approving STSM position assignments
- LASO Facility Representative Program Staffing Plan, March 28, 2007, Draft
- Key Safety Positions Status Report addressing Implementation Plan to Improve Oversight Of Nuclear Operations in response to DNFSB Recommendation 2004-1 Commitment 13
- NNSA TQP Progress Matrix
- LASO Tracking Matrix for Personnel Actions
- LASO NSM Personnel Actions

- Los Alamos Site Office Resource Needs Matrix, dated January 26, 2006
- Los Alamos Site Office Functional Analysis and Staffing Plan, dated March 18, 2005
- Los Alamos Site Office Organization Chart, dated April 20, 2007
- Qualifying Official Attestation Forms for LASO
- Human Resources Division (HRD) Announcement Checklist

LASO Personnel Interviewed:

- Site Manager, Acting
- Deputy Manager for Business, Environment and Quality
- Technical Deputy Manager, Acting
- Senior Technical Safety Manager, Acting
- Assistant Manager for Safety Operations, Acting
- Assistant Manager for National Security Missions
- Federal Technical Capability Program Agent
- National Security Missions Integrated Operations Team Leader
- Safety Engineering Team Leader
- Technical Qualification Program Manager
- Industrial Hygienist
- Nuclear Safety Specialist
- Human Resources Specialist
- Facility Representative
- Environmental Permitting Manager
- Safety System Oversight Program Manager

NNSA Service Center Personnel Interviewed:

- Department Manager, Site Office Servicing Department, Office of Human Capital Management

- Technical Qualification Program Coordinator