



The U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Health, Safety and Security (HSS) issued its report today on a recent assessment it conducted of the safety culture on the Waste Treatment Plant Project. We will carefully review the assessment and develop an action plan. We will provide you details regarding the findings, recommendations, and actions we will be taking.

The report concluded that, "Overall, the HSS Independent Oversight team determined that most personnel at WTP believed that safety was a high priority. However, during the safety culture evaluation, a significant number of staff within ORP, DOE-WTP and BNI expressed a reluctance to raise safety or culture concerns for various reasons." To read the entire report, visit [HSS Assessment and Supplemental Report](#).

As part of building our strong nuclear safety and quality culture, we seek feedback all of the time. We've now heard from four groups regarding our safety culture at WTP, the HSS, the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, the Independent Safety and Quality Culture Assessment team and most importantly, you, the WTP employees. Each group provides important input, and we are taking action to address all recommendations.

We have worked hard, especially over the last couple of years, to foster an environment for employees to comfortably raise issues and have them addressed efficiently and respectfully. However, we know we still have work to do. The most recent set of important recommendations from HSS will help us enhance our safety culture. Our goal is to achieve a safety culture that you can agree is the best in the country.

As I've said before, the WTP is a complex, one-of-a-kind project. In many ways, we're walking into uncharted territory, but we have the team to navigate it successfully. For that reason, I want to re-emphasize how important it is for everyone to have a questioning attitude, to stop and ask questions if something doesn't seem right, and if there is a concern, to raise it so it can be addressed. We expect it and appreciate it.

To reinforce this message, I've created a 10-minute video I'd like you watch. The video is located at <http://vimeo.com/35039654>.

Thank you for your cooperation with the HSS review team and the other review teams. I'm confident in your dedication and professionalism, as well as your willingness to embrace all efforts to improve our nuclear safety and quality culture.

Below is the message DOE sent to its employees.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Department of Energy	ORP No. 12-005
Office of River Protection	
P.O. Box 450	
Richland, Washington 99352	Issued: 1-13-2012

To: All ORP Employees
Subject: HSS Final Assessment Report

In late December, I sent to each of you the final signed Implementation Plan for the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board's Recommendation 2011-1, *Safety Culture at the Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant*. I sincerely hope that you had the opportunity to read the Implementation Plan as I encouraged you to do. In that message I also briefly touched on the impending release of the report detailing the 2011 Office of Health, Safety and Security (HSS) independent assessment of the WTP safety culture. The final HSS assessment report was released today and is enclosed with this message. As with the Implementation Plan, I encourage each of you to read the HSS assessment report, and its conclusions and recommendations. You will quickly see that this report is not limited to the WTP Project.

As you know, the HSS review occurred between September and December of last year. I would like to thank all of you for supporting the numerous HSS requests and visits to ORP, whether it was logistical, or through participation in the survey or one of the focus groups. As I discussed in my earlier message, we will be looking at the recommendations in this assessment, the 2011-1 Implementation Plan, and other documents in the following weeks and moving forward to develop an ORP Action Plan with your input and participation.

I would like to remind you all that DOE is committed to a strong and sustained safety culture, where all employees - from workers with shovels in the ground to their managers all the way up to the Secretary and everyone in between - are energetically pursuing the safe performance of work, encouraging a questioning work environment, and making sure that executing the mission safely is not just a policy statement but a value shared by all.

I look forward to working with you on the development of our Action Plan, and invite you to share your thoughts and ideas with me about how we can best work together to accomplish this.

Scott L. Samuelson
Manager, Office of River Protection