UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
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OFFICE OF THE
INSPECTOR GENERAL

February 2, 2010

MEMORANDUM TO: R. William Borchardt
Executive Director for Operations

FROM: Stephen D. Dingbaum **/RA/**
Assistant Inspector General for Audits

SUBJECT: STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS: EVALUATION OF NRC'S TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (OIG-08-A-13)

REFERENCE: DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES, MEMORANDUM DATED DECEMBER 23, 2009

Attached is the Office of the Inspector General's analysis and status of recommendations 2-4, 7-11, 13, 14, 16, and 17, as discussed in the agency's response dated December 23, 2009. Based on this response, recommendations 2-4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, and 17, are closed and recommendation 9 remains in resolved status. Recommendations 1, 5, 6, 12, and 15, were previously closed. Please provide an updated status of the resolved recommendation by April 30, 2010.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 415-5915 or Steven Zane, Team Leader, at 415-5912.

Attachments: As stated

cc: N. Mamish, OEDO
J. Andersen, OEDO
J. Arildsen, OEDO
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Status of Recommendations

Recommendation 2:	Develop a plan and timeline for completing any missing course documentation.
Agency Response Dated December 23, 2009:	The staff has completed this item. Human Resources Training and Development (HRTD) developed a plan and timeline for completing any missing course documentation. Enclosure 1, HRTD Course File Review Summary – Courses Requiring Material Development, provides the plan and timeline for the remaining six courses requiring material development. Completion Date: June 30, 2009
OIG Analysis:	OIG reviewed HRTD's documentation that contains a plan and timeline for completing any missing course documentation. This satisfies the recommendation. Therefore, this recommendation is closed.
Status:	Closed.

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Status of Recommendations

Recommendation 3:	Complete HRTD Operating Procedure 404 – Training Material Control to include a standard process for version control, tracking changes, and assigning accountability for changes.
Agency Response Dated December 23, 2009:	The staff has completed this item. Enclosure 2, HRTD Operating Procedure 404 – Training Material Control has been revised and completed to include a standard process for version control and tracking changes. Completion Date: December 16, 2009
OIG Analysis:	OIG reviewed a copy of the completed HRTD Operating Procedure 404 – Training Material Control that includes a standard process for version control and tracking changes. This satisfies the recommendation. Therefore, this recommendation is closed.
Status:	Closed.

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Status of Recommendations

Recommendation 4: Develop a plan to centralize course materials in one location, preferably a central repository on a shared server.

Agency Response Dated December 23, 2009: HRTD is centralizing its course material master files in the Agencywide Document Access and Management System (ADAMS). ADAMS was chosen because it is the agency's official record repository and it is readily accessible from any NRC location. Additionally ADAMS has the capability to provide version control to ensure that instructors are always able to access the current version of course materials.

Historically, ADAMS was used as the central repository for HRTD training materials so a simplified project plan was being implemented to create the appropriate file structure, develop the necessary document templates, and migrate the master files into the ADAMS database. The Plan for Centralizing Course Materials in ADAMS is attached as Enclosure 3.

Completion Date: June 30, 2009

OIG Analysis: OIG reviewed HRTD's documentation that contains a plan to centralize course materials in one location. This satisfies the recommendation. Therefore, this recommendation is closed.

Status: Closed.

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Status of Recommendations

Recommendation 7: Within contractual limitations, identify and schedule courses at the same time each year so employees can anticipate the availability of courses. Communicate these courses and dates widely to make sure employees, supervisors, training coordinators, and managers are aware of the annual schedule.

Agency Response Dated December 23, 2009: HRTD created a Course Master Schedule of HRTD-Sponsored Courses, Enclosure 4, listing its sponsored courses. The schedule provides a framework for scheduling training courses year-over-year. For infrequently offered courses, the typical delivery frequency is noted in the schedule. For frequently offered courses, it lists the planned delivery month. The schedule also identifies courses offered on an "as-requested" basis; courses that are conducted on-line; and "new" courses that are under development. Self-study and Individual Learning Center courses are available on-demand and are not listed in the schedule. The comments section on the schedule identifies the courses that FSME sponsors for Agreement State personnel. We schedule based, in part, on the need identified by FSME.

The Course Master Schedule is a planning tool. The iLearn system contains information on specific scheduled offerings. The actual schedule may differ from the planned schedule due to factors such as the availability of instructors, contracts, funding, and facilities.

There are two major pathways staff may use for requesting additional course offerings. The iLearn system can be used to track demand for specific courses. Individuals can indicate demand for a course by clicking the "Request Schedule" button in the iLearn system. Once a pre-determined threshold has been reached; the iLearn system automatically notifies course managers of the need to schedule an additional course session. Alternatively, staff can contact course managers directly and establish a plan and schedule for a given course. In many cases, additional course sessions can be conducted if there is sufficient demand.

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Status of Recommendations

Recommendation 7 (continued):

The iLearn system also provides information on the location of the scheduled course offerings. We are often able to hold courses in alternate locations when there is high demand in that location, and overall costs are minimized by holding the course in the remote location.

HRTD distributed the Course Master Schedule to the Training Coordinators for their review and comment. Several program offices provided comments. Enclosure 5, Course Master Schedule Comments and Responses, lists the comments, along with a comment resolution summary. HRTD will periodically update the master schedule and distribute it for review and comment.

Completion Date: June 30, 2009

OIG Analysis: OIG reviewed HRTD's documentation (Perpetual Calendar of Sponsored Courses) that identifies and schedules courses at the same time each year. HRTD also communicated this information to those individuals affected. This satisfies the recommendation. Therefore, this recommendation is closed.

Status: Closed.

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Status of Recommendations

Recommendation 8: Before implementing the enforcement of course prerequisites in the Learning Management System:

a. Determine the impact on employees' ability to take all required training within the allotted timeframe.

b. Communicate the change to NRC personnel in advance and allow opportunities for feedback.

Agency Response Dated December 23, 2009: The staff has completed this item. The process HRTD uses to determine the impact on employees' ability to take all required training within the allotted timeframe was incorporated into Enclosure 6, HRTD Operating Procedure 0403 – Course Administration.

Completion Date: June 30, 2009

OIG Analysis: OIG received HRTD's documentation verifying that HRTD Operating Procedure 0403, "Technical Training Course Administration," contains the process HRTD uses to determine the impact on employees' ability to take all required training within the allotted timeframe. This satisfies the recommendation. Therefore, this recommendation is closed.

Status: Closed.

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Recommendation 9:	Develop and implement new performance metrics to demonstrate mission alignment, effectiveness, and efficiency.
Agency Response Dated December 23, 2009:	The staff had previously targeted a completion date of December 31, 2009 for this recommendation. Although the methodology for measuring the effectiveness of training has been developed and piloted, some key work remains to be completed by the engaged vendor and the Plateau learning management vendor before the staff completes developing and implementing new performance metrics. This work is expected to finish in Q2 of FY 2010. Targeted Completion Date: March 31, 2010
OIG Analysis:	This recommendation will be closed when HRTD develops and implements new performance metrics to demonstrate mission alignment, effectiveness, and efficiency and provides OIG with documentation that verifies that this action has been taken.
Status:	Resolved.

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Status of Recommendations

Recommendation 10: Develop and implement a plan to leverage the capabilities of the LMS for collection and reporting of chosen metrics. Specifically, evaluate the competency model capabilities to determine if they meet NRC's needs, including identifying competencies, linking courses (or course modules and learning objectives) to identified competencies, and closing critical skill gaps.

Agency Response Dated December 23, 2009: The staff has completed this item. HRTD entered into an interagency agreement with OPM to have the learning management system (LMS) vendor, Plateau upgrade the iLearn LMS from version 5.8, Service Pack 3 to version 5.8, Service Pack 5. The upgrade is necessary to access the latest competency-assessment capability in the iLearn LMS. The Service Pack 5 upgrade is currently in the testing and rollout phase and is scheduled to go live in February 2010.

To develop and implement the competency-assessment capabilities, NRC entered into an interagency agreement with the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) for Competency Framework Development and Institutionalization. The competency framework is being fully integrated with the competency assessment and management functionality of the iLearn LMS. Knowledge Engineering Associates, the provider under the NTIS agreement, developed and is assisting NRC in implementing a Plan for Collecting and Reporting Chosen Metrics, Enclosure 7.

Completion Date: September 30, 2009

OIG Analysis: OIG reviewed HRTD's documentation of a plan to leverage the capabilities of the LMS for collection and reporting of chosen metrics. A contractor is assisting NRC in implementing this plan. This satisfies the recommendation. Therefore, this recommendation is closed.

Status: Closed.

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Status of Recommendations

Recommendation 11:	Develop and implement a comprehensive cost tracking capability (including cost data for each course) to determine the most economical and efficient method to meet NRC's training needs.
Agency Response Dated December 23, 2009:	The staff has completed this item. Enclosure 8, HRTD Operating Procedure 0406 – Training Program Development Process, was revised to include specific guidance for applying NRC cost-benefit principles for determining the most economical and efficient method to meet NRC's training needs. Completion Date: September 9, 2009
OIG Analysis:	OIG reviewed HRTD's revised Operating Procedure 0406 that includes specific guidance for determining the most economical and efficient method to meet NRC's training needs. This satisfies the recommendation. Therefore, this recommendation is closed.
Status:	Closed.

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Status of Recommendations

Recommendation 13: Develop an evaluation strategy plan that defines the data HRTD needs to collect at varying levels to demonstrate the impact of its programs on the agency.

Agency Response Dated December 23, 2009: The staff is adopting the multilevel evaluation model developed by Kirkpatrick. The Kirkpatrick model is a maturity model, and relies on evaluation beginning with level one, and then moving sequentially through subsequent levels. Information from each prior level provides the base for the next level's evaluation. Consequently, successive levels provide more focused measures of training program effectiveness. However, successive levels also require more rigorous and time-consuming analyses so cost-benefit considerations may limit the scope of higher-level evaluations.

HRTD developed its evaluation strategy plan that defines the data HRTD needs to collect to demonstrate the impact of its programs on the agency. Enclosure 9, HRTD Evaluation Strategy Plan, outlines the approach and milestones and Enclosure 10, Level One Evaluation, contains the reaction measurement tool that HRTD is implementing via the iLearn learning management system during FY 2010.

Completion Date: December 16, 2009

OIG Analysis: OIG reviewed HRTD's Evaluation Strategy Plan that defines the data HRTD needs to collect at varying levels to demonstrate the impact of its programs on the agency. This satisfies the recommendation. Therefore, this recommendation is closed.

Status: Closed.

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Status of Recommendations

Recommendation 14: Evaluate the capability for collecting evaluation data via the Learning Management System.

a. If the Learning Management System's capabilities meet the agency's needs, develop a business case for purchase and deployment of additional capabilities.

b. If the Learning Management System's capabilities do not meet the agency's needs, develop a plan for using alternative technologies to collect and analyze evaluation data.

Agency Response Dated December 23, 2009: The staff has completed this item. The staff decided to upgrade the iLearn learning management system from version 5.8, Service Pack 3 to version 5.8, Service Pack 5. Service Pack 5 provides the capability for collecting evaluation data via the learning management system. Consequently the staff has decided to use the evaluation collection and analysis capability inherent in iLearn Service Pack 5.

Completion Date: December 16, 2009

OIG Analysis: HRTD upgraded the iLearn Learning Management System to provide the capability to collect and analyze evaluation data. This satisfies the recommendation. Therefore, this recommendation is closed.

Status: Closed.

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Status of Recommendations

Recommendation 16: Develop an implementation plan for e-learning that includes, at a minimum:

a. An assessment of NRC's baseline technology.

b. A plan for roll-out, implementation, maintenance and ongoing evaluation of additional Learning Management Systems capabilities. The implementation plan should include a cost/benefit analysis of the available LMS features and how they can support NRC's business needs.

Agency Response Dated December 23, 2009: The staff has completed this item. HRTD engaged a contractor to assess NRC's baseline technology. Enclosure 11, Training Assessment Report presents the results of that assessment supported by information in Enclosure 12, Training Baseline Report. The staff completed a plan for roll-out, implementation, maintenance, and ongoing evaluation of additional learning management system capabilities contained in Enclosure 13, E-Learning Implementation Plan and Gap Analysis. The implementation plan is supported by the cost/benefit analysis in Enclosure 14, Human Resources Training Division Business Case version 1.1.

Completion Date: October 15, 2009

OIG Analysis: OIG reviewed HRTD's documentation for its e-learning plan that includes an implementation plan; an assessment of NRC's baseline technology; a plan for roll-out; implementation, maintenance, and ongoing evaluation of additional LMS capabilities; and a cost/benefit analysis of the available LMS features. This satisfies the recommendation. Therefore, this recommendation is closed.

Status: Closed.

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Status of Recommendations

Recommendation 17: Develop a process similar to the Strategic Workforce Planning Process to:

a. Determine the e-learning skill sets necessary to meet NRC's business needs;

b. Assess the current staff to determine the availability of the needed skills; and

c. Develop a plan to close any identified gaps—either through training, hiring, or outsourcing.

Agency Response Dated December 23, 2009: The staff has completed this item. HRTD staff engaged a contractor to assess the agency's capabilities and readiness to move forward with advanced training methods. The contractor used a self-assessment process, similar to the Strategic Workforce Planning Process to determine the e-learning skill sets necessary to meet NRC's business needs, assess the current staff to determine the availability of the needed skills, and to provide a plan to close any identified gaps. The results of those activities are incorporated in Enclosure 13, E-Learning Implementation Plan and Gap Analysis, pp. 15–17 and Appendix E.

Completion Date: July 31, 2009

OIG Analysis: OIG reviewed HRTD's documentation that updates its e-learning plan to include a process that incorporates e-learning skill sets to meet NRC's business needs, the availability of the needed skills, and a plan to close identified gaps. This satisfies the recommendation. Therefore, this recommendation is closed.

Status: Closed.