



# Office of the Inspector General

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board

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## Results in Brief <sup>1</sup>

### Why We Did This Review

The objective of the survey was to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement pertaining to NRC's safety culture and climate and to benchmark against prior survey results. To appreciate the benchmark comparisons, it should be recognized that NRC was operating in a different environment and experienced significant organizational transformations since the 2009 and 2012 surveys. Specifically, in 2009, NRC was in the midst of the nuclear renaissance and experiencing significant organizational growth. Since 2012 NRC experienced changes in senior leadership, office reorganizations, and the implementation of agencywide initiatives such as Project AIM. OIG contracted with Willis Towers Watson to conduct this survey between November 23, 2015, and December 31, 2015. The survey response rate was 70 percent, which was sufficient to provide a reliable and valid measure of the current attitudes and perceptions of NRC employees. OIG expects the agency will use the survey data to develop and inform agencywide and office-specific action planning to address opportunities for improvement and to strengthen the agency's overall safety culture and climate.

### *2015 NRC Safety Culture and Climate Survey*

#### What We Found

Successfully cultivating an engaged workforce and managing a culture and climate based on safety requires a great deal of time, resources, and effective leadership. Survey results identified strengths as well as opportunities for improvement.

#### Strengths

Strengths were identified in the areas of Mission & Objectives, Supervision, and Training. More specifically, NRC's staff understand the mission, goals, and objectives of their work unit and feel that NRC prepares them for the work they do. In addition, staff feels they have the information they need to do their job and have development and growth opportunities.

#### Opportunities

NRC's three greatest areas of opportunity include Differing Views Processes, Empowerment and Respect, and Senior Management. Employees are concerned about using the Non-Concurrent Process and the Differing Professional Opinions Program due to potential negative consequences and have perceptions that management is not recognizing and is not holding all employees to the same standards of ethical behavior. Moreover, participants do not have confidence in senior management and feel senior management does not provide a clear sense of direction.

#### Results to Action

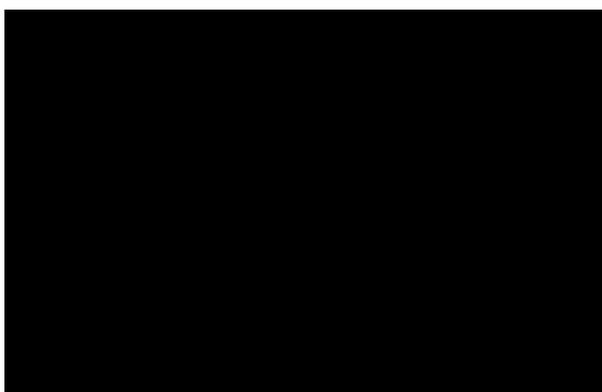
NRC senior management should continue the action planning that was initiated at the March 2016 Results-to-Action workshops. The extent to which NRC's leadership can effectively manage and implement action plans and drive change using the results of this survey will have a significant impact on the future adherence to safety culture and climate at NRC. As such, NRC leadership should demonstrate commitment to the process on an ongoing basis.

<sup>1</sup> This is an OIG-prepared Results in Brief that summarizes the results and activities of the Safety Culture and Climate Survey.

NRC Office of the Inspector General Safety  
Culture and Climate Survey

## **Executive Summary**

April 2016



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# Abbreviations and Acronyms

The following table includes a list of abbreviations and acronyms in this report.

Abbreviations / Acronyms	Full Name
ACRS	Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards
ADM	Office of Administration
AEC	Atomic Energy Commission
ASLBP	Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel
EDO	Executive Director for Operations
GG	General Grade
HP	High Performing
ISR	International Survey Research
IT	Information Technology
N	N-size; number of participants
N/A	Not Available or Not Applicable; not able to benchmark the category or item
NMSS	Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
NRC	Nuclear Regulatory Commission
NRO	Office of New Reactors
NRR	Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
NSIR	Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response
OCA	Office of Congressional Affairs
OCAA	Office of Commission Appellate Adjudication
OCFO	Office of the Chief Financial Officer
OCHCO	Office of Chief Human Capital Officer
OCIO	Office of Chief Information Officer
OEDO	Office of the Executive Director for Operations
OE	Office of Enforcement
OGC	Office of the General Counsel
OI	Office of Investigations
OIG	Office of the Inspector General
OIP	Office of International Programs
OPA	Office of Public Affairs
R&D	Research and Development
RES	Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
SECY	Office of the Secretary
SES/Executive	Senior Executive Service/Executive Level
U.S.	United States
YR or YRS	Year or Years

# Executive Summary

For over 16 years, Willis Towers Watson has partnered with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), Office of the Inspector General (OIG) to assess NRC's safety culture and climate as well as other aspects of employee experience such as engagement. Willis Towers Watson conducted the NRC Safety Culture and Climate Survey for approximately 3,670 employees in the fall of 2015. The survey was designed from information gathered from on-site and phone interviews and on-site focus groups. The analysis from the interview and focus group meetings aided in the development of the survey instrument.

The overall results are examined first, looking at specific strengths and areas of improvement for NRC. Category and item-level results are benchmarked against the Willis Towers Watson's U.S. National Norm, U.S. Research and Development Norm (U.S. R&D), U.S. High Performance Norm, and the 2009 and 2012 NRC Safety Culture and Climate Survey results. Following normative and historical analysis, demographic comparisons such as job function, employment status, job category, grade level, resident inspector vs. non-resident inspector and length of service are examined. Further, Key Driver Analysis (multiple regression analysis) on employee engagement and safety are reviewed.

Overall findings indicate that employee engagement and safety at NRC are highly affected by attitudes toward Empowerment and Respect, and NRC Mission & Objectives. Based on survey results, overall strengths and opportunities, and areas at risk are addressed and suggestions for action planning are provided.

# Purpose of Survey and Background

For over 16 years, Willis Towers Watson has been working with NRC to assess its safety culture and climate as well as other aspects of employee experience such as engagement. NRC/OIG engaged Willis Towers Watson to conduct the 2015 Safety Culture and Climate Survey.<sup>1</sup>

Like all organizations, NRC has undergone changes throughout the years that may have impacted results over survey iterations. The Nuclear Renaissance is a term used to refer to an era when nuclear power was undergoing a revival. During this time in 2009, NRC was experiencing significant growth. In turn, NRC was able to attract and retain top talent. In 2011, nuclear accidents worldwide resulted in many nuclear facilities to shut down which slowed the pace of projected new nuclear construction. Since 2011, NRC has experienced significant changes in senior leadership, undergone office reorganizations, and has implemented organizational initiatives (Project AIM) in an effort to rebaseline the organization. The type of change NRC has experienced since 2011 can significantly impact employee engagement and morale and should be taken into consideration when comparing historical survey results (2009 and 2012) to the 2015 findings.

Willis Towers Watson conducted the NRC Safety Culture and Climate Survey for approximately 3,670 employees in the fall of 2015. Through this research initiative, OIG's goals were to:

- Measure NRC's safety culture and climate to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement
- Understand the Key Drivers of Employee Engagement and Safety and leverage identified areas of opportunity to improve Engagement and Safety within NRC
- Compare the results of this survey against the previous survey results
- Provide, where practical, benchmarks for the findings against other similar organizations and high-performing companies.

To achieve these goals, the 2015 Safety Culture and Climate Survey consisted of four distinct activities:

1. A review of the existing research on safety culture and climate.
2. Evaluation of the 2005, 2009, and 2012 Safety Culture and Climate Survey results.
3. A qualitative design phase where a sample of NRC employees and managers were interviewed and focus group meetings were held.

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<sup>1</sup> In 1998, International Survey Research (ISR) conducted the first NRC Safety Culture and Climate Survey. In 2007, Towers Perrin acquired ISR and after a later merger formed Towers Watson after a later merger. Most recently, Towers Watson and Willis merged in January 2016.

4. A quantitative component consisting of a survey administered to all permanent full-time and part-time NRC employees.

NRC in conjunction with Willis Towers Watson defined Safety Culture and Climate as follows:

- Safety Culture (as it relates to the agency) refers to the complex sum (or whole) of the mission, characteristics, and policies of an organization, and the thoughts and actions of its individual members, which establish and support nuclear safety and security as overriding priorities.<sup>1</sup>
- Climate refers to the current work environment of the agency. Climate is like a snapshot in time and can affect culture.

A better understanding of NRC's safety culture and climate will facilitate identification of agency strengths and opportunities for improvement. Agency program and support offices can use this information to develop action plans, as warranted. In addition, OIG plans to use the survey results in connection with risk assessments to help inform its annual audit planning and review, and update as appropriate, agency management challenges.

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that this definition is not the current and official definition of safety culture at NRC. However, the above definition of Safety Culture and Climate was established in order to have a consistent comparison to results from prior years.

# Survey Design

As previously discussed, the 2015 Safety Culture and Climate Survey consisted of four phases. The interviews, focus group meetings, and Willis Towers Watson's review of the 2005, 2009, and 2012 Safety Culture and Climate Survey results served as the basis for designing the survey questionnaire. The questions that comprised the 2015 survey included selected items from Willis Towers Watson's normative database as well as tailored items to address the unique topic of NRC's safety culture and climate.<sup>1</sup> The 2015 study, as a sixth iteration survey, provides NRC with a distinct advantage: a comparison of the 2015 results with historical and normative items used in the 1998, 2002, 2005, 2009 and 2012 surveys.

During the survey design process, some survey questions were added as a result of feedback received during the interviews with senior management and staff focus group meetings. Likewise, some questions were removed, because some concepts previously assessed have been addressed, or are no longer relevant. In addition, an inter-item correlation analysis was completed, and some survey categories were combined due to high correlation of scores with other survey items in similar categories.<sup>2</sup> In all, the 2015 survey contained 127 separate items, as compared with 132 items in 2012. The 2015 survey items were broken down across 16 distinct categories.

This Executive Summary highlights the quantitative results of NRC's survey. The overall results are examined first, looking at specific areas of strength and opportunities for improvement at NRC. Category and item-level results are compared to the Willis Towers Watson's U.S. National Norm, U.S. Research and Development Norm (U.S. R&D), U.S. High Performance Norm, and the 2009 and 2012 NRC Safety Culture and Climate Survey results.<sup>3</sup> The Executive Summary then analyzes internal comparisons such as job function, employment status, job category, grade level, resident inspector vs. non-resident inspector and length of service. Following internal comparisons, the Key Driver Analysis of engagement and safety are reviewed before analysis is provided that highlights the key results of the Safety Culture and Climate Survey.

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<sup>1</sup> Item: An item is a survey question. Similar items are grouped together to create survey categories.

<sup>2</sup> Inter-item correlation: Inter- item correlations are an essential element in conducting an item analysis of a set of test questions. Inter item correlations examine the extent to which scores on one item are related to scores on all other items in a scale.

<sup>3</sup> The U.S. National Norm is comprised of organizations representing a broad spectrum of industries across the United States; The U.S. R&D Norm is comprised of a representative sample of the U.S. research and development workforce weighted according to Bureau of Labor Statistics data; The U.S. High Performing Companies Norm is comprised of some of the top performing organizations in the U.S. They are included in this norm because they meet two mandatory criteria - very strong financial results and employee engagement survey scores.

# Survey Results in Brief

## Survey Administration Summary

The OIG's NRC Safety Culture and Climate Survey had a six week administration period from November 23 to December 31, 2015. All permanent full-time and part-time employees were eligible to participate. From the 3,670 employees invited to participate, 2,561 employees completed the survey, for an overall return rate of 70 percent. This return is lower than the 2012 completion rate of 79 percent participation, yet is sufficient to provide a reliable and valid measure of the current attitudes and perceptions of employees and managers (Exhibit 1) regarding safety culture and climate at NRC.

## External Benchmark Summary

When compared to the U.S. National Norm, the overall category scores for NRC are significantly more favorable (percentage of employees responding favorable to a given set of questions) in nine comparable categories (utilizing statistical significance at the 95 percent confidence level, an industry standard).<sup>1</sup> The category with the most favorable score compared to the U.S. National Norm is Mission & Objectives, which is ten points above the norm (Exhibit 3). Similarly, when comparing NRC survey scores with the U.S. R&D Norm, 11 categories score significantly above the norm. The category with the most favorable score compared to the R&D Norm is Quality Focus, which is 18 points above the norm. Mission & Objectives, Training, and Workload and Support/Working Relationships categories also have large favorable differences compared to the U.S. R&D Norm, scoring ten points above the norm (Exhibit 4).

The Willis Towers Watson U.S. High Performing Companies Norm is also used as a benchmark.<sup>2</sup> When compared to this rigorous norm, NRC is significantly more favorable in four of the ten comparable categories and is significantly less favorable in five of the ten comparable categories. The most favorable difference against this norm is Mission & Objectives, which is seven points above the norm. Senior Management and Human Capital categories both received scores five points below the norm (Exhibit 5).

## Historical Comparison Summary

The historical comparison from 2012 to 2015 is split fairly evenly between improvements and declines. The Mission & Objectives and Supervision categories show significant increases compared to 2012, and Differing Views Processes and Quality Focus show significant decreases in category scores compared to 2012 (Exhibit 6)

Compared to 2009, NRC has significantly decreased in eight categories, including Differing Views processes, Engagement, Empowerment and Respect, Human Capital, NRC Mission & Strategic Plan,

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<sup>1</sup> Statistical Significance: Statistical Significance is a statistical test that is run to find out the likelihood that a result or relationship is caused by something other than mere random chance. A confidence level is a type of interval estimate. Using a confidence level of 95 percent, this means that we can be 95 percent sure that a result from a statistical analysis is not due to random chance.

<sup>2</sup> The Willis Towers Watson U.S. High Performing Companies Norm is comprised of a weighted average of employee survey results from a cross-section of U.S. companies. Data are derived from recent client studies conducted by Willis Towers Watson and companies qualify for the inclusion by meeting two criteria: (a) superior financial results relative to industry performance; and (b) superior human resource practices, defined by top-quartile employee opinion scores.

Performance Management, Quality Focus, and Senior Management. Elevating Concerns, Mission & Objectives and Supervision are the only categories that obtained significant favorable differences compared to 2009 (Exhibit 7).

Comparing trends across 2009 and 2012, Mission & Objectives and Supervision are the only categories that have significant improvements. Moreover, Differing Views Processes and Quality Focus are the only categories that have significant declines compared to 2009 and 2012.

## Demographic Comparison Summary

Employee data is broken down using several demographic variables. The following paragraphs will highlight key findings from each demographic comparison. The demographic groups that are analyzed include job function, employment status, job category, grade level (pay), resident inspector status, tenure, and office.

Analyzing job function, Admin/Support and Security functions have multiple categories with significant unfavorable category scores compared to NRC overall. Engineering has the most favorable results compared to NRC overall, with four categories scoring significantly more favorable (Exhibit 8).

Employment status comparisons reveal no differences between permanent full-time employees and NRC Overall category scores. However, permanent part-time employees have significant favorable category scores compared to NRC overall in Office/Region and Performance Management categories (Exhibit 9).

Employees were also requested to identify their job category in the survey. Participants could choose from senior management, middle management, line management, or non-supervisor classifications. Differences exist among responses from senior management to the survey questions versus responses from line management and non-supervisory classifications. This pattern is particularly common among government and private sector organizations. Responses from senior management and middle management are significantly more favorable by double-digit differences compared with NRC Overall scores (Exhibit 10).

Among grade level comparisons, employees in the SES/Executive Level, Senior Level Service/Administrative Law Judge, and GG-15 levels (top three most senior grade levels) have significantly more favorable category scores compared to NRC Overall. GG-13 and GG-14 grade levels (mid-level) had many categories with unfavorable results compared to NRC overall, and GG-1 to GG-10 and GG-11 to GG-12 (lower level) grade levels had minimal category differences compared to NRC overall. This pattern is typical of private and government agencies, regardless of industry or sector (Exhibit 11).

When comparing resident inspectors against non-resident inspectors, no significant differences were found. However, 12 out of 16 category scores are more favorable for resident inspectors. Non-resident inspectors have the same category scores as NRC overall (Exhibit 12).

The two groups with the longest tenure at NRC, 20 to 25 years and 25 years or more and the shortest two tenure groups, one to five years and less than one year, have very favorable category scores

compared to NRC overall. However, employees with tenures between five and 20 years have unfavorable category scores compared to NRC overall (Exhibit 13).

Within the Commission Offices, OCFO has 11 out of 16 categories with unfavorable significant results compared to NRC overall. ASLBP has one significant category score above NRC overall (Exhibit 15). Examining EDO office comparisons ADM, NMSS, OCIO, and OE all have significant unfavorable category scores compared to NRC overall. Within EDO offices, the Differing Views Processes category is the only category with favorable significant scores as obtained for NRO and NRR (Exhibit 18 & 19).

## Engagement & Safety Results Summary

Generally, engagement scores dropped from 2009 to 2012, and increased from 2012 to 2015. NRC engagement scores are highly favorable compared to the U.S. R&D Norm and the U.S. National Norm. However, engagement scores are significantly unfavorable compared to the U.S. High Performance Norm. Results from a key driver analysis reveal that employee engagement at NRC is highly affected by attitudes toward Empowerment and Respect, NRC Mission & Objectives, and Training.

Along with the engagement index (Exhibit 23), a safety index (Exhibit 24) was incorporated into the 2015 survey to reveal key drivers of safety. This new index is comprised of four components including employee values, safety culture, employee action, and management action. Compared to 2009, and 2012 survey results, 2015 safety scores have significantly decreased. Nonetheless, NRC safety scores are significantly more favorable compared to the U.S. High Performance and U.S. National Norms. Results from a key driver analysis explain that safety at NRC is highly affected by attitudes toward Empowerment and Respect, Senior Management, and NRC Mission & Objectives.<sup>1</sup>

## Survey Results Summary

In summary, the 2015 OIG NRC Safety Culture and Climate Survey results are significantly more favorable compared to the U.S. National Norm and the U.S. R&D Norm. Compared to the U.S. High Performance Norm, the 2015 survey scores are split fairly evenly between favorable and unfavorable significant differences. Comparing historical trends, 2012 results were split fairly evenly between improvements and declines compared to 2015. Compared to 2009, 2015 NRC results are significantly unfavorable, with few categories showing improvement. A key driver analysis revealed that employee engagement and safety at NRC are highly affected by attitudes toward Empowerment and Respect, and NRC Mission & Objectives.

To help integrate these findings into NRC's culture, the Willis Towers Watson survey team held Results to Action Workshops for NRC leaders. The two day workshop provided an overview of NRC's overall survey results, and helped NRC leaders understand, interpret, and prioritize their organizations survey results. Further, NRC leaders learned how to build action plans using Willis Towers Watsons Action Planning Software and were given guidance regarding how to implement and communicate action plans and drive real change.

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<sup>1</sup> Key driver analysis: A key driver analysis is a multiple regression statistical test used to learn about the relationship between several independent or predictor variables (survey categories) and a dependent or criterion variable (Engagement and Safety).

# Qualitative Design Phase: Interviews and Focus Groups

For the qualitative design component of the NRC Safety Culture and Climate Survey, Willis Towers Watson conducted on-site and phone interviews and on-site focus group meetings. The analysis from the interview and focus group meetings aided in the development of the survey instrument. The primary emphasis for these interviews and focus group meetings was to inform the design of the survey instrument. Further, the meetings helped Willis Towers Watson gather information and understanding regarding what new themes (or categories) may need to be explored as well as what themes (or categories) may now be less relevant and thus subject to removal from the survey instrument.

The interviewees and focus group participants were asked questions on a variety of areas. The methodology used to create these questions was based on the key driver areas and select areas from the 2012 survey that received significant scores, as well as other key factors such as NRC's current organizational initiatives. A total of 26 interviews and nine focus group meetings (three at headquarters, three at Region III, and three at Region II) were conducted from September 30 to October 22, 2015. During the interviews and focus group meetings many employees referenced Project Aim, a current agencywide initiative.<sup>1</sup>

A thematic analysis of the interview and focus group content found that participants believe strongly in NRC's mission.

- **NRC Mission:** NRC has a large focus on its mission and leadership makes decisions that are in the best interest for the agency to support its mission.

Participants have mixed perceptions regarding NRC's safety culture, quality focus, elevating concerns and empowerment, differing views processes, training and development, continuous improvement commitment, NRC image, and open, collaborative working environment.

- **Safety Culture:** Some participants feel NRC has a strong safety culture and that promoting safety is a fundamental part of what they do. Others feel that working conditions and current organization initiatives do not always support a full NRC safety culture.
- **Quality Focus:** Some participants feel NRC produces high-quality work and employees are encouraged to adhere to quality standards. However, a larger portion of participants feel that great pressure is put on meeting metrics rather than on producing quality work, and there is no efficient way of measuring work quality.
- **Elevating Concerns and Empowerment:** Participants have mixed views regarding elevating concerns and empowerment. Some participants feel that employees are able to elevate concerns freely to managers and senior leadership without fear of reprisal. Other employees feel that although there is strong encouragement to elevate concerns, it is stigmatizing to

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<sup>1</sup> Project AIM: An agencywide initiative to project the agency's workload for five years out. The objective is to develop strategies and recommendations for future planning, using a range of scenarios to forecast the conditions NRC may face in 2020. These strategies will help NRC accomplish its safety and security mission while enhancing operational excellence, agility, and responsiveness.

actually do so. Some employees feel decisions are made in a vacuum and managers do not have authority to empower staff.

- **Differing Views Processes:** Participants are pleased to see an open door policy established to promote discussion of concerns and differing views. Some participants believe the Differing Views Process has been revised and that it is no longer an issue. A majority of participants feel the non-concurrence program was put in place only to document disagreements and are concerned that if you disagree with your manager it can, and most likely will, affect your career path and advancement.
- **Training and Development:** Participants feel they receive proper training for their jobs as new employees and job rotation is a key aspect of development. Most participants feel there are not as many developmental opportunities as there used to be and the training that does occur, post new employee training, is ineffective. Some employees feel NRC lacks necessary resources for adequate training and development to occur.
- **Continuous Improvement Commitment:** Some focus group participants feel NRC actively prevents career progression. Others feel that due to a lack of resources, making improvements and reaching career goals is difficult. However, some participants feel NRC is focusing on continuous improvement through job rotation and Project Aim.
- **NRC Image and Ethics:** Some participants feel NRC's ethical standards have changed for the better, and within government, NRC has a positive reputation. A larger proportion of participants feel the general public knows very little about NRC and the industry recognizes the necessity of regulation, but views NRC as an obstacle between them and production. Employees have concerns regarding NRC's internal ethical standards in that consequences for the same behavior tend to vary depending on who you know.
- **Open Collaborative Working Environment:** Although participants think NRC has a collective mind-set for a collaborative work environment, many do not think this mind-set actually translates into collaborate working conditions. Participants feel that values such as openness and collaboration are no longer practiced.

Focus group participants and interviewees identified areas for improvement across NRC including leadership and supervision, workload and support, working relationships, strategic planning, engagement, performance management, and communication were recognized as areas for improvement across NRC.

- **Leadership/Supervision:** Although participants feel managers care about their employees, many individuals think managers and leaders do not "walk the walk" and lack people skills. Participants also feel that some leaders focus on the wrong things, are indecisive decision makers, "play favorites," and are unapproachable.
- **Workload and Support/Working Relationships:** Participants feel that some areas of NRC are severely understaffed. A common theme is employees are being given more responsibilities but lack adequate time and resources to perform the additional work. Participants also feel that senior management argue with each other and demonstrates disrespectful behavior throughout the organization.
- **Strategic Plan:** Participants believe the agency is downsizing and are concerned about layoffs. Regional management feels headquarters does not take the regions' perspectives into account and things are always done last minute throughout the agency. Participants feel there needs to be more strategic and innovative thinking and hiring decisions need to be streamlined to attract and retain top talent.
- **Engagement:** Although some participants feel happy working at NRC, some are disengaged and are not willing to expend discretionary effort. Participants feel NRC is a stressful place to

work and there is a lack of career opportunity, leadership support, and available resources to effectively perform their jobs.

- **Performance Management:** Participants feel that the current appraisal system is subjective, and there is no disparity in ratings of a strong performer and a weak performer. Participants feel people are not held accountable for their performance and leadership is given high ratings despite their actual performance.
- **Communication:** Participants suggest that communication at NRC could improve. Most individuals feel leadership needs to be more transparent about strategy, policies, and why decisions are made, especially with regard to Project Aim. Participants also feel that current communications create uncertainty because they are not thought out and are overwhelming.

## Conclusion of Qualitative Phase

In conclusion, interview and focus group participants believe strongly in NRC's mission and have mixed perceptions regarding NRC's safety culture, quality focus, elevating concerns, empowerment, differing views processes, training and development, continuing improvement commitment, NRC image, and open, collaborative working environment. Similarly, numerous areas are recognized as areas for improvement such as leadership and supervision, workload and support, working relationships, strategic planning, engagement, performance management, and communication. Feedback received from interview and focus group participants informed decisions regarding the final survey content for the 2015 survey. The Willis Towers Watson survey team also provided recommended additions and deletions of survey items for OIG's consideration.

# Survey Development / Pre-test

After the survey instrument was reviewed and approved by the OIG survey team, a pre-test version of the survey instrument was developed based on Willis Towers Watson's research into safety culture; the qualitative review of the 2005, 2009 and 2012 survey questionnaires; the qualitative interview and focus group meetings; and Willis Towers Watson's survey experience in other government and private sector organizations. The pre-test survey contained both Willis Towers Watson normed and NRC tailored questions, and was tested with a broad cross-section of NRC employees, using individuals from headquarters, remote sites, and regional offices.

Willis Towers Watson grouped the survey questions into 16 categories, representing the major topic areas of NRC's Safety Culture and Climate. A list of the categories, along with a brief description of the items each category contains, is provided below. For each category, the average favorable response was calculated; Exhibit 2 of this report shows the percent-favorable response for each survey category. Beginning at Exhibit 3, 2015 survey results are compared with Willis Towers Watson Norms (U.S. Research and Development Norm, U.S. National Norm, and U.S. High Performance Norm) and historical results from 2009 and 2012.

## Survey Categories

1. **Differing View Processes:** Assesses employee awareness and perceived effectiveness of the Differing Professional Opinions program and the Non-concurrence process.
2. **Elevating Concerns:** Examines employees' views pertaining to the process of bringing awareness to areas of concern, including accessibility and organizational responsiveness.
3. **Engagement:** Probes employees' willingness to recommend NRC as a good place to work, whether they feel they are a part of the agency, their pride in working for NRC, and their belief in NRC goals, objectives, and values. This category also measures employee intent to leave for both retirement- and non-retirement-related reasons.
4. **Empowerment and Respect:** Assesses the amount of authority employees have to do their jobs, the trust they receive from management, the openness to discuss differing opinions, the ability to openly and confidently raise issues, how respected they feel at work, and whether NRC's climate allows one to be innovative.
5. **Human Capital:** Examines employees' perceptions of how well NRC is doing recruiting, retaining, and developing talent.
6. **Mission and Objectives:** Measures employees' understanding of goals and objectives pertaining to their work unit and NRC overall. It also measures employees' understanding of NRC's mission.
7. **NRC Mission and Strategic Plan:** Assesses the clarity of NRC's mission and strategic plan, and whether employees believe management decisions are communicated effectively. In addition, this category assesses potential issues that could affect the future of NRC.
8. **Office/Region Management:** Focuses on employees' views of how their divisions and offices are managed, including communication, and decision making.

9. **Open, Collaborative Work Environment:** Probes the degree to which employees are satisfied with the different programs/policies that are available at NRC (e.g., the Differing Professional Opinions Program, the Open Door Policy, and the Non-Concurrence Program). This category also addresses employees' comfort with communicating with different levels of management.
10. **Performance Management:** Explores NRC's recognition for quality of performance, and investigates the breadth, utility, and understanding of performance reviews.
11. **Quality Focus:** Explores how priorities and work objectives affect work quality, as well as, the sacrifice of quality work due to the need to meet a deadline or the need to satisfy a personal or political agenda.
12. **Safety Index:** Evaluates employees' perception of NRC safety culture, how safe they feel at work, and NRC's commitment to public safety. It also measures' perception regarding how safety issues are investigated and resolved by management.
13. **Senior Management:** Probes employees' views of senior management within NRC, including management style, and confidence in management's decisions.
14. **Supervision:** Evaluates employees' perceptions regarding supervision including supervisors' ability to prioritize tasks, receptiveness to suggestions for change, communication, decision making, and ability to deal with poor performers.
15. **Training:** Assesses availability and quality of training, development and growth opportunity. Also provides employees with the opportunity to identify things that interfere with training opportunities.
16. **Workload and Support/Working Relationships:** Evaluates the level of staff resources to handle the workload, the amount of stress employees experience on the job, prioritization and resource allocation to improve efficiency of work, and the dissemination of information. This category also evaluates employees' understanding of NRC's safety culture. Measures the level of cooperation, respect, and teamwork among employees, work units, divisions, office/regions, and headquarters.

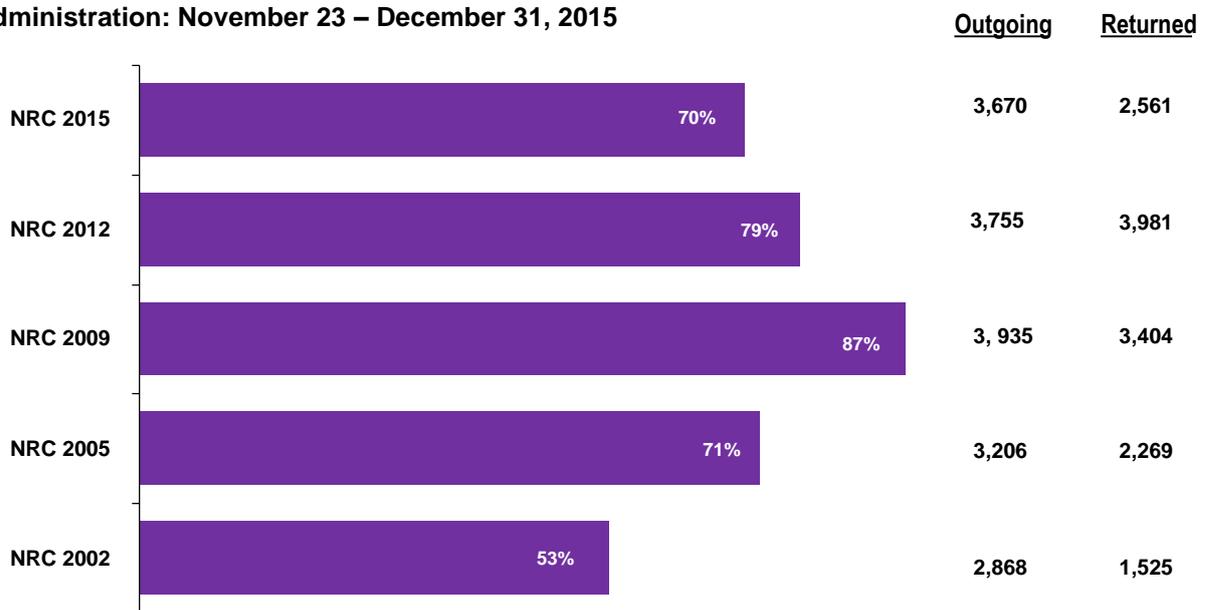
# Survey Administration

The NRC Safety Culture and Climate Survey was administered November 23 to December 31, 2015. All current permanent full-time and part-time NRC employees were eligible to participate. Of the 3,670 employees invited to participate, 2,561 completed surveys, for an overall return rate of 70 percent. This return is lower than the 2012 survey administration (79 percent participation in 2012), yet is more than sufficient to provide a reliable and valid measure of the current attitudes and perceptions of NRC employees and managers.

## Exhibit 1

### Participation Rates

Administration: November 23 – December 31, 2015



WILLIS TOWERS WATSON'S GLOBAL RETURN RATE IS 80 PERCENT

EXHIBIT 1 FOOTNOTE: A valid survey is when the individual selects at least one coding question and at least one opinion question. Self-select coding can result in sub-group participation amounts not adding up to the overall NRC total.

# Overall Category Scores

“Total Favorable” in the results charts that follow is the combination of the “Agree”/“Tend to Agree” responses. The Question Mark “?” response column is comprised of employees who do not know or do not have an opinion to the question. “Total Unfavorable” are employees who responded with a “Tend to Disagree” or “Disagree” response to the question. For negatively worded items, the rules just mentioned are reversed. The average favorable response score for each category was calculated and is provided below. All but one category (Differing Views Processes) demonstrate majority favorable scores (defined as greater than 50 percent favorable responses), with the most favorable being Mission and Objectives at 94 percent favorable.

The category scores range between 47 to 94 percent favorable, with Mission & Objectives and Safety being characterized by employees as most favorable, with scores at 80 percent or higher. The remaining categories range from Engagement and Workload and Support/Working Relationships at 79 percent to Differing Views Processes 47 percent (the lowest-scoring category). When reviewing category scores, caution should be exercised in the absence of historical or external benchmarks. Some categories have a propensity to receive low, or unfavorable category scores, so when reviewing these scores without a benchmark, one may draw an inaccurate conclusion.

## Exhibit 2

### Categories

NRC OVERALL 2015 Category Scores

Category	Total Favorable Score
Differing Views Processes	47
Elevating Concerns	60
Engagement	79
Empowerment and Respect	70
Human Capital	62
Mission & Objectives	94
NRC Mission & Strategic Plan	78
Office/Region Management	67
Open, Collaborative Working Enviro...	74
Performance Management	68
Quality Focus	51
Safety Index	81
Senior Management	68
Supervision	77
Training	72
Workload and Support/Working Rela...	79

# Comparison of NRC with the U.S. National Norm

A Willis Towers Watson norm is a weighted sample of employee responses categorized by nation, industry, function, or performance. The first benchmark NRC is compared with is the U.S. National Norm. This norm is comprised of organizations representing a broad spectrum of industries across the United States and is updated annually. The norm includes 160,585 cases (weighted average) from individual participants. Employees in the norm are Hourly, Salaried, Exempt, and Non-Exempt up to and including Executives. Organizations in the norm are weighted to ensure proper proportionality.

## Exhibit 3

### Categories

NRC OVERALL 2015 Category Scores vs. U.S. National Norm

Category	Total Favorable Score	U.S. National Norm
Differing Views Processes	47	n/a
Elevating Concerns	60	n/a
Engagement	79	4*
Empowerment and Respect	70	1
Human Capital	62	1
Mission & Objectives	94	10*
NRC Mission & Strategic Plan	78	5*
Office/Region Management	67	4*
Open, Collaborative Working Enviro...	74	n/a
Performance Management	68	4*
Quality Focus	51	7*
Safety Index	81	n/a
Senior Management	68	1
Supervision	77	3*
Training	72	7*
Workload and Support/Working Rela...	79	2*

The overall category score for NRC is above the U.S. National Norm. Each category score is represented by a green bar in the graph. NRC scored more favorable in all 12 categories available, nine of which with a significant difference as represented by the asterisk. Categories with the greatest difference above the Norm include Mission & Objectives, scoring ten points higher, and Quality Focus and Training, both scoring seven points higher. NRC employee opinions are significantly more favorable than what would typically be observed amongst the U.S. National population.

When a percent favorable or unfavorable response between two groups is displayed, a statistical test is conducted by Willis Towers Watson to determine whether the difference in scores represents a

“real” difference in opinion, rather than attributing the difference to random chance. A statistically significant difference is one that is large enough, given the size of the groups being compared, to be unlikely to be caused by chance. Statistically significant differences are therefore thought to be indicators of real difference between two groups being compared. A statistically significant difference indicates there is less than a 5 percent chance the difference occurs randomly. Please note that in the charts throughout this report, statistically significant differences are indicated by dark colored (green or red) cells with an asterisk next to the value.

# Comparison of NRC with U.S. Research and Development Norm

The U.S. Research and Development Norm (R&D Norm) is comprised of a representative sample of the U.S. research and development workforce weighted according to Bureau of Labor Statistics data. This norm contains a representative sample of organizations throughout the U.S. and includes 22,898 entities (weighted average) that perform R&D functions. When comparing the 2015 NRC survey scores with the R&D Norm, 11 of the 12 available categories score significantly above the norm. The most favorable differences are in Quality Focus, scoring 18 points higher, and Mission & Objectives, Training, and Workload and Support/Working Relationships, all scoring ten points higher than the R&D Norm. As the scores demonstrate in this comparison, NRC employee opinions are significantly more favorable than what would typically be observed among U.S. R&D populations.

## Exhibit 4

### Categories

NRC OVERALL 2015 Category Scores vs. U.S. Research & Dev. Norm

Category	Total Favorable Score	U.S. Research & Dev. Norm
Differing Views Processes	47	n/a
Elevating Concerns	60	n/a
Engagement	79	6*
Empowerment and Respect	70	0
Human Capital	62	6*
Mission & Objectives	94	10*
NRC Mission & Strategic Plan	78	5*
Office/Region Management	67	6*
Open, Collaborative Working Enviro...	74	n/a
Performance Management	68	9*
Quality Focus	51	18*
Safety Index	81	n/a
Senior Management	68	4*
Supervision	77	2*
Training	72	10*
Workload and Support/Working Rela...	79	10*

# Comparison of NRC with U.S. High Performing Companies Norm

The Willis Towers Watson U.S. High Performing Companies Norm is comprised of some of the top performing organizations in the United States. They are included in this norm because they meet two mandatory criteria - very strong financial results and employee engagement survey scores.

When comparing NRC results to the U.S. High Performing Companies Norm, NRC has four of ten available categories with significantly more favorable scores. Mission & Objectives has the highest category score, with seven points above the Norm. However, five of ten available categories score significantly lower than the Norm, with Office/Region Management scoring seven points below the Norm. The rigor of this norm should be taken into consideration when comparing NRC results.

## Exhibit 5

### Categories

NRC OVERALL 2015 Category Scores vs. U.S. HP Norm

Category	Total Favorable Score	U.S. HP Norm
Differing Views Processes	47	n/a
Elevating Concerns	60	n/a
Engagement	79	-2*
Empowerment and Respect	70	-4*
Human Capital	62	-5*
Mission & Objectives	94	7*
NRC Mission & Strategic Plan	78	n/a
Office/Region Management	67	-7*
Open, Collaborative Working Enviro...	74	n/a
Performance Management	68	-1
Quality Focus	51	n/a
Safety Index	81	n/a
Senior Management	68	-5*
Supervision	77	2*
Training	72	3*
Workload and Support/Working Rela...	79	3*

# Comparison of NRC 2015 Results with NRC 2012 Results

The historical comparison of results from 2015 to 2012 is split fairly evenly between improvements and declines. NRC has improved in nine out of 16 categories. Mission & Objectives and Supervision are the only categories that have significant increases, both scoring three points higher than 2012. However, NRC has six out of 16 categories score lower compared to 2012 survey results, with Differing Views Processes and Quality Focus categories both scoring significantly lower. Despite going through substantial change due to nuclear incidents in 2011, the overall category scores from 2012 to 2015 can be seen as an accomplishment.

## Exhibit 6

### Categories

NRC OVERALL 2015 Category Scores vs. NRC OVERALL 2012

Category	Total Favorable Score	NRC OVERALL 2012
Differing Views Processes	47	-3*
Elevating Concerns	60	2
Engagement	79	1
Empowerment and Respect	70	0
Human Capital	62	-2
Mission & Objectives	94	3*
NRC Mission & Strategic Plan	78	1
Office/Region Management	67	1
Open, Collaborative Working Enviro...	74	2
Performance Management	68	2
Quality Focus	51	-3*
Safety Index	81	-1
Senior Management	68	-2
Supervision	77	3*
Training	72	1
Workload and Support/Working Rela...	79	-1

# Comparison of NRC 2015 Results with NRC 2009 Results

The historical results comparison from 2015 to 2009 is fairly negative, with ten of 16 categories scoring less favorable than the 2009 NRC results, eight of which are statistically significant. The biggest improvement since 2009 is the Elevating Concerns category, which is four points above the 2009 score. NRC’s nuclear renaissance revival in 2009 should be taken into consideration when comparing category scores from 2009 to 2015.

## Exhibit 7

### Categories

NRC OVERALL 2015 Category Scores vs. NRC OVERALL 2009

Category	Total Favorable Score	NRC OVERALL 2009
Differing Views Processes	47	-5*
Elevating Concerns	60	4*
Engagement	79	-3*
Empowerment and Respect	70	-4*
Human Capital	62	-7*
Mission & Objectives	94	3*
NRC Mission & Strategic Plan	78	-4*
Office/Region Management	67	-1
Open, Collaborative Working Enviro...	74	1
Performance Management	68	-3*
Quality Focus	51	-4*
Safety Index	81	-1
Senior Management	68	-6*
Supervision	77	2*
Training	72	0
Workload and Support/Working Rela...	79	0

## Internal Comparisons

The following internal comparisons illustrate how various subgroups within NRC (i.e., job function, employment status, job category, grade level, resident inspector versus non-resident inspector and length of service) vary at the category-level compared to NRC overall. In addition, Commission and EDO Offices results will be compared.

When reviewing any of the internal comparisons, such as the graph on the next page, it should be noted that while all participants are included in the overall number (N=2,561), not all employees provided a response to every coding question in the survey. For this reason, the sum of all groups may not be equal to the total NRC Overall combined group. Also, to ensure confidentiality for each participant, groups with less than ten are included in the overall NRC population counts, but are not broken out separately.

## Job Function Comparisons

Some very distinct patterns emerge when comparing job function categories to NRC overall results. Engineering and Legal job functions both had 15 out of 16 categories score more favorable than NRC overall. Engineering had significantly more favorable scores for four of the 16 categories, and Legal had two out of 16 categories with significant favorable differences compared to NRC overall.

Admin/Support, Security and Scientific categories all have unfavorable category scores compared to NRC Overall. Admin/Support and Security are the only Job Functions with significant unfavorable category scores compared to NRC overall. However, these two categories have a large number of participants who chose the “?” response, which suggests these groups may not use the Differing Professional Opinions Program.

## Exhibit 8

### Category Breakdown

NRC OVERALL 2015

Category	NRC OVERALL 2015	Admin/Support 2015	Engineering 2015	Legal 2015	Security 2015	Scientific 2015
Differing Views Processes	47	-10*	8*	5	-12*	1
Elevating Concerns	60	-3	3	12*	-8*	0
Engagement	79	-3	2	4	-3	-1
Empowerment and Respect	70	-4	3*	9	-5	-3
Human Capital	62	-2	2	9	-4	-3
Mission & Objectives	94	-1	1	0	-2	0
NRC Mission & Strategic Plan	78	0	1	2	-1	-4
Office/Region Management	67	-3	3	8	-6	-2
Open, Collaborative Working Environment	74	-3	3	11*	-5	-2
Performance Management	68	1	0	2	0	-3
Quality Focus	51	-7*	5*	11	-7	0
Safety Index	81	-4*	3*	2	-3	0
Senior Management	68	1	1	4	-4	-4
Supervision	77	-1	2	6	-3	-1
Training	72	-1	2	3	-4	-3
Workload and Support/Working Relationships	79	-2	2	5	-5	-2

## Employment Status Comparisons

When comparing NRC overall scores with permanent full-time employee scores, no differences emerge between the two groups' category scores. However, for permanent part-time employees, 15 out of 16 categories are more favorable compared to NRC overall. Office/Region Management and Performance Management categories both yielded highly significant favorable category scores. Although full-time employee category scores were not negative compared to NRC overall, these results indicate that part-time employees have more positive opinions about the agency than full-time employees. Action planning may need to be focused more around full-time employees.

### Exhibit 9

#### Category Breakdown

NRC OVERALL 2015

Category	NRC OVERALL 2015	Permanent FT 2015	Permanent PT 2015
Differing Views Processes	47	0	3
Elevating Concerns	60	0	10
Engagement	79	0	9
Empowerment and Respect	70	0	8
Human Capital	62	0	12
Mission & Objectives	94	0	2
NRC Mission & Strategic Plan	78	0	13
Office/Region Management	67	0	16*
Open, Collaborative Working Environment	74	0	5
Performance Management	68	0	19*
Quality Focus	51	0	0
Safety Index	81	0	11
Senior Management	68	0	14
Supervision	77	0	6
Training	72	0	5
Workload and Support/Working Relationships	79	0	6

## Job Category Comparisons

When employee opinion data is segmented according to Job Category, as expected, Senior Management and Middle Management category scores are all significantly favorable compared to NRC overall except for one category in Senior Management. As you go further down in the organization to Non-Supervisor participant's category scores change drastically.<sup>1</sup>

Line Management category scores are split fairly evenly, with eight out of 16 categories scoring more favorable than NRC Overall, with only one significant difference. For Non-Supervisor employees, 15 of the 16 categories have lower category scores compared to NRC overall, one of which with a significant difference. Non-Supervisor participants had by far the least favorable opinions regarding NRC and may require extra attention during action planning.

### Exhibit 10

#### Category Breakdown

NRC OVERALL 2015

Category	NRC OVERALL 2015	Senior Management 2015	Middle Management 2015	Line Management 2015	Non-Supervisor 2015
Differing Views Processes	47	29*	28*	7*	-4*
Elevating Concerns	60	27*	24*	5	-3
Engagement	79	13*	10*	-1	-1
Empowerment and Respect	70	22*	17*	2	-2
Human Capital	62	32*	19*	2	-2
Mission & Objectives	94	6	5*	-1	0
NRC Mission & Strategic Plan	78	18*	14*	-1	-1
Office/Region Management	67	26*	15*	0	-1
Open, Collaborative Working Environment	74	21*	16*	2	-2
Performance Management	68	15*	9*	2	-1
Quality Focus	51	31*	17*	-1	-1
Safety Index	81	14*	12*	1	-1
Senior Management	68	25*	15*	0	-1
Supervision	77	19*	15*	1	-1
Training	72	17*	13*	0	-1
Workload and Support/Working Relationships	79	14*	14*	0	-1

<sup>1</sup> Senior Management: Deputy Office Director/Deputy Regional Administrators and above; Middle Management: Deputy Division Directors and above; Line Management: Section and Branch Chiefs, Team Leaders, Senior Project Engineer, Senior Resident Inspector and above; Non-Supervisor: Employees not in a supervisor or manager role.

## Grade Level Comparisons

Grade Level is another comparison with compelling trends. The pattern demonstrated below is very typical of private and government agencies, regardless of industry or sector. The data below reveal statistically significant favorable responses compared to NRC overall for the SES/Executive Level, the most senior grade level of the organization. Similarly, the Senior Level Service/Administrative Law Judge grade level had favorable scores for each category, three of which are highly significant. GG-15 grade level also has extremely favorable category scores, with 13 out of 16 categories more favorable than NRC overall.

GG-1 to GG-10 and GG-11 to GG-12 grade levels have fairly favorable category scores, each with more than half of their categories scoring more favorable than NRC overall results. Similar to NRC's 2012 Grade Level results, GG-13 and GG-14 grade levels have very low category scores compared to NRC overall. With such low scores over survey iterations, NRC may want to hold focus groups with GG-13 and GG-14 grade level employees to investigate these negative opinions.

## Exhibit 11

### Category Breakdown

NRC OVERALL 2015

Category	NRC OVERALL 2015	GG-1 to GG-10 2015	GG-11 to GG-12 2015	GG-13 2015	GG-14 2015	GG-15 2015	Senior Level Service/Administrative Law Judge 2015	SES/Executive Level 2015
Differing Views Processes	47	-7	-7	-7*	-3	7*	15*	34*
Elevating Concerns	60	2	4	-2	-5*	2	14*	29*
Engagement	79	0	4	-1	-2	1	5	12*
Empowerment and Respect	70	0	4	-2	-4*	3	12	21*
Human Capital	62	5	8*	-3	-6*	2	10	28*
Mission & Objectives	94	-1	1	0	0	0	3	5*
NRC Mission & Strategic Plan	78	3	2	-2	-2	1	6	16*
Office/Region Management	67	5	3	0	-4*	0	8	21*
Open, Collaborative Working Environment	74	-2	-1	-2	-2	2	13*	19*
Performance Management	68	3	4	-1	-3	1	7	11*
Quality Focus	51	-3	-3	-3	-2	2	6	26*
Safety Index	81	3	2	-1	-2	0	6	15*
Senior Management	68	5	6	-1	-4*	1	2	21*
Supervision	77	1	1	-2	-2	1	9	17*
Training	72	0	4	-2	-2	1	2	15*
Workload and Support/Working Relationships	79	2	2	-1	-4*	2	4	17*

## Resident Inspector versus Non Resident Inspector Comparisons

When comparing resident inspectors with non-resident inspectors, no significant differences are found. However, 12 out of 16 category scores are more favorable for resident inspectors. Non-resident inspectors have the same category scores as NRC overall. Non-resident inspector participants have less positive employee opinions regarding NRC and may require extra attention during action planning.

### Exhibit 12

#### Category Breakdown

NRC OVERALL 2015

Category	NRC OVERALL 2015	Yes 2015	No 2015
Differing Views Processes	47	-1	0
Elevating Concerns	60	4	0
Engagement	79	5	0
Empowerment and Respect	70	3	0
Human Capital	62	-1	0
Mission & Objectives	94	3	0
NRC Mission & Strategic Plan	78	1	0
Office/Region Management	67	3	0
Open, Collaborative Working Environment	74	5	0
Performance Management	68	0	0
Quality Focus	51	6	0
Safety Index	81	8	0
Senior Management	68	0	0
Supervision	77	2	0
Training	72	3	0
Workload and Support/Working Relationships	79	4	0

## Length of NRC/AEC Service (Tenure) Comparisons

Similar to other organizations, the longest and shortest tenure groups have the most favorable responses. NRC senior leaders may want to review and consider these lower-scoring tenured groups and investigate the findings more closely.

### Exhibit 13

#### Category Breakdown

NRC OVERALL 2015

Category	NRC OVERALL 2015	< 1 yr 2015	1 yr < 5 yrs 2015	5 yrs < 10 yrs 2015	10 yrs < 15 yrs 2015	15 yrs < 20 yrs 2015	20 yrs < 25 yrs 2015	25 yrs or more 2015
Differing Views Processes	47	-3	-3	-2	-1	0	8	5*
Elevating Concerns	60	11*	7*	-3	-3	-1	4	2
Engagement	79	7	1	-2	-1	-1	3	3
Empowerment and Respect	70	8	3	-2	-1	-2	4	1
Human Capital	62	14*	1	-4*	-2	-1	8*	5
Mission & Objectives	94	2	1	0	0	-1	2	0
NRC Mission & Strategic Plan	78	9*	1	-1	-2	-2	4	2
Office/Region Management	67	12*	4	-2	-2	-3	3	2
Open, Collaborative Working Environment	74	5	2	-1	-2	-2	6	2
Performance Management	68	-6	5	-1	-1	-2	2	1
Quality Focus	51	2	4	-2	-3	4	2	2
Safety Index	81	7	4	-1	-1	-3	1	1
Senior Management	68	6	1	-1	-1	-3	4	3
Supervision	77	5	2	-2	-1	-1	5	1
Training	72	4	1	-3	0	-1	7	3
Workload and Support/Working Relationships	79	4	0	-2	-1	0	4	3

## Commission Offices Comparisons

### Historical Breakdown

The historical breakdown of the Commission Office reveals some interesting changes from 2009 to 2015. Elevating Concerns and Mission and Objectives 2015 category scores have favorable significant differences compared to the 2009 category scores. However, the 2015 Quality Focus category score is significantly lower compared to its 2009 category score. Similar to 2009, the 2015 Mission and Objectives category score has a favorable significant difference compared to the 2012 category score. These results suggest that when implementing action plans, Commission offices may want to focus their efforts around quality focus.

### Exhibit 14

#### Categories

COMMISSION OFFICES Category Scores vs. Benchmarks

Category	Total Favorable Score	COMMISSION OFFICES 2012	COMMISSION OFFICES 2009	NRC OVERALL 2015
Differing Views Processes	47	-3	0	-1
Elevating Concerns	63	4	12*	2
Engagement	80	0	-2	1
Empowerment and Respect	71	1	0	1
Human Capital	61	-4	-3	0
Mission & Objectives	95	5*	4*	1
NRC Mission & Strategic Plan	81	3	0	3
Office/Region Management	69	0	3	1
Open, Collaborative Working Enviro...	77	4	5	3
Performance Management	70	3	-1	1
Quality Focus	51	-6	-8*	0
Safety Index	79	-2	2	-2
Senior Management	72	0	0	4
Supervision	77	2	1	0
Training	71	-1	-2	0
Workload and Support/Working Rela...	81	0	1	2

## Commission Offices Comparisons

### Office Breakdown 1/2

Compared to NRC overall, OCFO categories all score lower, with 11 categories significantly less favorable. ASLBP has 15 out of 16 categories with favorable responses, one of which yields a highly significant difference (Quality Focus). All other offices have relatively strong favorable scores compared to NRC overall category scores, SECY (Exhibit 16) in particular. These findings suggest that OCFO may require extra attention during action planning, or alternatively, that OCFO jobs don't pertain directly to safety.

### Exhibit 15

#### Category Breakdown

NRC OVERALL 2015

Category	NRC OVERALL 2015	COMMISSION OFFICES 2015	CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE/COM MISSIONERS' OFFICES 2015	ACRS 2015	ASLBP 2015	OCA 2015	OCAA AND OPA 2015	OCFO 2015	OEDO 2015
Differing Views Processes	47	-1	6	8	-2	6	-1	-15*	15
Elevating Concerns	60	2	8	4	23	14	-2	-17*	10
Engagement	79	1	8	7	13	3	13	-13*	-1
Empowerment and Respect	70	1	10	-2	15	15	10	-15*	2
Human Capital	62	0	1	4	21	21	13	-21*	3
Mission & Objectives	94	1	6	6	4	-7	6	-4	2
NRC Mission & Strategic Plan	78	3	13	7	9	12	14	-8	5
Office/Region Management	67	1	12	5	22	9	3	-16*	2
Open, Collaborative Working Environment	74	3	12	1	16	11	8	-11*	5
Performance Management	68	1	7	8	20	15	13	-10	-7
Quality Focus	51	0	22	-10	33*	19	3	-13*	-8
Safety Index	81	-2	4	3	1	0	2	-14*	5
Senior Management	68	4	11	4	12	17	7	-7	8
Supervision	77	0	9	6	19	5	-12	-12*	-6
Training	72	0	-1	12	23	-12	-1	-11*	-1
Workload and Support/Working Relationships	79	2	16	3	14	1	9	-8	3

## Commission Offices Comparisons

### Office Breakdown 2/2

#### Exhibit 16

##### Category Breakdown

NRC OVERALL 2015

Category	NRC OVERALL 2015	COMMISSION OFFICES 2015	OGC 2015	OIP 2015	SECY 2015
Differing Views Processes	47	-1	-1	0	15
Elevating Concerns	60	2	9	4	18
Engagement	79	1	1	7	14
Empowerment and Respect	70	1	7	2	13
Human Capital	62	0	5	-2	17
Mission & Objectives	94	1	-1	6	6
NRC Mission & Strategic Plan	78	3	0	7	15
Office/Region Management	67	1	5	6	18
Open, Collaborative Working Environment	74	3	6	8	18
Performance Management	68	1	-1	10	10
Quality Focus	51	0	5	-1	7
Safety Index	81	-2	0	-2	8
Senior Management	68	4	3	6	21
Supervision	77	0	5	7	10
Training	72	0	2	2	7
Workload and Support/Working Relationships	79	2	3	3	12

## EDO Offices Comparisons

### Historical Breakdown

The historical breakdown of the EDO Offices provides important insights. Compared to 2009, eight categories have significantly less favorable results in 2015. Mission and Objectives is the only 2015 category with a favorable significant difference compared to 2009. Compared to 2012, Differing Views processes and Senior Management category scores are significantly less favorable in 2015. These are the only two categories that have unfavorable significant results compared to both prior survey iterations. However, Mission and Objectives and Supervision 2015 category scores are significantly more favorable than 2012 scores. Mission and Objectives is the only 2015 category with favorable significant results compared to both previous survey iterations. These findings suggest that EDO Offices may need to focus on Differing Views processes and Senior Management when creating action plans.

### Exhibit 17

#### Categories

EDO OFFICES Category Scores vs. Benchmarks

Category	Total Favorable Score	EDO OFFICES 2012	EDO OFFICES 2009	NRC OVERALL 2015
Differing Views Processes	48	-3*	-5*	0
Elevating Concerns	60	1	2	0
Engagement	79	1	-3*	0
Empowerment and Respect	70	-1	-5*	0
Human Capital	61	-2	-8*	0
Mission & Objectives	94	2*	3*	0
NRC Mission & Strategic Plan	78	1	-4*	-1
Office/Region Management	67	1	-1	0
Open, Collaborative Working Enviro...	74	2	0	0
Performance Management	68	2	-4*	0
Quality Focus	51	-3	-4*	0
Safety Index	81	-1	-2	0
Senior Management	68	-3*	-6*	-1
Supervision	76	3*	2	0
Training	71	1	0	0
Workload and Support/Working Rela...	79	-1	0	0

## EDO Offices Comparisons

### Office Breakdown 1/2

Compared to NRC overall, ADM, NMSS, OCIO and OE (see exhibit 19 for OCIO and OE results) offices all have significant unfavorable category scores. ADM and OCIO offices have the least favorable results. ADM has three categories with significant unfavorable scores and OCIO has eight categories with significant unfavorable scores. The Differing Views Processes category is the only category that has favorable significant scores for two offices; specifically, NRO and NRR. These findings suggest that ADM and OCIO offices may require extra attention during action planning.

### Exhibit 18

#### Category Breakdown

NRC OVERALL 2015

Category	NRC OVERALL 2015	EDO OFFICES 2015	ADM 2015	NMSS 2015	NRO 2015	NRR 2015
Differing Views Processes	47	0	-13*	-5	11*	6*
Elevating Concerns	60	0	-5	-8*	3	0
Engagement	79	0	-7	-1	0	1
Empowerment and Respect	70	0	-6	-4	0	3
Human Capital	62	0	-8	-4	-1	0
Mission & Objectives	94	0	0	0	-2	2
NRC Mission & Strategic Plan	78	-1	-4	-5	-1	-1
Office/Region Management	67	0	-5	-5	3	1
Open, Collaborative Working Environment	74	0	-7	-4	2	1
Performance Management	68	0	4	-7	2	-4
Quality Focus	51	0	-13*	0	-1	1
Safety Index	81	0	-8*	-2	0	2
Senior Management	68	-1	-4	-4	3	1
Supervision	77	0	-1	-4	0	0
Training	72	0	-1	-4	-2	-1
Workload and Support/Working Relationships	79	0	-7	0	-3	2

## EDO Offices Comparisons

### Office Breakdown 2/2

### Exhibit 19

#### Category Breakdown

NRC OVERALL 2015

Category	NRC OVERALL 2015	NSIR 2015	OCHCO 2015	OCIO 2015	OE 2015	OI 2015
Differing Views Processes	47	-6	-8	-17*	4	-10
Elevating Concerns	60	-3	-5	-9*	-15	13
Engagement	79	-1	-2	-10*	-14	-3
Empowerment and Respect	70	-2	-3	-11*	-9	3
Human Capital	62	-1	-1	-13*	-22*	15
Mission & Objectives	94	-4	-1	-2	-3	1
NRC Mission & Strategic Plan	78	-2	5	-8	-1	14
Office/Region Management	67	0	-6	-21*	-16	7
Open, Collaborative Working Environment	74	-2	-5	-8	-6	6
Performance Management	68	2	-3	0	-10	8
Quality Focus	51	1	-8	-19*	-8	0
Safety Index	81	1	-8	-7	-7	4
Senior Management	68	-3	-1	-7	-11	6
Supervision	77	2	-3	-6	-12	10
Training	72	-3	1	-4	-6	0
Workload and Support/Working Relationships	79	0	-2	-14*	-14	4

# Engagement & Safety Indexes

## Engagement Historical Breakdown

The engagement index is comprised of nine questions that are shown in Exhibits 22 and 23. Exhibit 22 compares NRC historical engagement scores. Compared to 2009, 2015 engagement scores have significantly decreased for the majority of the items. 2015 engagement results compared to 2012 tell a different story. Engagement item scores in 2015 have significantly increased in four items compared to 2012. Overall, engagement scores dropped from 2009 to 2012, and increased from 2012 to 2015.

### Exhibit 22

#### Benchmark Summary - Engagement

NRC OVERALL 2015 vs. Benchmarks

Question Text	Total Favorable Score	NRC OVERALL 2012	NRC OVERALL 2009
5 My work gives me a sense of personal accomplishment.	85	-1	-2*
19 I would recommend the NRC as a good place to work.	86	1	-3*
26 The NRC energizes me to go the extra mile.	68	5*	-4*
32 I am proud to be associated with the NRC.	89	-1	-4*
38 I have the work tools and resources I need to achieve exceptional performance.	80	1	n/a
43 The amount of stress I experience in my job seriously reduces my effectiveness. (N)	65	4*	-1
48 I believe strongly in the goals and objectives of this organization.	93	2*	2*
49 I am able to sustain the level of energy I need throughout the work day.	83	3*	n/a
79 At the present time, are you seriously considering leaving the NRC?	67	-4*	-9*

## Engagement Norm Breakdown

The engagement index scores are significantly favorable compared to the U.S. R&D Norm and the U.S. National Norm. However, five out of nine 2015 engagement items are significantly less favorable compared to the U.S. HP Norm. These results reveal NRC employees are significantly more engaged compared to the U.S. R&D and U.S. National Norms.

### Exhibit 23

#### Benchmark Summary - Engagement

NRC OVERALL 2015 vs. Benchmarks

Question Text	Total Favorable Score	U.S. Research & Dev. Norm	U.S. HP Norm	U.S. National Norm
5 My work gives me a sense of personal accomplishment.	85	4*	-2*	2*
19 I would recommend the NRC as a good place to work.	86	9*	-1	6*
26 The NRC energizes me to go the extra mile.	68	4*	-8*	-4*
32 I am proud to be associated with the NRC.	89	2*	-3*	1
38 I have the work tools and resources I need to achieve exceptional performance.	80	8*	1	4*
43 The amount of stress I experience in my job seriously reduces my effectiveness. (N)	65	13*	n/a	15*
48 I believe strongly in the goals and objectives of this organization.	93	7*	3*	8*
49 I am able to sustain the level of energy I need throughout the work day.	83	3*	-2*	2*
79 At the present time, are you seriously considering leaving the NRC?	67	1	-4*	-1

## Safety Historical Breakdown

This safety index is a new feature introduced in the 2015 survey. The safety index is comprised of nine questions that are shown in Exhibit 24. The comparison of NRC historical safety scores is shown in Exhibit 24. Compared to 2009, 2015 safety scores have significantly decreased in two of six available items. Safety item scores in 2015 have significantly decreased in five items compared to 2012. Although safety scores have improved across two items since 2012, the majority of safety item scores have significantly decreased since previous survey iterations. It is important to note that safety and engagement indexes share two key drivers at the category level (Empowerment and Respect & Mission and Objectives) and have a correlation at NRC of .784 which is significant at the 0.01 level. This means that Empowerment and Respect and Mission and Objectives categories have a very strong relationship with safety and engagement levels at NRC and should be taken into account during action planning.

### Exhibit 24

#### Benchmark Summary - Safety Index

NRC OVERALL 2015 vs. Benchmarks

Question Text	Total Favorable Score	NRC OVERALL 2012	NRC OVERALL 2009
2 I believe NRC's commitment to public safety is apparent in what we do on a day-to-day basis.	94	4*	1
8 My work area is a safe place to work.	96	0	0
15 I believe the NRC's commitment to our security mission is apparent in what we do on a day-to-day basis.	88	7*	0
22 I have a clear understanding of the NRC's safety culture.	85	1	-3*
29 I believe a culture exists in the NRC that is conducive to raising safety and quality concerns.	78	-2*	n/a
55a Employees are encouraged to communicate ideas to improve: Nuclear safety	76	-2*	-4*
55b Employees are encouraged to communicate ideas to improve: Nuclear security	72	-2*	-1
61a I am confident that safety issues that are reported to NRC Office/Region management are: Thoroughly investigated	72	-8*	n/a
61b I am confident that safety issues that are reported to NRC Office/Region management are: Appropriately resolved	68	-8*	n/a

## Key Driver Analysis

A key driver analysis (multiple regression) enables the identification of those critical areas that drive Employee Engagement and Safety. Multiple regression is a statistical technique which is used to understand and predict the changes in one variable by understanding relationships of that variable with other variables. Therefore, this analysis looks at factors that have a predictive relationship with Engagement and Safety. Meaning, if scores in these factors that influence Engagement/Safety change, that would influence Engagement/Safety scores to change. In order to determine the critical factors that influence Employee Engagement and Safety, the Engagement and Safety categories are designed to empirically measure Employee Engagement and Safety. They are used as the dependent variable in the key driver analysis, while all other questions in the survey serve as the independent variables (potential influencers on Engagement/Safety) and are regressed on the Engagement and Safety Indexes.

## Engagement Key Driver Analysis (Category Level)

### Historical & Norm Comparison

Exhibits 25 and 26 represent category level key driver analysis broken down by historical year and norm.

#### Exhibit 25

##### Key Drivers of Engagement - NRC OVERALL

NRC OVERALL 2015 Category Scores vs. Benchmarks

NRC OVERALL 2012	NRC OVERALL 2009	Total Favorable Score	Key Driver Categories
0	-4*	70	Empowerment and Respect »
3*	3*	94	Mission & Objectives »
1	0	72	Training »
			Engagement »

#### Exhibit 26

##### Key Drivers of Engagement - NRC OVERALL

NRC OVERALL 2015 Category Scores vs. Benchmarks

U.S. Research & Dev. Norm	U.S. HP Norm	U.S. National Norm	Total Favorable Score	Key Driver Categories
0	-4*	1	70	Empowerment and Respect»
10*	7*	10*	94	Mission & Objectives »
10*	3*	7*	72	Training »
				Engagement »

## Engagement Key Driver Analysis (Item Level)

### Historical & Norm Comparison

Exhibits 27 and 28 represent item level key driver analysis broken down by historical year and norm.

### Exhibit 27

#### Key Driver Items of Engagement - NRC OVERALL

NRC OVERALL 2015 Item Scores vs. Benchmarks

NRC OVERALL 2012	NRC OVERALL 2009	Total Favorable Score	Item Text
-2	-6*	80	EMPOWERMENT AND RESPECT: Employees are treated with respect at the NRC, regardless of their job.
0	-2*	84	EMPOWERMENT AND RESPECT: I have sufficient authority to do my job well.
0	-9*	72	TRAINING: I believe I have the opportunity for personal development and growth in this organization.
-1	0	85	TRAINING: The information I need to do my job is readily available.
4*	6*	94	MISSION & OBJECTIVES: I have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of: The NRC as a whole
3*	2*	93	MISSION & OBJECTIVES: I have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of: My work unit



### Exhibit 28

#### Key Driver Items of Engagement - NRC OVERALL

NRC OVERALL 2015 Item Scores vs. Benchmarks

U.S. Research & Dev. Norm	U.S. HP Norm	U.S. National Norm	Total Favorable Score	Item Text
3*	-1	3*	80	EMPOWERMENT AND RESPECT: Employees are treated with respect at the NRC, regardless of their job.
5*	-1	2*	84	EMPOWERMENT AND RESPECT: I have sufficient authority to do my job well.
4*	-3*	2*	72	TRAINING: I believe I have the opportunity for personal development and growth in this organization.
11*	3*	7*	85	TRAINING: The information I need to do my job is readily available.
12*	6*	11*	94	MISSION & OBJECTIVES: I have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of: The NRC as a whole
10*	4*	7*	93	MISSION & OBJECTIVES: I have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of: My work unit



## Safety Key Driver Analysis (Category Level)

### Historical & Norm Comparison

Exhibits 29 and 30 represent category level key driver analysis broken down by historical year and norm.

### Exhibit 29

#### Key Drivers of Safety Index - NRC OVERALL

NRC OVERALL 2015 Category Scores vs. Benchmarks

NRC OVERALL 2012	NRC OVERALL 2009	Total Favorable Score	Key Driver Categories
0	-4*	70	Empowerment and Respect »
-2	-6*	68	Senior Management »
3*	3*	94	Mission & Objectives »

### Exhibit 30

#### Key Drivers of Safety Index - NRC OVERALL

NRC OVERALL 2015 Category Scores vs. Benchmarks

U.S. Research & Dev. Norm	U.S. HP Norm	U.S. National Norm	Total Favorable Score	Key Driver Categories
0	-4*	1	70	Empowerment and Respect »
4*	-5*	1	68	Senior Management »
10*	7*	10*	94	Mission & Objectives »

## Safety Key Driver Analysis (Item Level)

### Historical & Norm Comparison

Exhibits 31 and 32 represent item level key driver analysis broken down by historical year and norm.

### Exhibit 31

#### Key Driver Items of Safety Index - NRC OVERALL

NRC OVERALL 2015 Item Scores vs. Benchmarks

NRC OVERALL 2012	NRC OVERALL 2009	Total Favorable Score	Item Text
-5*	-8*	72	SENIOR MANAGEMENT: NRC senior management provides a clear sense of direction.
0	-9*	74	EMPOWERMENT AND RESPECT: Management recognizes and respects the value of human differences.
4*	6*	94	MISSION & OBJECTIVES: I have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of: The NRC as a whole
3*	2*	93	MISSION & OBJECTIVES: I have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of: My work unit
1	1	63	EMPOWERMENT AND RESPECT: The NRC has established a climate where: Employees can feel free to debate or challenge mission-related decisions
-1	-4*	79	SENIOR MANAGEMENT: Regarding the NRC's mission, I believe: Management decisions are consistent with the mission

Safety Index >

### Exhibit 32

#### Key Driver Items of Safety Index - NRC OVERALL

NRC OVERALL 2015 Item Scores vs. Benchmarks

U.S. Research & Dev. Norm	U.S. HP Norm	U.S. National Norm	Total Favorable Score	Item Text
11*	1	4*	72	SENIOR MANAGEMENT: NRC senior management provides a clear sense of direction.
-8*	-12*	-8*	74	EMPOWERMENT AND RESPECT: Management recognizes and respects the value of human differences.
12*	6*	11*	94	MISSION & OBJECTIVES: I have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of: The NRC as a whole
10*	4*	7*	93	MISSION & OBJECTIVES: I have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of: My work unit
n/a	n/a	n/a	63	EMPOWERMENT AND RESPECT: The NRC has established a climate where: Employees can feel free to debate or challenge mission-related decisions
7*	1	5*	79	SENIOR MANAGEMENT: Regarding the NRC's mission, I believe: Management decisions are consistent with the mission

Safety Index >

## Total Variance Explained

### Engagement

The total variance explained for this model is 75 percent, which is considered highly predictive of the dependent variable engagement. This indicates that 75 percent of all of the variation in responses to engagement can be accounted for by the responses to these three categories. The .47, .29, and .23 for the key driver categories are regression coefficients, which indicate the relative strength of each category in driving engagement. The categories displayed in Exhibit 33 have been listed in order of how strongly they predict engagement of NRC employees.

In interpreting this model, we can assume that individuals responding favorable to the Engagement Index items also responded favorable to the items determined to most influence engagement. Conversely, individuals responding unfavorable to Engagement Index items also tend to respond unfavorable to the items determined to most influence employee engagement. It is apparent that employee engagement at NRC is highly affected by attitudes toward Empowerment and Respect, NRC Mission & Objectives, and Training.

### Exhibit 33



## Total Variance Explained

### Safety

The total variance explained for this model is 76 percent, which is considered highly predictive of the dependent variable safety. This indicates that 76 percent of all of the variation in responses to safety can be accounted for by the responses to these three categories. The .42, .31, and .24 for the key driver categories are regression coefficients, which indicate the relative strength of each category in driving safety. The categories displayed in Exhibit 34 have been listed in order of how strongly they predict engagement of NRC employees.

In interpreting this model, we can assume that individuals responding favorable to the safety Index items also responded favorable to the items determined to most influence safety. Conversely, individuals responding unfavorable to Safety Index items also tend to respond unfavorable to the items determined to most influence safety. It is apparent that safety at NRC is highly affected by attitudes toward Empowerment and Respect, Senior Management, and NRC Mission & Objectives.

### Exhibit 34



## Areas at Risk

The key drivers of engagement and safety are critical in maintaining a workforce that is engaged, committed to their work and safety culture, has the appropriate resources, and experiences appropriate amounts of job-related stress. Therefore, the largest potential concerns to NRC's culture would be items that are key drivers of engagement and safety, and statistically significantly below benchmark. These include:

### Engagement Key Drivers

- **Empowerment and Respect:** I have sufficient authority to do my job well (two points below NRC 2009).
- **Empowerment and Respect:** Employees are treated with respect at the NRC, regardless of their job (six points below NRC 2009).
- **Training:** I believe I have the opportunity for personal development and growth in this organization (nine points below NRC 2009 and three points below U.S. High Performing Norm).

Although Empowerment and Respect items are only significantly lower than the NRC 2009 historical benchmark, both items should be identified as areas of potential risk. NRC should ensure employees are given sufficient authority to perform their jobs well, and that all employees are treated with respect. Similarly, although the Training item was above numerous benchmarks, the items score has dropped significantly since 2009, and is three points below the U.S. High Performing Norm. NRC should ensure employees have the opportunity for personal development and growth.

### Safety Key Drivers

- **Empowerment and Respect:** Management recognizes and respects the value of human differences (nine points below NRC 2009, eight points below U.S. R&D Norm, 12 points below U.S. High Performing Norm, & eight points below U.S. National Norm).
- **Senior Management:** NRC senior management provides a clear sense of direction (five points below NRC 2012 & eight points below NRC 2009).
- **Senior Management:** Regarding the NRC's mission, I believe: Management decisions are consistent with the mission (four points below NRC 2009).

A high risk area pertaining to Empowerment and Respect is how management recognizes and respects the value of human differences (i.e., gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation). This item was significantly below all but one benchmark (NRC 2012). Further, NRC needs to make sure senior management is providing a clear sense of direction and that decisions are consistent with NRC mission.

The items below are all survey questions that are significantly below benchmarks. These could all be potential areas of concern for NRC. We have grouped the items into the following categories: Human Capital Management, Quality Focus, and Internal Processes by face validity.<sup>1</sup>

**Human Capital Management:** NRC may need to focus more on recruiting, retaining, and developing its human capital. Further, management may need to focus on holding all employees to the same standards, and being more transparent in their efforts in building the organization and integrating survey findings.

- **Human Capital:** The management style at the NRC encourages employees to give their best. 70 percent favorable (seven points below the U.S. High Performing Norm, five points below NRC 2009, and three points below NRC 2012).
- **Human Capital:** I think the NRC is doing a good job of: Recruiting the right people for its future needs. 62 percent favorable (seven points below the U.S. High Performing Norm and six points below NRC 2009).
- **Human Capital:** I think the NRC is doing a good job of: developing its people to their full potential. 60 percent favorable (three points below the U.S. High Performing Norm and nine points below NRC 2009).
- **Human Capital:** I think the NRC is doing a good job of: Retaining its most talented people. 54 percent favorable (four points below the U.S. High Performing Norm, ten points below NRC 2009 and four points below NRC 2012).
- **Engagement:** At the present time, are you seriously considering leaving the NRC? 67 percent favorable (four points below the U.S. High Performing Norm, nine points below NRC 2009, and four points below NRC 2012).
- **Engagement:** The NRC energizes me to go the extra mile. 68 percent favorable (eight points below the U.S. High Performing Norm, four points below the U.S. National Norm, and four points below NRC 2009).
- **Senior Management:** I feel significant actions have been taken as a result of the previous Safety Culture and Climate Survey. 37 percent favorable (15 points below the U.S. High Performing Norm, nine points below the U.S. Research and Development Norm, ten points below the U.S. National Norm and five points below NRC 2012).
- **Empowerment and Respect:** In my experience, all NRC employees are held to the same standards of ethical behavior. 62 percent favorable (seven points below the U.S. National Norm, 15 points below the U.S. High Performing Norm, 12 points below the U.S. Research and development Norm and 11 points below NRC 2009).

**Quality Focus:** It is imperative that employees are given the time and resources to produce high quality work. NRC may need to realign its metrics to allow employees to focus on producing quality work.

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<sup>1</sup> Face Validity: is the extent to which a test is subjectively viewed as covering the concept it purports to measure. It refers to the transparency or relevance of a test as it appears to test participants.

- **Quality Focus:** We too often sacrifice the quality of our work in order to: Meet established Metrics [established schedule of performance]. 43 percent favorable (three points below the U.S. National Norm, three points below NRC 2009 and four points below NRC 2012).
- **Quality Focus:** We too often sacrifice the quality of our work in order to: Satisfy a personal or political need. 46 percent favorable (eight points below NRC 2009 and six points below NRC 2012).

**Internal Processes:** Reinforcing a key point from focus groups, employees at NRC are hesitant to elevate concerns or raise differing views. Internal processes and programs may need to change based on the following item results.

- **Differing Views Processes:** From what I know or have heard, the Differing Professional Opinions [DPO] Program is effective. 47 percent favorable (six points below NRC 2009 and four points below NRC 2012).
- **Differing Views Processes:** Regarding the Differing Professional Opinions [DPO] Program: it functions properly. 37 percent favorable (four points below NRC 2009 and six points below NRC 2012).
- **Differing Views Processes:** Regarding the Differing Professional Opinions [DPO] Program: it has no negative effect on career development at the NRC. 31 percent favorable (six points below NRC 2009 and five points below NRC 2012).
- **Differing Views Processes:** Regarding the Differing Professional Opinions [DPO] Program: Senior management supports it. 49 percent favorable (13 points below NRC 2009 and ten points below NRC 2012).
- **Differing Views Processes:** I think I would be willing to use the Differing Professional Opinions [DPO] Program in appropriate circumstances. 62 percent favorable (eight points below NRC 2009 and seven points below NRC 2012).
- **Workload and Support/Working Relationships:** In my experience, there is good cooperation between: Headquarters and my [the] region[s]. 64 percent favorable (11 points below the U.S. National Norm and seven points below NRC 2012).
- **Elevating Concerns:** My Office/Region management actively seeks to detect and prevent retaliation for raising concerns. 49 percent favorable (seven points below NRC 2012).

Participants were also asked to identify areas they feel worried about impacting the future of NRC. The below table exhibits the item and the responses:

<b>NRC Mission &amp; Strategic Plan: I am frequently worried about the following impacting the future of the NRC [please select the top two choices]:</b>		
<b>Area</b>	<b>Selected</b>	<b>Not Selected</b>
Budget	70%	30%
NRC Leadership	28%	72%
Nuclear Events	13%	87%
Talent Management Issues	29%	71%
Rebaselining efforts in relation to Project AIM	50%	50%

A large majority (70 percent) of participants are worried that budget will affect the future of NRC. NRC senior leaders may need to devise a communication strategy to address this concern. Holding a town hall, or having managers hold a question and answer session would allow employees to address these types of concerns. Further, half of the survey participants (50 percent) are worried that rebaselining efforts in relation to Project AIM are going to affect the future of NRC. These findings suggest that NRC senior leaders may need to build transparency around the purpose of Project AIM, its current state, and the specific outcomes NRC hopes to achieve through the initiative.

## Conclusion

Successfully cultivating an engaged workforce and managing a culture and climate based on safety requires a great deal of time, resources and effective leadership. Addressing this challenge, Willis Towers Watson conducted the 2015 NRC Safety Culture and Climate Survey to gather employee insight regarding current NRC safety cultures and climate. The survey addressed the most important elements of NRC culture, and thus provided NRC leadership with a clear picture of employee opinions and perceptions regarding Safety, Engagement and other organizational topics.

Overall results found that NRC participants have significantly more favorable category scores compared to the U.S. National and the U.S. R&D Norms. This suggests that in general, NRC participants have more positive attitudes and perceptions regarding their organization, and are more engaged compared to employees in the R&D and U.S. National workforce. The 2015 NRC survey findings were less favorable compared to the 2009 results, and were split fairly evenly between improvements and declines compared to 2012. Since 2009, nuclear events worldwide caused NRC to undergo major changes in senior leadership and office reorganizations, which may have influence survey results from 2009 to 2015.

Survey results measuring Employee Engagement and Safety uncover imperative insight. In general, Engagement scores dropped from 2009 to 2012, and increased from 2012 to 2015. Key driver analysis reveals that Employee Engagement at NRC is highly affected by attitudes toward Empowerment and Respect, NRC Mission & Objectives, and Training. A newly introduced Safety index allowed insight into the types of attitudes that influence Safety Culture at NRC. Similarly, results from a key driver analysis reveal that safety at NRC is highly affected by attitudes toward Empowerment and Respect, Senior Management, and NRC Mission & Objectives. Employee Engagement and Safety at NRC are both highly affected by attitudes toward Empowerment and Respect, and NRC Mission & Objectives.

Dipping deeper into the results, overall strengths and opportunities were identified and should be taken into consideration during action planning. NRC's three greatest strengths are Mission & Objectives, Training, and Supervision. More specifically, NRC participants understand the mission, goals, and objectives of their work unit and feel that NRC prepared them for the work they do. In addition, participants feel they have the information they need to do their job and have development and growth opportunities. Further, NRC participants feel that supervisors are helping prioritize tasks, are receptive to change, explain resolutions of differing views, and communicate effectively.

NRC's three greatest areas of opportunity include Differing Views Processes, Empowerment and Respect, and Senior Management. Looking closer, employees are concerned about using the Non-Concurrence Process and the Differing Professional Opinions Program due to potential negative consequences and have perceptions that management is not recognizing and respecting human differences and is not holding employees to the same standards of ethical behavior. Moreover, participants do not have confidence in senior management and feel they do not provide a clear sense of direction. Lastly, participants feel that significant action has not been taken based on the last survey.

A number of techniques can be implemented to address these areas of opportunity. NRC may want to hold focus group meetings or team discussions and encourage participants to identify ways the

Differing Professional Opinions Program and the Non-Concurrence Process can be more effective. Using participant input to develop detailed action steps to address barriers mentioned is another effective way to give employees a voice and let them know time and energy is being invested into their input.

Regarding respecting human differences and holding employees to the same standard, managers have a role to play in fostering an inclusive culture within their organization. At the most basic level, this involves ensuring that they relate to others in an accepting and respectful manner regardless of their organizational level, personality, or background. Managers may need to modify their behavior if necessary and then hold others on their team to the same standard. As a manager, exhibiting concern and addressing claims of harassment and unfair treatment is imperative to cultivating a trusting relationship with subordinates. Managers should make sure to include themselves in discussion regarding any claim a subordinate has, and include a human resources professional in the discussion.

There are a number of things senior leaders can do to provide a clearer sense of direction and gain employees trust and confidence in their decision-making. Role-modeling certain types of behavior is one way to build trust and give employees confidence that leaders' actions are authentic. Always telling the truth and openly sharing the facts will help build valuable transparency. Seeking other's interpretations of facts and data, and not always relying on personal analysis or point of view will also show employees that leaders care about their input. Further, ensuring words and actions are consistent, making sure not to favor any team members over others, and showing genuine interest in others' well-being and concerns will demonstrate authenticity.

In conclusion, NRC must continuously monitor the perception and opinions of employees to ensure that strengths and opportunities are identified. Doing so will also help measure a culture and climate of Safety given the importance this aspect continues to have at NRC, now more than ever. The extent to which NRC's leadership can effectively manage and implement action plans and drive change utilizing the results will have a significant impact on the future perception of, and adherence to, the Safety Culture and Safety Climate at NRC, and overall Employee Engagement levels. In the context of an employee survey program, leadership teams need to demonstrate commitment to the process on an ongoing basis. There should be regular updates on the actions being taken to address priority issues identified in the survey.

The following pages outline in more detail specific strengths to maintain, overall areas for improvement, benchmark comparisons, and group differences.

### ***Overall Strengths to Maintain***

Despite concerns raised by some in the focus groups, the survey highlights strength in employees' understanding of NRC's mission, goals and objectives and having proper training and development opportunities. Further, employees feel that supervisors are prioritizing tasks well, are receptive to change, and communicate effectively.

- **Mission & Objectives:** Employees understand the mission, goals and objectives of their work unit and NRC overall.
- **Training:** Employees feel NRC has prepared them for the work they do, they have the information they need to do their job, they have the opportunity for development and growth, and they have training to improve in their current job.
- **Supervision:** Supervisors are helping prioritize tasks, are receptive to change, explain resolutions of differing views, and communicate effectively.

### ***Overall Opportunities for Improvement***

The biggest opportunities reinforce many of the concerns raised in focus groups, especially relative to differing views, empowerment and respect, and senior management.

- **Differing Views Processes:** Employees are concerned about using the Non-Concurrence Process and the Differing Professional Opinions program due to potential negative consequences.
  - The survey reinforces a key point raised in focus groups relevant to the Differing Views Process. Focus group participants felt that the Non-Concurrence Process was put in place to document disagreement but has no influence in actual decisions. Numerous employees shared a similar view in that if you disagree with your manager it can, and most likely will negatively affect your career path and your relationship. Focus group participants also felt there is no real way to provide anonymous feedback and employees will only use the non-concurrence process as a last resort.
- **Empowerment and Respect:** Employees have a perception that management is not recognizing and respecting human differences and is not holding employees to the same standards of ethical behavior.
  - Prior to the survey, focus group participants expressed concern regarding NRC's internal ethical standards; specifically, that consequences for the same behavior tend to vary depending on who you know. Some focus group participants felt that decisions at NRC are made in a vacuum, without input from the right source, and managers do not have authority to empower staff. Many participants think by elevating concerns they put their careers on the line and the desire to succeed supplants the need to do the right thing.

- **Senior Management:** Significant declines in senior management providing a clear sense of direction, confidence in senior management's decisions, and feeling significant action has been taken based on the last survey.
  - Focus group participants felt managers and leaders do not "walk the walk" and many lack people skills. Participants also felt that many leaders focus on the wrong things, are indecisive with decision making, play favorites, and are unapproachable.
- **Quality focus:** Reinforcing a key point raised in the focus groups, there is a clear opportunity to impact the perception that people sacrifice quality in order to meet metrics.
  - Focus group participants felt that throughout NRC there is a great deal of pressure on getting work done on time and meeting metrics rather than producing high-quality work. Further, employees feel there is no efficient way of measuring quality, and that quality of work across offices varies considerably. There is also concern that despite dwindling resources and tighter timelines, management wants things completed quicker, which contributes to poor quality work.

### ***Benchmark Comparisons***

- **2009 NRC survey:** NRC 2015 category scores are statistically less favorable in ten out of 16 categories compared to 2009. Human capital, Senior Management and Differing Views Processes have the lowest scores compared to the 2009 results.
- **2012 NRC survey:** NRC 2015 category scores are statistically less favorable in Differing Views processes and Quality Focus categories, and are statistically more favorable in Mission & Objectives and Supervision categories compared to 2012 results.
- **U.S. National Norm:** NRC is statistically more favorable in nine out of 12 comparable categories. Mission & Objectives and Training have the highest scores above the norm.
- **U.S. Research & Development Norm:** NRC is statistically more favorable in 11 out of 12 comparable categories. Mission & Objectives, Quality Focus, Training and Workload and Support/Working relationships have the highest scores above the norm.
- **U.S. High Performing Companies Norm:** NRC is statistically more favorable in four out of ten comparable categories and is statistically less favorable in five out of ten comparable categories.

### ***Group Differences***

While the results overall are relatively consistent, there are clear differences across key groups:

- **Job Function:** The Engineering function has the most favorable results compared to NRC overall, while Admin/Support and Security functions have the least favorable results compared to NRC overall.

- **Job Category:** As in most government and private organizations, Senior Management and Middle Management have the most favorable results.
- **Grade Level:** SES/Executive and Senior Level Service/Administrative Law Levels (most senior grade levels) have many category results more favorable than NRC Overall. GG-13 and GG-14 levels (mid-grade levels) have very low category scores compared to NRC overall.
- **Length of NRC/AEC Service:** Employees with less than one year and more than 20 years of service have the most favorable results. Employees with five to 15 years of service have the least favorable results.
- **NRC Offices:** The OCFO (Commission office), ADM (EDO office), and OCIO (EDO office) offices have the least favorable scores compared to NRC overall.

### ***Engagement and Safety***

- Employee engagement and safety at NRC are highly affected by attitudes toward Empowerment and Respect and NRC Mission & Objectives