

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

The NRC staff continues to provide outreach and education on the importance of a positive safety culture through presentations at various conferences, participation in workshops, and discussions with stakeholders during inspections and public meetings. In addition, the NRC has developed various educational tools to aid in understanding the Safety Culture Policy Statement and the importance of a positive safety culture. These tools include case studies highlighting

how the safety culture traits apply to real events and documenting the journey that organizations have taken to improve their safety culture.

The NRC also has a publication called “An Educational Resource about the NRC’s Safety Culture Policy Statement,” which was developed as a training tool for licensees, vendors, and Agreement States. This resource includes the nine Trait Talks, the Metro Case Study and the Metro Journey (all previously published individually on the Safety Culture Web page), along with study questions and the *Federal Register* notice concerning Safety Culture Policy Statement. This resource provides the licensees with a comprehensive understanding of the policy statement and how they can put its principles into action in their daily activities. This resource and other educational tools are available for download from the NRC’s Safety Culture Web page (<http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/safety-culture.html>).



Interactions between NRC staff and stakeholders about safety culture are an important part of the success of the policy statement. These interactions increase awareness of the importance of safety culture and help individuals and organizations develop an understanding of how they can foster and maintain a positive safety culture in their work environments.

NRC MISSION

The NRC licenses and regulates the Nation's civilian use of radioactive materials to provide reasonable assurance of adequate protection of public health and safety and to promote the common defense and security and to protect the environment.

This brochure was adapted from the NRC's Final Safety Culture Policy Statement, published in the *Federal Register* on June 14, 2011 (76 FR 34773).

FOR MORE INFORMATION, GO TO:

<http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/safety-culture.html>

FOR FEEDBACK AND QUESTIONS, SEND E-MAIL TO:

external_safety_culture.resource@nrc.gov



NUREG/BR-0500, Rev. 4
May 2018



SAFETY CULTURE

Policy Statement



SAFETY CULTURE POLICY STATEMENT

The Safety Culture Policy Statement sets forth the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) expectation that individuals and organizations performing regulated activities establish and maintain a positive safety culture commensurate with the safety and security significance of their activities and the nature and complexity of their organizations and functions.



This policy statement applies to all licensees, certificate holders, permit holders, authorization holders, holders of quality assurance program approvals, vendors and suppliers of safety-related components, and applicants for a license, certificate, permit, authorization, or quality assurance program approval subject to NRC authority. In addition, the Commission encourages the Agreement States (States that assume regulatory authority over their own use of certain nuclear materials), their licensees, and other organizations interested in nuclear safety to support the development and maintenance of a positive safety culture within their regulated communities.

CONSIDERATION OF SAFETY AND SECURITY

Because safety and security are the primary pillars of the NRC's regulatory mission, consideration of both is an



underlying principle of the Safety Culture Policy Statement. Organizations should ensure that personnel in the safety and security sectors appreciate the importance of each, emphasizing the

need for integration and balance to achieve both safety and security in their activities.



DEFINITION OF NUCLEAR SAFETY CULTURE

Nuclear safety culture is the core values and behaviors resulting from a collective commitment by leaders and individuals to emphasize safety over competing goals to ensure protection of people and the environment.

TRAITS OF A POSITIVE NUCLEAR SAFETY CULTURE

Experience has shown that certain personal and organizational traits are present in a positive safety culture: The following are traits of a positive safety culture:

Leadership Safety Values and Actions

Leaders demonstrate a commitment to safety in their decisions and behaviors.

Problem Identification and Resolution

Issues potentially impacting safety are promptly identified, fully evaluated, and promptly addressed and corrected commensurate with their significance.

Personal Accountability

All individuals take personal responsibility for safety.

Work Processes

The process of planning and controlling work activities is implemented so that safety is maintained.

Continuous Learning

Opportunities to learn about ways to ensure safety are sought out and implemented.

Environment for Raising Concerns

A safety conscious work environment is maintained where personnel feel free to raise safety concerns without fear of retaliation, intimidation, harassment, or discrimination.

Effective Safety Communication

Communications maintain a focus on safety.

Respectful Work Environment

Trust and respect permeate the organization.

Questioning Attitude

Individuals avoid complacency and continuously challenge existing conditions and activities in order to identify discrepancies that might result in error or inappropriate action.

Additional traits not included here may also be important in a positive safety culture. For example, decision-making is included as a trait in the safety culture common language for the nuclear power industry (NUREG-2165, "Safety Culture Common Language," issued March 2014).

BACKGROUND

The 1986 nuclear accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in Ukraine revealed the impact that weaknesses in safety culture can have on safety. Since then, a number of significant events in the United States and internationally have further demonstrated the influence of safety culture. Assessments of these events revealed that safety culture weaknesses were an underlying cause or increased the severity of problems.



The NRC addressed aspects of safety culture in two previously issued policy statements. The "Policy Statement on the Conduct of Nuclear Power Plant Operations" (published in 1989) states the NRC's expectations that licensed operators and managers of nuclear power plants conduct themselves professionally to ensure safety. In 1996, the NRC published "Freedom of Employees in the Nuclear Industry To Raise Safety Concerns without Fear of



Retaliation," a policy statement that applies to the regulated activities of all NRC licensees and their contractors. It provides the expectation that licensees and employers subject to NRC authority establish

and maintain work environments where employees feel free to raise safety concerns without fear of retaliation (referred to as a "safety conscious work environment").

IMPORTANCE FOR REGULATED ENTITIES

Industry experience has shown the value of establishing and maintaining a positive safety culture. It is important to remember that individuals and organizations performing regulated activities bear the primary responsibility for safety and security. The Safety Culture Policy Statement is not a regulation; therefore, it is the regulated entities' responsibility to consider how to apply this policy statement to its regulated activities.