

2021 Agency Objectives and Key Results

INTRODUCTION

The 2021 agency Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) were developed by the Executive Director for Operations (EDO), with the support of the Transformation Steering Committee. The intent of the OKRs is to drive actions that will contribute to the accomplishment of aspirational goals during this year. The formulation of new OKRs is in accordance with the agency's annual OKR cadence and reflects both progresses made over the prior year and strategic focus areas for the upcoming year. As they did in 2020, EDO staff offices and regions will develop their own OKRs in alignment with those at the agency level.¹

The transformation is a multi-year journey. In 2020 the primary efforts were oriented to develop and build familiarity with transformation-enabling tools and resources that the staff to perform its work in different and better ways. The agency's 2020 OKRs reflected this goal. Among those that were developed and launched in 2020 as part of Transformation Initiatives are:

- Be tiskSMART Decision-Making Framework
- IdeaScale Innovation Platform
- Signposts and Markers Dashboard
- Career Enhancement Platform
- Employee Journey Platform

Significant progress was also made in motivating the adoption of collaborative work tools, such as through Office 365 while over 90% of employees were working remotely during the Coronavirus 2019 public health emergency. The only Transformation Initiative still underway is the Agency Desired Culture Initiative, which involves a longer-term effort on the NRC's Culture Improvement Plan.²

The widespread adoption and application of the tools and resources developed in 2020 is necessary to provide long-term and sustainable value to the agency. This is the new focus of the agency's transformation-related activities 2021. The largest number of key results (KRs) relate to measures of how frequently staff are using the tools and resources, and of staff's perceptions of whether these are improving our work execution. As such, they are intended to drive actions that will motivate staff to try them and to provide feedback to those responsible for their development. The types of tools and resources vary across the four focus areas, and therefore to clarify the actions that are expected, there is a separate objective statement and supporting KRs for each.

In 2021, we will consider external stakeholder feedback as a measure of transformation impact. The transformation is intended in part to improve the agency's engagement with members of the public, applicants, licensees, other government agencies, and Congress. External engagement has been a priority since the beginning of transformation effort, and as the new tools and resources are applied with greater frequency, their impact will become apparent to these parties. Stakeholder insights will be considered in the ongoing transformation-related activities.

¹ Chairman- and Commission-reporting offices were also encouraged to submit OKRs.

² Further information on the Culture Improvement Plan is available internally at: <https://usnrc.sharepoint.com/teams/AgencyDesiredCulture/SitePages/Agency-Culture-Improvement-Strategy.aspx>.

AGENCY 2021 OKRs

Be riskSMART Focus Area

In 2020, Be riskSMART was developed as a common framework for understanding and communicating risk that would apply to the NRC's technical, corporate support, and legal work. Be riskSMART does not replace or supersede any of the NRC's existing policies or practices for the consideration of risk, but rather is intended to facilitate their application to a greater scope of decision-making processes. To this end, it is necessary to increase staff's awareness of the framework, integrate Be riskSMART into routine work processes, and build additional momentum for the use of Be riskSMART by sharing success stories. These goals are reflected in the OKRs, with the addition of a measure to ascertain the perception of external stakeholders of the staff's progress on risk-informed decision-making.

Objective: Increase the use of the Be riskSMART framework across all sectors of the agency to improve the timeliness and quality of decision-making.

KR1: At least 85% of staff complete the Be riskSMART training module and successfully pass a knowledge check before the end of calendar year 2021.

KR2: The Be riskSMART framework is used in at least 50% of what are determined by office management to represent key decisions related to the execution of that office's mission in 2021.

KR3: In 2021, each office submits to the IdeaScale Success Gallery four examples in which use of the Be riskSMART framework improved the timeliness and quality of decision-making.

KR4: At least 75% of external stakeholders (e.g., public interest groups, industry representatives, other government agencies,) surveyed by NRC during 2021 agree that the use of risk information has improved the timeliness and quality of the agency's decision-making over the past year.

Innovation Focus Area

In 2020, staff launched IdeaScale as a best-in-class platform to manage the NRC's Innovation Program, referred to as Innovate NRC 2.0. IdeaScale has the capabilities to document, share, and collaborate on innovative ideas, as well as to organize campaigns where staff ideas are solicited to solve specific challenges. IdeaScale replaces what were formerly office-level innovation workspaces. During the IdeaScale launch event on June 28, 2020, the staff shared hundreds of innovation stories on the IdeaScale Success Gallery, and several Challenge Campaigns have already been completed. The focus for 2021 is to motivate even greater use of IdeaScale, while also beginning to measure the degree to which innovation is leading to process improvements.

Objective: Leverage staff creativity to innovate the ways that the agency performs its work, while using the Innovate NRC 2.0 IdeaScale platform to collect, manage and document ideas.

KR1: Of the ideas posted in the IdeaScale Success Gallery in 2021, at least one-third are categorized as process improvements.

KR2: At least 25% of agency staff engage in a Challenge Campaign in 2021.

KR3: In response to a survey, at least 75% of agency staff indicate that the adoption of innovative ideas is improving their job satisfaction.

KR4: At least 75% of external stakeholders (e.g., industry representatives, other government agencies, public interest groups) surveyed by NRC during 2021 agree that within the past year, the agency has adopted new processes, tools, or products that are improving the agency's mission execution.

Focus on our People Focus Area

In 2020, work within the Focus on our People Focus Area proceeded in two directions. The first concerned agency culture. The agency contracted Human Synergistics to administer a series of surveys to assess the NRC's current culture and the culture to which it aspires, and then identified the gaps between the two. From this information, and also considering the results of the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey and the Safety Culture and Climate Survey, the team devised an agencywide Culture Improvement Plan focusing on five behavior and five process changes. These changes address the NRC's approaches to decision-making, acceptance of change, accountability, communication, goal-setting, and employee recognition, among other elements. At the end of 2020, the team requested that each office put in place its own culture improvement plan for 2021 as a complement to that of the agency, with the intent to drive office-level actions. Human Synergistics will administer a limited-scope re-survey to staff in mid-2021, the results of which will be used to further refine the agency and office plans.

The second direction for the Focus on our People Focus Area related to employee training and development. In 2020, the Career Enhancement Initiative team released a tool to organize and synthesize information on the resources available to the staff, and a Career Journey initiative is currently underway to address specific skill-building strategies for positions that are anticipated to be in high demand in the coming years. The number of employees using the Career Enhancement and Career Journey resources, as well as feedback on their quality, will be tracked in 2021 to determine if these are having the desired reach and meeting staff expectations.

Objective: Execute culture improvement and strategic workforce plans to ensure that staff have the engagement, motivation, and skills to successfully execute our mission now and in the future.

KR1: In 2021, each office takes steps to address the actions in their culture improvement plan.

KR2: The agency shows improvement in employee engagement as measured by the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey administered in 2021 compared to 2020.

KR3: At least 25% of agency staff visit the Career Enhancement and Employee Journey portals and completes a survey about the usefulness of the tools during calendar year 2021.

KR4: At least 75% of the staff responses to the Career Enhancement and Employee Journey surveys indicate that the use of these tools has positively influenced their career path.

Use Technology Focus Area

The 2020 focus of transformation-related technology work was advocacy for the broader adoption of new information technology tools and resources deployed by the Office of the Chief Information Officer by the full NRC workforce through communication, and training, and by providing peer support. These efforts will continue into 2021, but it is expected that by the end of the year offices will have implemented technology solutions that effect meaningful changes to work processes and approaches to decision-making. These solutions will involve the analysis of data to discern patterns, trends, and business insights; the development of dashboards and other means of data visualization; and the use of automation to streamline workflows.

Objective: Employ greater application of technology, data, and data analytics across the agency to strengthen our decision-making process and inform regulatory activities.

KR1: Each office will share in the IdeaScale Success Gallery two cases in which they used data analytics to improve decision-making in 2021.

KR2: Each office should identify at least two use cases for applying automation to improve a work process, which can be referred to the Office of the Chief Information Officer for inclusion in its Information Technology Roadmap.

KR3: At least 90% staff surveyed by NRC during 2021 agree that during the past year, the agency's use of technology, data, and data analytics has strengthened our decision-making process and informing regulatory activities.

KR4: At least 75% of external stakeholders (e.g., industry representatives, other government agencies, public interest groups) surveyed by NRC during 2021 agree that during the past year, the agency's use of technology, data, and data analytics has strengthened our decision-making process and informing regulatory activities.