



## Attachment 2-1

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# **Safety Reports Series**

**No. 83**

## **Performing Safety Culture Self-assessments**

- (iii) Violation of confidentiality and anonymity commitments may inhibit staff involvement.
- (iv) The team may assign too many findings for the organization to deal with effectively.
- (c) Dealing with the results of the assessment:
  - (i) The organization may be unable to formulate effective solutions to cultural issues, resulting in ineffective action.
  - (ii) Results may be inappropriately used to assign blame.
  - (iii) The results may be rationalized or responded to defensively, especially if there are surprises.
  - (iv) Management may fail to share the information or accept ownership of the personal implications of the results.
  - (v) There may be a desire to use the results as a report card for comparison with others rather than comprehending that the results are self-referential by nature - asking 'How are we relative to someone else?' as opposed to 'Are we who we want to be?'; the focus needs to be on the organization itself, as each organization is a unique culture which cannot be compared directly to another culture.
  - (vi) Management may rely on traditional approaches when translating outcomes into actions (i.e. more training, more expectations, and procedure enhancements) rather than encouraging ownership, leadership development and demonstrating commitment to understanding and improving.

Despite these issues, SCSAs provide broader, more useful information than limited approaches focused on human performance and behaviour. They help management to understand organizational tendencies that give rise both to organizational strengths and latent weaknesses. Depending on how effective the level of engagement throughout the assessment is, the assessment can expose potential risks and heighten both awareness and vigilance.

## **4. SAFETY CULTURE SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

### **4.1. ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS**

In undertaking an SCSA, there are several considerations related to the organization's level of readiness for performing an assessment. Importantly, the absence of these factors does not preclude doing a self-assessment, as the

report. Management needs to obtain a clear understanding of tendencies within themselves and the organization at large that might cause unsafe behaviour or decisions.

The approach should be focused on maximizing the learning value to the organization. The following points are to be considered when summarizing and communicating the results:

- Consider graphical representations, taking care to avoid misleading pictures;
- Use a variety of communication vehicles to communicate to management and personnel;
- Include context to avoid misinterpretation
- Request feedback as a reality check and confirm the messages have been understood as intended.

### 7.3. TRANSITION TO ACTION

Successful implementation of any programme requires an assessment of potential barriers. With respect to safety culture enhancement initiatives, potential barriers include:

- A lack of vision, understanding and an integrated plan focused on the desired state;
- Reward systems based on cost and production rather than a culture for safety;
- Complacency and natural defensiveness that 'we are safe enough and do not need more safety culture effort';
- Failure to take both a systemic and systematic view;
- 'One size fits all' approaches that import concepts such as error reduction methods without considering the culture in which they are to be applied;
- Mechanistic approaches that favour 'perfect systems' and rely on technical fixes, without due consideration of the human system.

Senior management is advised to use the results of the self-assessment to determine what can be done to reframe the understanding or reshape tendencies that do not support a strong safety culture. Improvements require a long term strategy and plan in addition to ongoing promotion of continuous improvements. The approach taken in this Safety Report is that the self-assessment and the resulting report are separate from the action plan. Management may wish to give some indication of its approach to developing the plan and some key

considerations that might be included. However, the plan is not to be finalized without significant engagement with the groups affected. Their involvement results in a higher degree of commitment to successful implementation compared with top-down direction.

Some considerations in the continuous improvement of safety culture include:

- Taking a systematic approach to developing a safety culture programme;
- Utilizing safety culture experts knowledgeable in behavioural science, organizational psychology, and sociology, supplemented by training in nuclear technology;
- Using multidisciplinary, cross-functional teams to assist in understanding cultural aspects;
- Providing safety culture training to management;
- Providing workshops on safety culture for all levels and functions (managers, employees, contractors and corporate organizations) to ensure understanding of the fundamentals and not simply the use of human performance and error reduction methods;
- Positioning human performance techniques and error reduction in terms of organizational culture at all levels, rather than focusing on field workers and front line supervisors;
- Integrating a systemic approach to safety through for example placing organizational emphasis on doing the right things in the right context (e.g. building pre-job briefs into outage plans);
- Developing reward systems that support safety and long term thinking;
- Taking a 'plan to learn' approach that aggressively seeks to 'learn what we do not know';
- Involving corporate organizations in safety culture enhancement to ensure transparency in terms of what is needed in time and resources, and communicating an understanding that safety culture enhancement contributes to long term production results;
- Identifying management champions and advocates;
- Embracing transparency on safety matters throughout the organization.

Safety culture programmes involve integrated, generic and specific activities. Generic activities involve the entire organization including corporate personnel and long term contractors in a systematic manner. Specific activities include job related training needs, responding to issues triggered by events, identification of safety deviations and acting on assessment results. Integrated

activities take place when cultural improvement inventions are integrated into the ongoing, daily activities. Intervention may involve the entire organization or specific groups, depending on the nature of the issue.