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News Release

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE REPRESENTATIVES VISIT HANFORD TO BENCHMARK SAFETY

RICHLAND, Wash. –Dec. 20, 2005 – Representatives of the Department of Defense’s (DoD’s) Voluntary Protection Program Center of Excellence (VPP CX)—working to reduce injuries at selected (DoD) sites nationwide—visited the Department of Energy’s (DOE’s) Hanford Site in Southeast Washington State recently to learn about its exemplary safety programs.

The Mission of the DoD VPP CX is to assist DoD Installation Commanders and Activity Directors in achieving Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP) Star status. Participation and recognition in the OSHA program requires rigorous safety reviews and typically results in a 50–60% reduction in workplace accidents. The DoD’s goal is to reduce mishaps 75% by 2008.

Representatives of the VPP CX want to share with DoD sites how Hanford ensures worker safety while conducting work on one of the nation’s largest cleanup projects with a wide array of radiological, chemical, and industrial hazards. Hanford’s site has a number of best practices that can be shared with DoD sites hoping to achieve VPP recognition.

“We recognize and appreciate the challenges that the DOE and its contractors face with worker safety and health,” said Jim Patton, the government’s lead agent for the DoD VPPCX. “The DOE has made tremendous accomplishments in improving safety culture and safety performance at its facilities, as evidenced by its recognition in the VPP. The DoD is committed to improving the safety of our workplaces and reducing occupational injuries and illnesses. We are confident the accomplishments and lessons learned from the DOE will facilitate these improvements and enhance the operational readiness of

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our warfighters and civilian employees.”

“There’s a reason the number of injuries at Fluor Hanford has gone down 87% since we came to the site in 1996,” said Tony Umek, meeting participant and Fluor Hanford vice president of Safety & Health. “The key has been involving the employees in all aspects of work and safety, as well as participating in the Voluntary Protection Program. Seven Fluor projects have achieved Star Status at Hanford. Other companies doing business here have also earned recognition in the program, and our experiences can be beneficial to the DoD. Mentoring others is one of the key responsibilities in the VPP and one that we take seriously.”

“Recognition in the Voluntary Protection Program put processes in place to resolve issues and concerns,” said Jack Griffith, union safety representative with the Hanford Atomic Metal Trades Council and member of the regional VPP Participants’ Association Board of Directors. “Striving for VPP recognition is an excellent way to begin a continuous improvement program.”

Representatives of VPP CX met with DOE officials, representatives from Hanford-area businesses, and labor officials at the Volpentest HAMMER Training & Education Center (HAMMER) in Richland, Wash. Fluor Hanford operates HAMMER for the DOE. The full list of participating organizations includes the following: Central Washington Building Trades Council; CH2M HILL Hanford Group; Department of Energy (DOE) Richland Operations Office; DOE Office of River Protection; DOE Pacific Northwest Site Office; Fluor Hanford; HAMMER; Hanford Atomic Metal Trades Council; Intermech; Pacific Northwest National Laboratory; Parsons Constructors, Inc.; and Washington Closure Hanford.

A prime contractor to the Department of Energy since 1996, Fluor Hanford has approximately 3,500 employees and manages several major activities at the Hanford Site, including dismantling former nuclear processing facilities, cleaning up the site’s contaminated groundwater, retrieving and processing transuranic waste for off-site shipment, maintaining the site’s infrastructure, and operating the Volpentest HAMMER Training & Education Center.

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The VPP CX is operated by Concurrent Technologies Corporation (CTC) for the DoD. CTC is an independent, nonprofit, applied research and development professional services organization providing management and technology-based solutions to a wide array of clients representing state and federal government as well as the private sector. Established in 1988, CTC operates from more than 35 locations with a staff of 1,400 employees. For more information about CTC, visit www.ctc.com.

For more information about the Department of Energy's Hanford Site, visit www.hanford.gov.

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