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Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

February 22, 1999

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DNF SAFETY BOARD

The Honorable John T. Conway
Chairman
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana Avenue N.W., Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In the Revised Implementation Plan (IP) for Board Recommendation 93-3, *Improving DOE Technical Capability in Defense Nuclear Facilities Programs*, the Department commits to examine and revise Technical Leadership Development Program (TLDP) guidance to include methods that can be used by Department line organizations to address current issues (e.g., retention of interns) that have adversely affected the program.

As a deliverable pursuant to Commitment 5.3.3 of the IP, the enclosed document, the *Technical Leadership Development Program Guidance Framework*, was developed and approved by the Federal Technical Capability Panel. This document is being used by a working group formed by the Panel that will prepare specific procedures and program descriptions to institutionalize the revised TLDP. The guidance document has been forwarded to the Acting Deputy Secretary (memo attached) to obtain Departmental support where needed for changes to the TLDP.

Completion of the guidance framework represents the initial actions identified under Commitment 5.3.3. Development of specific procedures and implementation of the revised TLDP program will require additional review and approval by the Department. It is anticipated that the revised program will be in place by the third quarter of CY 1999. The Panel will review progress on the completion of the revisions to the TLDP and inform the Board of the status of the program.

If you have any questions, please call me, or your staff may contact Mr. Dave Roth at (202) 426-1506.

Sincerely,

Thomas W. Evans
Executive Secretary to the
Federal Technical Capability Panel



Enclosure

cc:

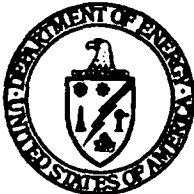
Steve Richardson, Panel Chair

Panel Members

Mark B. Whitaker, Jr., S-3.1

SEPARATION

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Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

February 10, 1999

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DNF SAFETY BOARD

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ACTING DEPUTY SECRETARY

FROM:

Steven D. Richardson, Chair
Federal Technical Capability Panel

Steven D. Richardson

SUBJECT:

Technical Leadership Development Program:
Program Guidance Framework

In the revised Implementation Plan (IP) for Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) Recommendation 93-3, "Improving DOE Technical Capability in Defense Nuclear Facilities Programs," the Department committed (Commitment 5.3.3) to the development of revised program guidance for the Technical Leadership Development Program (TLDP)(i.e., technical intern program). The attached Program Guidance Framework was developed by the Federal Technical Capability Panel (Panel), which is responsible for overseeing completion of the IP, and will be forwarded to the Board as the deliverable due under this commitment.

The Department's current TLDP was established in March 1994 as a centrally managed technical intern program, fulfilling a commitment in the Department's original 93-3 IP. Two classes of interns have been recruited since the inception of the program. These classes were comprised of highly qualified and diverse candidates that the Department needed to position itself for the future. The 1994 Class had a total of twenty-three interns. Seventeen of the twenty-three completed the program and remain in the Department. The 1995 Class started with twenty interns. Three of them left the Department and three others exited the TLDP and took other jobs in the Department. The fourteen remaining interns completed their program in December 1998 and have reported, or are in the process of reporting, to their permanent assignments. The interns that have remained with the Department have proven to be high quality employees, demonstrating the effectiveness of the TLDP and a remarkable return on investment for the Department.

Classes were not recruited after 1995 due to the Department's downsizing and budget constraints during that time. This dormancy increased the Department's vulnerability regarding our technical skills and leadership capabilities, as the average age of DOE employees continued to rise, larger percentages of the workforce became eligible for retirement, and diversity decreased. The attached Program Guidance Framework was prepared in recognition of these increased vulnerabilities, and in consideration of the Secretary's Workforce for the 21st Century Initiative.

The Program Guidance Framework provides for the establishment of a corporate working group, representing stakeholders from throughout the complex, to draft the specific program procedures and methods necessary to implement a revised TLDP. Stakeholders from around the complex



have recognized the need for a revised TLDP and are prepared to support this working group. Interested stakeholders include members of the Panel, representing the defense nuclear safety community, as well as representatives from the R&D community who participated in the development of the Action Plan for Improving R&D Technical Management, which includes a commitment to a revived TLDP that will help meet the needs of the R&D workforce.

Departmental resolution on some key issues may be required before finalization of revised TLDP procedures and methods. Primary amongst these key issues is likely to be the assignment of budget and FTE responsibilities for TLDP positions. Final procedures and methods developed by the working group will be completed by April 30, 1999, and submitted to you for approval.

Your continued interest and support of the work of the Federal Technical Capability Panel is appreciated. I believe we have made, and will continue to make, substantial progress in improving the overall technical capability of the Department's federal workforce.

Enclosure

cc:

Federal Technical Capability Panel
Mark B. Whitaker, Jr., Departmental Representative to DNFSB

SEPARATION

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U. S. Department of Energy

Technical Leadership Development Program PROGRAM GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK



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Washington, D.C. 20585

February 9, 1999

TECHNICAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM PROGRAM GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Energy (DOE) recognizes the continuing need to recruit and develop highly qualified and diverse technical personnel for entry and middle level positions. These employees will provide the Department with a continuing source of highly qualified technical personnel, knowledgeable about DOE programs, and prepared for future leadership roles.

The purpose of this document is to provide the framework for a new Technical Leadership Development Program (TLDP) in the Department. This program guidance is not intended to define the procedures and methods by which this will be accomplished. Rather, when approved, this document will provide the overall program direction and guidance to a working group of the Federal Technical Capability Panel (Panel). This working group will establish the procedures and methods to implement the guidance and direction provided in this document. Those procedures and methods will be published on the Panel's website, and institutionalized as necessary through more formal processes of the Department.

BACKGROUND

The Department's current Technical Leadership Development Program was established in March 1994 as a centrally managed technical intern program, fulfilling a commitment in the Department's original Implementation Plan for Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) Recommendation 93-3, dated November 4, 1993. Two classes of interns have been recruited since the inception of the program. The 1994 Class had a total of twenty-three interns. Seventeen of the twenty-three completed the program and remain in the Department. The 1995 Class started with twenty interns. Three of them left the Department and three others exited the TLDP and took other jobs in the Department. The fourteen remaining interns have reported to their final assignments, or will have done so at the completion of their program in December 1998.

The Department committed (Commitment 5.3.3) in the revised Implementation Plan (IP) for Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board Recommendation 93-3 to review the existing Technical Leadership Development Program (TLDP). Specifically, the Department committed that "The Technical Leadership Development Program will be examined, and the program guidance revised, to include procedures and methods that can be used by Department line organizations to address the current issues (e.g., retention of interns)."

At its October 1998 meeting the Federal Technical Capability Panel (Panel) discussed a draft white paper and an issue paper on the TLDP. The Panel directed that draft program guidance for a revised TLDP be prepared for its consideration, and finalized by the end of December 1998.

TECHNICAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM PROGRAM GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK

To meet the commitment of the 93-3 IP the revised TLDP need only apply to positions at Program and Field Offices having defense nuclear safety responsibilities. The original TLDP, however, was a department-wide program. The Program Guidance Framework allows for the establishment of TLDP positions in any part of the Department, as the Panel believed that establishing a revised TLDP applicable only to defense nuclear community would not be an efficient use of the Department's resources. The Panel will oversee the use of the TLDP in the defense nuclear community, in accordance with its charter, and provide a centralized coordinative and advisory function on behalf of the Department for TLDP use by other offices (e.g., Research and Development Technical Manager Program).

PROGRAM GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK

Flexibilities

The current TLDP is designed to recruit recent college graduates for entry level DOE technical positions. The Program and Field Offices have determined that there also exists a need to recruit highly qualified individuals with several years experience in industry, or within the Department or other federal agencies, into mid-level technical positions designed to meet the offices' long term technical and technical leadership needs.

The TLDP will be designed to accommodate the Department's need for entry-level and mid-level candidates. Program and Field Offices will determine which TLDP options, or which mix of options, best address their needs.

Responsibility and Authority

Line organizations must have significant input and control over the selection of TLDP candidates and the content and structure of the program. Additionally, assignment of responsibility for program coordination to a single source is essential for the TLDP to succeed.

The Panel, reporting to the Deputy Secretary, will have overall departmental responsibility for providing support and direction for the Technical Leadership Development Program within the defense nuclear community. The Panel will also be available to advise and assist other, non-defense nuclear, Offices participating in the TLDP.

Program and Field Office managers will have responsibility for identification of TLDP needs (i.e. number of participants), selection of personnel, Office specific training, local personnel matters, and other issues involving day-to-day administration of the TLDP.

TECHNICAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM PROGRAM GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK

The Office of Management & Administration, in support of the Panel, will have responsibility for those aspects of the TLDP that require centralized administration such as national recruitment efforts, coordination of rotational assignments, Departmental (i.e., not site/office specific) training, etc.

Institutionalization

Institutionalization of the TLDP through clear assignment of responsibilities and the publication of well defined documents, is critical to the continued success of the program.

The Federal Technical Capability Panel's Charter, which was approved by the Deputy Secretary on June 11, 1998, describes the Panel's responsibilities for:

- Overseeing and resolving issues affecting the Federal Technical Capability Program (FTCP);
- Providing recommendations to senior Departmental officials regarding the improvement of DOE technical capability.

The Panel will provide program guidance necessary for the development of a complex-wide TLDP, as required under Commitment 5.3.3 of the 93-3 Implementation Plan. Program guidance will include provisions to ensure that Program and Field Office managers have commensurate responsibility, authority, and flexibility, necessary for accountability. The TLDP will be designed in accordance with FTCP Principles, as defined in the Department's Federal Technical Capability Policy (DOE P420.1).

The Panel will establish a corporate working group, representing stakeholders from throughout the complex, to draft program procedures and methods necessary to implement the TLDP as a critical component of the FTCP. TLDP procedures and methods will be designed to ensure that the FTCP principle of line management accountability for technical excellence is maintained, and support the Secretary's Workforce 21 commitment to rebuilding a talented and diverse workforce. These procedures and methods will be issued through the Department's Directives system, as guidance associated with the FTCP Policy, through stand-alone documents, or, by revising the Training Order (DOE O 360.1A), and Manual (DOE M 360.1A-1).

Funding

A dedicated, reliable source of funding is necessary for the TLDP to succeed.

To establish an FY 2000 TLDP Class, Departmental level program funding will be required. This short term funding for the TLDP will include costs of training, travel, and salaries. Program and Field Offices electing to establish TLDP positions for FY2000 will be required to provide funding. The Panel will address the level of funding from each of the organizations.

TECHNICAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM PROGRAM GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK

Procedures and methods to accomplish the funding will be recommended by the Panel working group.

Funding should be included within line items detailed in the Department's budget for TLDP classes in FY 2001 and beyond. The Office of Management & Administration, in coordination with the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, will begin work in January 1999 to determine the propriety of including TLDP funding in the Department's budget. The Panel will establish and implement a strategy to brief Congress on the purpose and importance of the TLDP to support passage of the line item.

Designation of FTE's

Program and Field Offices electing to participate in the TLDP need dedicated FTE's for TLDP participants.

Program and Field Offices will identify TLDP positions as part of their workforce analysis, and resultant staffing plans, required under Commitment 5.3.1 of the 93-3 IP. The Panel will include a recommendation on the size, composition, and placement of outyear TLDP classes in its annual report to the Secretary.

A specific request for approval of TLDP FTE's will be prepared by the Panel. Upon approval, TLDP FTE's will be dedicated to the program. Use of TLDP FTE's for other purposes will not be permitted.

TLDP FTE's (and individual TLDP candidates upon recruitment) will be assigned to the responsible Program and Field Offices that requested and selected them.

Preserving TLDP Investment

The Department's investment in the TLDP needs to be protected to the greatest extent possible from the effects of future budget and downsizing actions.

As described in the "Program Structure" section of this document, the TLDP may be designed to extend over several years to allow time for additional mentoring or on the job experience necessary for critical technical positions. This will also have the effect of preserving TLDP positions, as candidates in a formal training program can also be protected during a reduction-in-force (RIF).

Program and Field Offices may elect to use the Department's excepted service authorities in filling TLDP positions, and in placing recent TLDP graduates. Excepted service authorities provide pay flexibilities that may be necessary as a recruitment incentive, and can be used to

TECHNICAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM PROGRAM GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK

preserve the Department's investment in its critical technical capabilities against the inadvertent impact of any future RIF.

Program and Field Offices will also use the model policies and procedures developed under Commitment 5.5.1 of the IP to preserve the critical technical capabilities inherent in their TLDP positions.

Program Coordination and Administration

The TLDP needs to be administered and coordinated through a system that ensures the most efficient use of program resources while preserving local management authority, responsibility, and accountability.

Central coordination will be necessary to ensure quality, consistency, and the best use of the Department's technical and financial resources. The Office of Training and Human Resource Development (MA-31), under the direction of the Panel, will be responsible for central coordination efforts.

Examples of areas where central coordination may be necessary include:

Recruitment: Program and Field Offices may wish to conduct local recruitment based on their knowledge of community sources. Program and Field Offices may coordinate recruitment efforts when appropriate. Departmental recruitment may also be appropriate for special skill needs. The Office of Human Resources Management will act as a clearinghouse for all recruitment efforts, and will make certain that well developed recruiting programs are used that ensure diversity candidates are given strong consideration.

Vacancy announcements may be done locally, centrally, or both, and should specify location and skill specialty of TLDP positions.

Selection: Program and Field Office managers will select candidates for TLDP positions within their organizations. The Panel Agent will participate in local selection and the Panel will provide oversight and guidance for the selection process.

Curriculum: The Office of Training and Human Resource Development, in support of the Panel, will coordinate the implementation of Department-wide curriculum for the intern program.

TECHNICAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM PROGRAM GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK

Assignments: The Office of Training and Human Resource Development, in support of the Panel, will coordinate rotational assignments across the Department. The Office of Training and Human Resource Development may also coordinate the assignment of interns to graduate study programs based on the recommendations and needs of the Program and Field Offices.

Program Structure

The TLDP must be designed to ensure a balance between providing a common Department-wide curriculum, while still allowing Program and Field offices the flexibility to ensure that the TLDP addresses their particular technical needs.

Program and Field Offices will determine their needs for TLDP employees, e.g., entry level or mid-level. Different TLDP elements will then be used to provide the TLDP employee with training and experience appropriate to the particular needs of the office. While the length of the TLDP will be five years for all participants, those candidates that enter at the mid level may spend less time in the Fixed Curriculum, Rotational Assignment or Advanced Education portions of the program, and more time in the Mentoring portion.

Specific modules will be designed to accommodate the diverse needs of the Program and Field Offices. Modules will be established in the following four areas:

- Fixed Curriculum - this includes items such as Department Orientation, DOE-specific technical training, regulations and Orders, etc.
- Rotational assignments - this will generally consist of two, six-month rotational assignments in Offices/organizations other than the organization to which the candidate will ultimately report. One of the assignments will typically be in headquarters and one in the field. Assignments to one of the Department's operating contractors may also be considered.
- Advanced education - this includes opportunities for the candidates to pursue advanced degree opportunities or an assignment to a government post-graduate school.
- Mentoring - this is the final portion of the program and typically occurs within the organization in which the candidate belongs. A mentor(s) will be assigned to the candidate. Mentors will be senior level individuals in the organization who are qualified as Senior Technical Safety Managers. This will be a formal, structured program with periodic meetings and reports provided.