

Integrated Safety Management Workshop - Building Mission Success



Acting Deputy Secretary Jeff Kupfer addresses the audience at the 2008 ISM Workshop.

Over 500 U.S. Department of Energy and contractor employees started the Labor Day weekend with safety in mind. Hosted by the U.S. Department of Energy's Idaho Operations Office, along with the prime contractors at the Idaho National Laboratory Site, the 2008 Integrated Safety Management Workshop, which was held in Idaho Falls, concluded Aug. 28. Acting Deputy Secretary for the Department of Energy, Jeff Kupfer described the workshop as "the Department of Energy's signature safety event," stating that safety enables the Department's mission success, and complacent work is safety's enemy. Kupfer also noted that workshop participation helps to renew and strengthen safety concepts, and that the workshop serves as a forum for sharing safety related practices and lessons learned, while emphasizing the importance of the use of the Integrated Safety Management System to safely accomplish the Department of Energy's mission.

Shane Johnson, the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Nuclear Energy, and John Grossenbacher, the Idaho National Laboratory director, discussed the importance of Integrated Safety Management at the INL. Johnson reminded attendees that the Department has a great responsibility to carry out the nation's nuclear development activities, and it is critical that the work is done safely. He noted that is accomplished when work is done through the continued implementation and improvement of ISM, also noting that, "an accident anywhere is an accident everywhere."

Viewed as the framework for all DOE safety programs, the Integrated Safety Management System continues to meet its objective of incorporating safety into management and work practices at all levels. The success of the Integrated Safety Management System has always been dependent on on-going participation, involvement, and ownership of the system by the people responsible for performing the work. U.S. Department of Energy headquarters employee Victor Reis discussed the importance of sustaining a strong safety culture at the Department during times of transition, and reminding attendees that the Department is performing work that affects the entire nation in numerous ways.

The focus of this year's workshop was "integrated management." What integrated management means is taking the concepts of Integrated Safety Management, such as lessons learned, and applying those concepts to other systems within the Department of Energy, including safeguards and security, quality assurance, and business and financial systems. In line with this year's focus, retired United States Forest Service employee Dave Thomas discussed becoming a high reliability organization by planning for the unexpected, and working with the employees performing the work to consider the unexpected. Thomas also shared lessons learned from numerous forest fires throughout the nation over the past decade.

Workshop participation on such a grand scale once again reaffirmed the Department's commitment to Integrated Safety and its use as a tool for DOE and its contractors to ensure that work is planned and accomplished safely. Although the nuclear industry maintains one of the best safety records of all the major industries, the Department of Energy does not take that record for granted, it always seeks continuous improvement of DOE programs, and through the implementation of the Integrated Safety Management System has had a positive impact on safe behaviors both at work, and at home.



Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office Nuclear Energy, Shane Johnson addresses the audience during the Plenary Session of the 2008 ISM Workshop.