

# EFCOG Best Practice #141

12/27/12

**Best Practice Title:** Management Leadership in the Field

**Facility:** Tank Farms/Hanford Site, Washington River Protection Solutions, LLC (WRPS)

**Point of Contact:** Rob Gregory, (509) 373-9980, [Robert E Rob Gregory@rl.gov](mailto:Robert_E_Rob_Gregory@rl.gov)

**Brief Description of Best Practice:** The Field Execution Oversight Team (FEOT) effort was a focused initiative over about a three month period to increase management field presence, monitor field work behaviors, and provide meaningful, objective feedback to obtain long-lived continuous conduct of operations performance improvement. This was done by observing field work execution and providing coaching/mentoring, using consistent expectations/performance throughout the leadership team. Sustainment actions after completion of the FEOT were the establishment of field observation expectations, an improved field observation checklist, and the supporting performance indicators to continue to monitor and adjust field performance. One of the goals of the FEOT was to transition ownership of the performance metrics to the Conduct of Operations Council (a chartered, multidiscipline committee composed of field organizations and sponsored by w management), to ensure continuous improvement.

**Why the best practice was used:** The purpose of the FEOT was to obtain improvement in conduct of operations with respect to the performance of field work and to promote behaviors throughout the company that support safe and reliable operation. Experience reveals that frequently, causes of operational performance problems exist in the work environment, the result of weaknesses in organizational processes and management. This by no means relieves individuals of their responsibility to work safely and reliably. However, to optimize successful performance at the job site, appropriate changes in individual and leader behaviors must occur in concert with appropriate changes in the organization's processes and values.

**What are the benefits of the best practice:** The FEOT effort was an initiative to increase management field presence, monitor field work behaviors, and provide meaningful objective feedback to obtain long-lived continuous conduct of operations performance improvement. This was done by observing field work execution and providing coaching/mentoring, establishing consistent expectations/performance throughout the leadership team through the rotational assignment of managers to the FEOT, institutionalizing the use of a field observation checklist to improve the consistency/accuracy of conduct of operations performance metrics, providing recommendations to the Conduct of Operations Council based on observations/analysis, and documenting/evaluating programmatic improvements provided by the workforce during the review.

**What problems/issues were associated with the best practice:** The FEOT was staffed by company employees and chartered with determining its own purpose. The thirty-five (35) managers assigned to rotate through the FEOT had a combined experience of nine hundred (900) years across many disciplines (i.e., operations, maintenance, engineering, safety and health, radiological controls). Sustainment actions after completion of the FEOT were the institutionalization of the field observation checklist, improved conduct of operations performance metrics, recommendations for future improvements to the Conduct of Operations Council based on observations/analysis, and documented programmatic improvements provided by the workforce during the review.

**How the success of the Best Practice was measured:** Over a twelve (12) week period, two hundred and thirty seven (237) field observation checklists were completed, documenting the observation of over eight hundred (800) hours of field observation by

## EFCOG Best Practice #141

12/27/12

thirty five (35) managers. All eighty-four (84) field work supervisors/operations engineers//persons-in-charge were observed at least once.

**Description of process experience using the Best Practice:** All FEOT members were briefed on the goals, objectives, and processes to be used during field observation. Consistency was maintained by the setting of expectations via the establishment of a team charter, briefings, weekly meetings, and the use of the same field observation checklist. The continuation of documented field presence will be accomplished by the leadership team through the Management Observation Program (MOP) using the field observation checklist. The field observation checklist is the vehicle used to feed a "Work Control Field Execution Health Indicator" performance metric/indicator developed as an outcome of this activity.

- Success was measurable because the process established and consistently applied expectations.
- Essential to success of the effort was that the senior management team allotted significant time to the effort.
- The participants benefitted from cross-organizational bonds built with both peers and workers as a result of this effort.
- Workers benefitted because the managers made themselves very visible to the workforce and real issues that they experience, giving them an opportunity to "see with their own eyes" what the workers sees.