

WM2008 Conference Panel Reports

Session 36

Panel: “Emerging Issues with DOE Prime Contracts”

Panel Reporter: Judith D. Connell, Fluor Hanford

The purpose of this panel was to bring together senior managers from various DOE sites to introduce and discuss topics they felt were issues that either are affecting or could potentially affect contract and/or technical performance.

The following individuals participated in the panel:

- Michael Kluse, Interim Director, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory
- George E. Dials, President & CEO, B&W Y-12 (recently assigned to corporate senior executive position in B&W Technical Services)
- Manfred Neil Brosee, Deputy Project Manager, River Corridor Closure Project, Hanford
- George W. Jackson, Senior Vice President, Fluor

After the panelists were introduced by the moderator (Judith Connell), they gave very brief descriptions of their individual projects (no formally prepared presentations). Brosee and Dials spoke from the perspective of prime contractors performing specific work scope at a DOE Site, while Kluse presented the views from a leading national laboratory and Jackson shared some lessons learned in managing construction and support personnel providing services to the Hanford Site as well as other Fluor projects.

Each panelist presented their individual unique circumstance; however, there were common issues in several areas:

- **Cyber Security:** OMB has mandated that all federal agencies comply with national Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) guidance. NIST has been releasing new documents almost weekly, and OMB also is issuing new requirements to federal agencies via memoranda. The result is a huge volume of “guidance” and “requirements” at DOE’s level that must be translated and interpreted for implementation. In many instances, the requirements have not been formally added to contracts because DOE has been unable to clearly interpret the requirements. Another example is the compromise of Personally Identifiable Information (PII). Requirements are that a compromise of PII must be reported within 45 minutes, compared to one hour to report the theft of a nuclear device and two hours to report a fatality.
- **Imposed Performance Objectives and Assessments by DOE Headquarters:** DOE’s field offices should be given more “power” and autonomy. They are overseeing the work being done and are intimately familiar with specific site conditions/environment that can affect decisions and outcomes. The message: “don’t put all the ‘power’ in HQ.”
- **Contractors’ Assurance Programs:** It’s incumbent on contractors to establish and maintain their own programs.
- **Risk-based approach versus compliance-based approach**