



DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD HUMAN CAPITAL PLAN FISCAL YEARS 2025-2029





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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB), like all federal agencies, has been challenged on numerous fronts including the COVID-19 pandemic, fiscal constraints, a competitive landscape for workers, and a potential wave of upcoming retirements. Additionally, the agency operates under a statutory ceiling limiting the number of Federal staff employed by the agency. As the defense nuclear facilities complex faces increased production pressures, and technical and operational challenges in both its nuclear defense and cleanup missions, the DNFSB must be able to recruit and retain a staff able to provide safety oversight and optimize its own operational needs.

Despite these challenges, the DNFSB is determined to excel in its mission. We are actively recruiting from diverse, highly skilled talent pools and have taken steps to increase our workforce to meet our needs. We are investing in our existing employees, providing them with the resources and tools they need to succeed and grow their skillsets and provide career advancement opportunities. These efforts will not only help us meet our current challenges but also ensure that we are ready for the future. We remain confident that the DNFSB will continue to be a leader in nuclear safety. Our vision is to secure a safe future for the American people through proven technical excellence and transparency that inspires public confidence as the defense nuclear enterprise evolves.

This Human Capital Plan (HCP) is a cornerstone of our journey to success. We will use it to lay down a clear path forward, showing how we can leverage our resources to reach our goals. Our objective is to create a vibrant, diverse culture where everyone can feel valued and perform at their best. We will create an environment of collaboration, innovation, and growth. This means the DNFSB will adapt a more inclusive environment and will work toward accomplishing workforce diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

By modernizing our systems, we will become more efficient at delivering our mission and create a better environment for our workforce, saving both time and money for the agency that we can reinvest in our talent. We will also update our procedures and keep them updated through internal controls. By working smarter, not harder, we can determine how best to partner with other agencies to achieve industry best practices without replicating services that can be outsourced.

Most importantly, we will create a culture that allows employees not only to achieve the mission but to hone and develop their skillsets in a nurturing environment. Leaders, supervisors, and managers will support the training and development of our staff and will lead by example by embodying our core values and will be held accountable for doing so. Engagement and communication will be emphasized and rewarded, as will coalition building and creating a collaborative workspace.

This Human Capital Plan is a blueprint for us to ensure that we have the right skills and personnel to meet our mission, plan for the succession of key roles, and transfer knowledge to future generations of



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our workforce and leaders. We must continually adapt to changing circumstances, both internal and external to the DNFSB. This Plan is our guide to navigating these challenges and developing strategies for long-term success. Together, this modern and effective Human Capital Plan will keep our organization at the forefront of innovation and change. We owe it to ourselves, our constituents, and future generations to make sure we get this right.

This Plan belongs to the whole agency as we work towards refining the skill sets and our personnel. We will fulfill the mission, plan for succession of the key roles of our components, and transfer knowledge to tomorrow's workforce and leaders. Our organization is dynamic and must adapt to changes both internal and external and we need a modern Human Capital Plan such as this one to guide us.

1. AGENCY OVERVIEW AND KEY FUNCTIONS

Under the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB or Board) is charged with providing independent safety oversight of the Department of Energy's (DOE) defense nuclear facilities complex. The mission of the complex is to design, manufacture, test, maintain, and decommission nuclear weapons and weapons production facilities, as well as other national security priorities. The act mandates that the Board review the content and implementation of DOE standards, facility and system designs, and events and practices at DOE defense nuclear facilities to provide independent analysis, advice, and recommendations to inform the Secretary of Energy regarding issues of adequate protection of public health and safety at DOE defense nuclear facilities.

2. VISION AND VALUES

2.1 Vision

To secure a safe future for the American people through proven technical excellence and transparency that inspires public confidence in a safe defense nuclear enterprise.

2.2 Values

- Integrity
 - Interaction among the DNFSB staff and colleagues is open, honest, and sincere. We commit to openness and trust in all relationships. We observe the highest ethical standards in all aspects of our work. We take personal responsibility for our own actions and are accountable to each other for the highest standards of behavior. We clearly define and fulfill the commitments we make. If we cannot meet that commitment, we inform everyone who might be impacted.



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- Respect
 - We treat each other as we would like to be treated. We treat others with respect and value diverse points of view, backgrounds, and experiences. We treat everyone fairly, strive for equity, and provide everyone an opportunity to contribute. We are attentive, listen, and exhibit deference to those who express different opinions on issues. We respect decisions taken by the Board. We respect the agency senior leaders and their efforts to conduct the agency mission in accordance with their roles.
- Independence
 - Our mission is not compromised by the influence of others. We rely on the facts as presented and the highest level of professional judgment. Independence does not imply isolation. Rather, we seek all facts and opinions openly, and weigh them all before arriving at conclusions. Data-driven decisions are based on objective, unbiased assessments of all information and conclusions are well documented.
- Excellence
 - We exhibit a passion for success, both individually and collectively. We strive to be the best in achieving our goals. We are inclusive and bring out the best in each other. Excellence is a daily pursuit. Excellence is pursued in all aspects of performance.

3. FUTURE OPERATING STATE

The DNFSB is working to modernize and improve its approach to human capital planning. To that end, we have established this Human Capital Plan to serve as the agency human capital operating plan and to implement the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Human Capital Framework, consistent with the OPM regulations in 10 C.F.R. part 250, subpart B “Strategic Human Capital Management.” This plan will ensure the agency-wide human capital practices are transformed with modern technology and tools. We will also institute industry best practices enterprise-wide in recruiting and hiring to attract a high-performing workforce from diverse backgrounds that is reflective of the public we serve. We will continually assess the skills of the agency’s workforce and work to improve skills and transfer knowledge where necessary and retain and reward employees. This proactive approach will position the DNFSB for long-term sustainability to accomplish its vital mission.



4. INPUTS FROM AGENCY INITIATIVES

As part of the DNFSB continuous effort to maximize the efficiency of operations, several internal and external agency initiatives and assessments have been conducted over the past four years. The resulting conclusions and recommendations directly influenced and helped drive the goals, objectives, strategies, performance measures and milestones described in this Human Capital Plan.

The DNFSB FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan serves as the foundation for the Human Capital Plan. Other critical inputs include the following:

- DNFSB Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan FY 2021-2025 (DEI Strategic Plan).
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Management Directive 715 (MD-715).
- Federal Agency Annual Equal Employment Opportunity Program Status Report (MD-715 Report).
- DNFSB 2022 Organizational Assessment.
- DNFSB 2022 Workforce Planning Survey.
- DNFSB 2022 Workforce Profile and Analysis.
- 2023 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS).
- OPM Human Capital Framework.

External assessments that also shaped the DNFSB's Human Capital Plan are:

- 2018 National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) *Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board Organizational Assessment*.
- 2020 Office of Inspector General (OIG) Audit of DNFSB's Human Resources Program.
- *The Inspector General's Assessment of the Most Serious Management and Performance Challenges Facing the DNFSB in Fiscal Year 2024*.





5. SUMMARY OF INPUTS TO THE HUMAN CAPITAL PLAN

5.1 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis Results

The SWOT Analysis performed in 2023 for the DNFSB included two major components. The first was an analysis of the DNFSB as an agency: its operations and its ongoing effort to provide independent safety oversight of the DOE defense nuclear complex. The second component of the SWOT Analysis was conducted separately by analyzing Mission Critical Occupations (MCOs). Although the two SWOT



RESULTS OF THE STRENGTH, WEAKNESS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS (SWOT) ANALYSIS

 Strengths:	Average age, average length of service, the FEVS Action Plan, education level.
 Weaknesses:	Impact on mission readiness and potential skill gaps due to attrition.
 Opportunities:	The use of the Human Capital Plan and its associated goals, objectives, strategies, and measures and milestones to sustain strengths, transition threats to opportunities, and utilize the other inputs described below to achieve the vision outlined in the DNFSB Strategic Plan.
 Threats:	The impact of attrition and the resulting loss of skills and institutional knowledge. The SWOT analyses were incorporated into the human capital planning workshops, resulting in objectives and strategies that have been incorporated into the Human Capital Plan to sustain strengths, overcome weaknesses, take advantage of opportunities, and minimize threats.

Reports appear similar, the assessments are based, respectively, on the population of the agency and the population of staff that occupy MCOs. The following is a summary of the analyses:

5.2 Summary of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan

The DEI Strategic Plan is built around two strategic goals, which encompass five strategic objectives and 23 key performance goals. Both the DEI Strategic Plan and this Human Capital Plan underscore the DNFSB's commitment to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion by recruiting from a broad and diverse pool of applicants, employing fair and consistent hiring practices, cultivating a collaborative and flexible work environment, providing clear career advancement opportunities to enhance retention, and maintaining continuous communication to reinforce our collective commitment to these principles across all levels of the organization.

5.3 Summary of the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey

In 2023, the DNFSB 2023 FEVS Review Team evaluated trends from indices developed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), tracked the progress made to address the focus areas identified by the 2022 FEVS review team, and identified additional focus areas for this year.

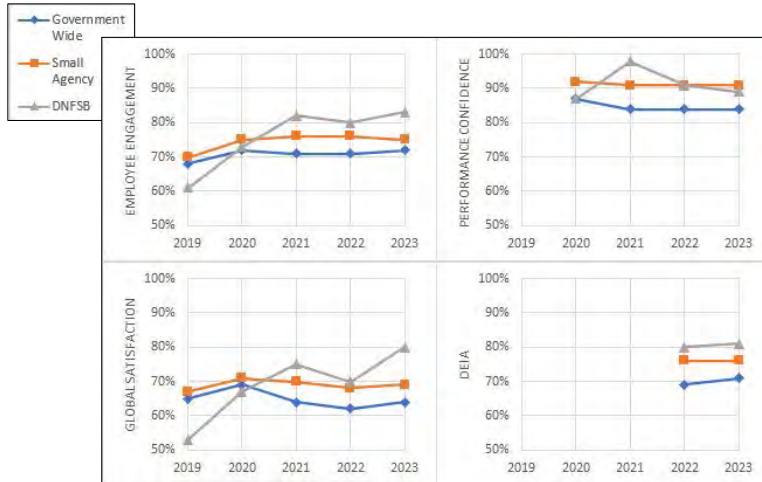
While the 2023 FEVS results indicate continued improvement over the last several years, the team identified several areas that could use focused management attention to ensure this trend continues.



Those four high level indices were Employee Engagement, Performance Confidence, Global Satisfaction, and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility.



FEVS Index Trends



Employee Engagement Index—measures conditions that are conducive to employee engagement and factors in employees’ perceptions of leadership, the interpersonal relationship between employees and their supervisor, and employees’ feelings of motivation.

Performance Confidence Index—measures employees’ perception of their work unit’s ability to achieve its goals and produce work at a high level and, ultimately, provides insights into agency performance.

Global Satisfaction Index—measures employees’ satisfaction on four aspects related to their work: the job, pay, organization, and whether they would recommend their organization as a good place to work.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Index —measures employees’ feelings about diversity (including the many communities, identities, races, ethnicities, backgrounds, abilities, cultures, and beliefs of the American people), equity (the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals), inclusion (recognition, appreciation, and use of the talents and skills of employees of all backgrounds), and accessibility (design, construction, development, and maintenance of facilities, information and communication technology, programs, and services so that all people can fully and independently use them).

DRAFT: NOT REVIEWED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

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5.4 Summary Results of the Human Capital Survey

In the first quarter of FY2023, the DNFSB conducted a Human Capital Survey to obtain feedback on the current state of the agency and identify the areas of focus that can be incorporated into this Human Capital Plan to help sustain mission capabilities. The survey response rate was 95% from all elements. From a statistical validation perspective, that provides credibility to the analysis, assessments, and the conclusions that can be drawn from the survey. This validity provides credence to the strategies and measures that will be established from the survey.

Throughout the Human Capital Survey, there were five recurring themes that became evident, either through the chosen response, the narrative response, or the additional explanation requested based on the response chosen. Those recurring themes are:

- **Skill Gaps** - competencies and skills needed for the current and future mission requirements.
- **Knowledge Transfer and Management** – a need to establish a more formal Knowledge Management Program.
- **Impact of Attrition** - the potential loss of knowledge, skills, and competencies that are not readily replaceable and take time for new hires to develop.



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- **Data Management and Analytics** – the need for the DNFSB to develop a human resources data management and analysis system and the commensurate skills for data management and validation.
- **Communication and Consistent Messaging** – the lack of knowledge and/or awareness of information and activities.

As with the SWOT Analysis, the Human Capital Survey results were incorporated into a series of planning workshops, resulting in objectives and strategies that have been incorporated into the Human Capital Plan.

5.5 Summary Results of the Workforce Profile and Analysis

The DNFSB Workforce Profile and Analysis was conducted in FY2022 by evaluating and analyzing data from two perspectives.

The first analysis was conducted by calculating the percentage of Onboard Strength (OBS) in eight affinity groups and comparing those percentages to the nationwide Civilian Labor Force (CLF). These are the same percentages used by Congress, EEOC, OPM, and others to establish goals for federal agencies. The goal is to have an agency labor force with percentages of underrepresented affinity groups that are equal to the percentages in the CLF.

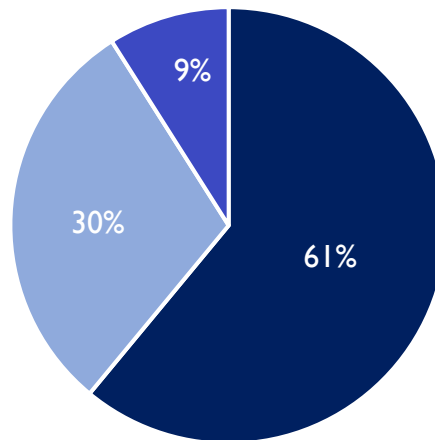


Figure 1: Distribution of Affinity Groups – Onboard Strength Early FY23



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A second analysis conducted in reference to gains and losses over the last six fiscal years resulted in the following conclusions, which are also depicted in Figure 3. 40% of all separations were transfers to other federal agencies, 35% of all separations were retirements, and the remaining 25% were either resignations or the expiration of temporary appointments.

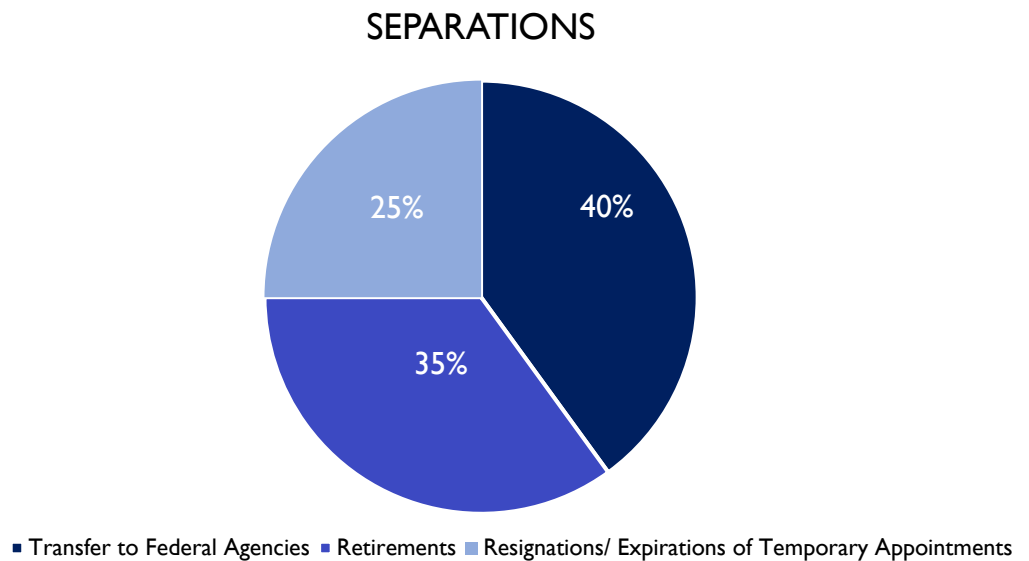


Figure 2: Separations Last Six Fiscal Years

The impacts from attrition and the associated loss of knowledge were a major challenge identified in the Workforce Survey completed by the DNFSB managers in FY2022 and is validated by this Workforce Profile and Analysis.

The average length of time between an employee becoming eligible and retiring is three years and five months. Identifying the number of DNFSB staff that are currently eligible to retire, and, of those, how many have been eligible for more than 3.5 years indicates which employees may be at higher risk of attrition. This information can be used to apply knowledge transfer and management strategies to reduce the impact of attrition. This will directly address a recurring theme in the Workforce Planning Survey and is validated by the data analysis conducted as part of the Workforce Profile and Analysis.



6. OVERVIEW OF HUMAN CAPITAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1

Align DNFSB strategies to leverage programs and services to enhance DNFSB performance to accomplish mission goals.

Objective 1.1

Define the roles and responsibilities of agency organizational units for engagement in Human Capital Plan execution.

Objective 1.2

Develop and establish specific measures and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to ensure that the objectives of the Human Capital Plan are achieved.

Goal 2

Leverage improved talent management systems to enhance DNFSB goal achievement.

Objective 2.1

Establish and implement an enterprise-wide workforce planning program that defines the skills and competencies necessary for mission priorities and assesses current staff against those criteria.

Objective 2.2

Adopt improved automation of services to enhance mission readiness.

Objective 2.3

Develop, communicate, and apply consistent hiring practices within each of the Competitive Service (GS), Excepted Service (GS), Excepted Service (DN), and Senior Executive Service (SES).

Objective 2.4

Develop time-to-hire metrics and improve the timeliness of the hiring process and improve the timeliness of the hiring process and other HR management processes in recruitment phases.

Goal 3

Enhance DNFSB performance culture to improve retention, recruitment, metrics analysis, and knowledge management to enhance agency performance.

Objective 3.1

Establish an agencywide career development retention, and succession strategy.

Objective 3.2

Establish an agencywide entry-level professional development program with independent tracks for key subject matter areas of expertise.



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Objective 3.3 Develop DNFSB leadership capabilities.

Objective 3.4 Develop a plan for knowledge retention, management, and transfer.



GOAL ONE

Align DNFSB strategies to leverage programs and services to enhance DNFSB performance to accomplish mission goals.

Objective 1.1 **Define the roles and responsibilities of agency organizational units for engagement in Human Capital Plan execution.**

Strategies

- Define and articulate the purpose, deliverables, lead executive, and audience for each performance measure in the Human Capital Plan. This will include a description of the roles and responsibilities each office has for the Human Capital Plan execution.

Objective 1.2 **Develop and establish specific measures and KPIs to ensure that the objectives of the Human Capital Plan are achieved.**

Strategies

- Identify the most impactful agencywide human capital strategies for KPI development and develop KPIs for each of those strategies.
- Incorporate the KPIs into the agency Annual Performance Plan, Agency Work Plan, and the leadership performance plans, as appropriate.
- Measure Human Capital Program effectiveness against established KPIs.



GOAL TWO

Leverage improved talent management systems to enhance the DNFSB goal achievement.

Objective 2.1 **Establish and implement an enterprise-wide workforce planning program that defines the skills and competencies necessary for mission priorities and assesses current staff against those criteria.**

Strategies

- Each office will identify the knowledge, skills, and competencies by occupational category necessary to successfully perform the work of that occupation.
- With guidance from Human Resources (HR), each appropriate organizational element will categorize the knowledge, skills, and competencies by core/transferable, technical/occupational specific, leadership skills and competencies.
- Each appropriate organizational element will identify and describe the proficiency levels of the identified skills and competencies in relation to the grade or pay band levels of each occupation/position and identify behavioral expectations.
- Each appropriate organizational element will assess current onboard strength in relation to the level of proficiency they possess to identify gaps between the required level of proficiency and the level possessed by incumbents for the grade/pay band they occupy.
- Each appropriate organizational element will establish Individual Development Plans for staff members to close identified skill gaps and enhance skills. SES staff members will establish Executive Development Plans to augment and sustain their skill levels and continued growth.
- Use the established competencies, associated proficiency levels, and behavioral examples as the basis for developing applicant assessment questionnaires. Apply behavioral examples and demonstrated application of the skill/competency in a work setting when filling positions and rating applicants.

Objective 2.2 **Adopt improved automation of services to enhance mission readiness.**

Strategies

- Finalize and establish milestones for the migration to the Interior Business Center (IBC) Shared Service Center integrated human resource support services and Human Resource Information System, while incorporating lessons learned from other agencies.
- Adopt new or improved self-service portals for agency staff support, training, and personnel functions.



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- Publish guides as a resource for staff to understand automated systems to reduce dependencies on HR and shared service provider support.
- Establish, track, and publish service-level agreements for HR services in line with IBC requirements. Measure HR performance against service-level agreements.

Objective 2.3 Develop, communicate, and apply consistent hiring practices within each of the Competitive Service (GS), Excepted Service (GS), Excepted Service (DN), and Senior Executive Service.

Strategies

- Finalize and establish milestones for the migration to the IBC Shared Service Center integrated human resource support services and Human Resource Information System, while incorporating lessons learned from other agencies.
- Adopt new or improved self-service portals for agency staff support, training, and personnel functions.
- Publish guides as a resource for staff to understand automated systems to reduce dependencies on HR and shared service provider support.
- Establish, track, and publish service-level agreements for HR services in line with IBC requirements. Measure HR performance against service-level agreements.

Objective 2.4 Develop time-to-hire metrics and improve the timeliness of the hiring process.

Strategies

- Establish agency time-to-hire metric in line with agency requirements and improve the timeliness of the hiring process and other HR management processes in recruitment phases.
- Use Service Now to track all steps required to accomplish hiring tasks.
- Conduct a barrier analysis at each step and identify actions that will shorten the time to complete each step without compromising the quality and diversity of applicants or candidates.
- Track the implementation of actions and calculate the DNFSB time-to-hire on an annual basis and report the results to the Executive Director of Operations.



GOAL THREE

Enhance DNFSB performance culture to improve retention, recruitment, and knowledge management to enhance agency performance.

Objective 3.1 Establish an agencywide career development and retention strategy.

Strategies

- Establish a rotational or stretch assignment program for temporary and detail assignments, which may include intra-agency rotations between Divisions/Offices and interagency details with other federal agencies.
- Review and catalog directives associated with attracting, appointing, developing, engaging, and retaining a diverse, high-performing workforce and evaluating any legal authorities granted to the agency or government policies that could be leveraged by the agency. Determine if additional hiring authorities are needed to reach agency hiring goals.
- Expand the use of senior level and scientific and technical positions and an SES candidate development program.

Objective 3.2 Establish an agency-wide entry-level professional development program with independent tracks for key subject matter areas of expertise.

Strategies

- Create an enterprise program directive and operating procedure for recruitment, career-pathing, and enhanced development of entry-level employees for specialized positions as appropriate (e.g. Professional Development Program).
- Define training and development for each position series or specialty in the program.
- Assess agency need for entry-level staff versus mid-career and senior staff to balance staff experience levels and attrition risks.
- Examine similar programs from other agencies and incorporate successful elements from those programs with particular emphasis on training and field experience.
- Create partnerships with Minority Serving Institutions for recruiting purposes.

Objective 3.3 Develop DNFSB leadership capabilities

Strategies

- Establish a leadership competency enhancement program: Develop a program aimed at building and refining leadership skills across all levels of the agency. The program should include



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targeted training, mentorship opportunities, and leadership assessments to ensure consistent growth and development.

- Conduct a strategic leadership offsite focused on developing leadership competencies that can effectively execute agency priorities.
- Develop an effective coaching program for both new and experienced executives that provides strategies that are customized for each leader's unique leadership style.
- Develop and identify career path maps for occupations and leadership positions in relation to succession planning.

Objective 3.4 Develop a plan for knowledge retention, management, and transfer.

Strategies

- Hire an agency Chief Learning Officer.
- Create an agency knowledge management system for technical and operational information.

AFFIRMATION OF BOARD VOTING RECORD

SUBJECT: DNFSB Human Capital Plan

Doc Control#: 2023-300-0014

The Board acted on the above document on 10/10/2024. The document was Approved.

The votes were recorded as:

	APRVD	DISAPRVD	ABSTAIN	NOT PARTICIPATING	COMMENT	DATE
Joyce L. Connery	☑					10/09/2024
Thomas Summers	☑					10/10/2024
Patricia Lee	☑					10/10/2024

This Record contains a summary of voting on this matter together with the individual vote sheets, views and comments of the Board Members.

Shelby Qualls

Executive Secretary to the Board

Attachments:

1. Voting Summary
2. Board Member Vote Sheets

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

NOTATIONAL VOTE RESPONSE SHEET

FROM: Joyce L. Connery

SUBJECT: DNFSB Human Capital Plan

Doc Control#: 2023-300-0014

DATE: 10/09/2024

VOTE: Approved

COMMENTS:

None

Joyce L. Connery

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

NOTATIONAL VOTE RESPONSE SHEET

FROM: Thomas Summers

SUBJECT: DNFSB Human Capital Plan

Doc Control#: 2023-300-0014

DATE: 10/10/2024

VOTE: Approved

COMMENTS:

None

Thomas Summers

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD
NOTATIONAL VOTE RESPONSE SHEET

FROM: Patricia Lee

SUBJECT: DNFSB Human Capital Plan

Doc Control#: 2023-300-0014

DATE: 10/10/2024

VOTE: Approved

Member voted by email.

COMMENTS:

None

Patricia Lee