

Testimony of Mr. Robert McQuinn
Nuclear Waste Partnership

Before the
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Public Hearing
Walter Gerrells Performing Arts & Exhibition Center
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Good evening, Vice Chairman, I am Robert McQuinn, President and Project Manager for Nuclear Waste Partnership (NWP). I will address the actions that have been taken or are planned to correct maintenance and engineering program deficiencies.

Independent assessments have been completed for these Safety Management Programs, namely the Engineering Program, Fire Protection Program and Work Control/Surveillance & Maintenance Program. The corrective actions from each of these assessments have been placed into a Corrective Action Plan and into NWP's issues management system.

The Maintenance and Work Control organizations have both benefitted from new managers with years of nuclear facility experience from Pantex, Savannah River Site, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and Hanford. This was a strategic initiative to provide experienced leadership from sites with a mature nuclear safety culture in order to address both program weaknesses and day-to-day work execution.

As I mentioned in an earlier testimony, shortly after my arrival, I moved the Engineering organization structurally out from under Operations and made it a direct report to me. I added an experienced Deputy Manager, who has led recovery at both commercial and DOE projects. Significant improvements have been made to the Conduct of Engineering Program with a typical emphasis on Cognizant System Engineers. As an example, we have incorporated into the annual system engineer walk-down procedure a new structured approach for System Health Reports, which are now briefed to senior management, including the Project Manager. These reports also form the basis for identifying and addressing emerging system deficiencies and trends.

As another example, the fire impairment process has been strengthened to require fire protection engineering review and approval of compensatory measures, and to drive to my level the timely resolution of fire impairments as a priority.

WIPP's Job Hazard Analysis process has also been enhanced to expand its thoroughness and the process checklist used in the walk-down and planning phases, which engages the worker. I require executive review and approval of high hazard work evolutions. We now use a process where my senior staff evaluates the adequacy of planning by walking through the work packages with the team that will conduct the work.