End-of-Year Results for the 2021 Objectives and Key Results

Objective 1: Increase the use of the Be riskSMART framework across all sectors of the agency in 2021 to improve the timeliness and quality of decision-making.

Key Result 1: At least 85 percent of U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff complete the Be riskSMART training module and successfully pass a knowledge check before the end of calendar year 2021.

> **End-of-Year Results:**
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> A total of 1,467 NRC employees completed the Be riskSMART training by the end of 2021, which represents 53.4 percent of the NRC staff. Four offices (Office of General Counsel, Office of Investigations, Office of Small Business and Civil Rights, and Region II) achieved their goal of having more than 85 percent of their staff complete the training by the end of the year.
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> Although the agency did not achieve the goal of 85 percent of all employees taking the training by the end of the year, progress was achieved, given that the staff's familiarity with the framework increased through its application across both the corporate and technical sectors of the agency. The training will remain available in the NRC's Training Management System for all staff members to access.

Key Result 2: By the end of 2021, the Be riskSMART framework is used in at least 50 percent of what are determined by office management to represent key decisions related to the execution of that office's mission.

> **End-of-Year Results:**
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> To provide maximum flexibility for offices to design meaningful office-level objectives and key results (OKRs), the Office of the Executive Director for Operations did not specifically define "key decisions related to the execution of that office's mission." As a result, offices applied different approaches in implementing the Be riskSMART framework.
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> Although a combined agency result was difficult to measure, most offices were able to meet their key results, and all offices applied, in more than one way, the framework in making key decisions. The following are examples of agency offices applying the Be riskSMART framework to key decisions:
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> - established the organizational structure for the new Regional Operations Branch in support of the Regional Office Centralization project (Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer);
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> - used Modified Enforcement Panels and e-mail for Allegation Boards for cases that have low safety significance or alignment for the path forward (Office of Enforcement);
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> - modified the existing "add/shed/defer" internal process for work scheduling and workload priorities (Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research);

- formulated staffing decisions for complex licensing amendment requests (Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation); and

- held knowledge management sessions in which the Be riskSMART framework was applied to technical and corporate areas (Region II).

<u>Key Result 3</u>: In 2021, staff in each office post at least four examples to the IdeaScale Success Gallery showing the use of the Be riskSMART framework to improve timeliness and quality of decision-making.

End-of-Year Results:

The staff posted a total of 24 ideas to IdeaScale that showcased the use of the Be riskSMART framework. Although the agency did not achieve its goal, the 24 ideas posted to IdeaScale represented significant progress in showing the use of the Be riskSMART framework to improve timeliness and quality of decision-making

<u>Key Result 4</u>: At least 75 percent of external stakeholders (e.g., industry representatives, other government agencies, public interest groups) surveyed by NRC during 2021 agree that the use of risk information has improved the timeliness and quality of the agency's decision-making over the past year.

Progress:

The NRC staff launched a public survey on September 13, 2021, to seek external stakeholder perceptions of the agency's transformation efforts. The survey is available until March 31, 2022, to provide ample time for all interested NRC external stakeholders to provide survey feedback, recognizing that external stakeholders participate in various NRC activities during different times of the year. As of March 14, 2022, the NRC had received 80 responses to the survey. The NRC staff will continue to collect responses and will assess the feedback.

Objective 2: Leverage staff creativity to innovate the ways that the agency performs its work in 2021, while using the IdeaScale platform to collect, manage and document ideas.

<u>Key Result 1</u>: Of the ideas posted in the IdeaScale Success Gallery in 2021, at least one-third are categorized as a process improvement.

End-of-Year Results:

A total of 76 percent of ideas submitted to IdeaScale were categorized as a process improvement. This was significantly above the target metric of 33 percent. This demonstrates that the staff is using the IdeaScale platform to enhance agency processes through collaborative discussion. This is also confirmed by the survey result that 55 percent of the staff who participated in the survey agreed that the NRC has adopted innovative approaches and solutions that have improved the agency's mission execution.

The links below provide examples of process improvement successes:

- [e-Concurrence Process](#)—The e-Concurrence system has streamlined, centralized, and automated the concurrence process as it relates to correspondence review and approval within the majority of the agency.

- [Tracking and Monitoring Nonbillable Fuel Facility Activities](#)—The improved tracking has provided a better understanding of how business line resources are being used. This information has informed and improved the NRC's budget formulation process.

- [Support Bot](#)—The NRC staff developed a question-and-answer bot in its Microsoft 365 environment to create a one-stop shop for agency support information.

- [Biennial Review of Fees Process](#)—The NRC staff modified the biennial review of the fees process by streamlining requirements.

Key Result 2: At least 25 percent of agency staff participate in a Challenge Campaign in 2021.

End-of-Year Results:

More than 15 challenge campaigns took place in 2021, and a total of 7 percent of the agency staff participated. The NRC staff will continue to leverage the use of challenge campaigns to solve agency challenges by tapping into the collective wisdom of the staff. The NRC staff is confident that use of this tool will continue to increase as staff gains more familiarity with its application and benefits.

The links below provide examples of challenge campaigns held this year:

- [Environmental Justice](#)
- [Innovating the Reactor Oversight Program](#)
- [Reshaping the Resident Inspector Program](#)
- [Identifying Priority Questions for the Agency's Learning Agenda](#)

Key Result 3: In response to a survey administered in 2021, at least 75 percent of NRC staff agree that the agency has benefited from the adoption of innovative ideas over the past year.

End-of-Year Results:

The Culture Pulse Survey conducted in April 2021 showed that 55 percent of the respondents agreed that the NRC has adopted innovative approaches and solutions that have improved execution of the agency's mission. Although the agency did not achieve the 75 percent goal, it did make progress, given that more than half the staff acknowledged the benefits of innovation, and its relation to achieving mission goals. The NRC staff will reassess, based on the results from the November 2022 Organizational Culture Inventory Survey.

Key Result 4: At least 75 percent of external stakeholders (e.g., industry representatives, other government agencies, public interest groups) surveyed by NRC during 2021 agreed that within the past year, the Agency has adopted new processes, tools, or products that are improving the Agency's mission execution.

Progress:

The NRC staff launched a public survey on September 13, 2021, to seek external stakeholder perceptions of the agency's transformation efforts. The survey is available until March 31, 2022, to provide ample time for all interested NRC external stakeholders to provide survey feedback, recognizing that external stakeholders participate in various NRC activities during different times of the year. As of March 14, 2022, the NRC had received 80 responses to the survey. The NRC staff will continue to collect responses and will assess the feedback.

Objective 3: Execute culture improvement and strategic workforce plans in 2021 to ensure that our people have the engagement, motivation, and skills to successfully execute our mission now and in the future.

Key Result 1: In 2021, each office takes steps to address the actions in their culture improvement plan.

End-of-Year Results:

Ongoing activities are being coordinated through the Agency Desired Culture Team and Agency Culture Change Agents. Given that culture has an influential role in how the agency conducts business, culture was identified as a transformation initiative and as being essential to creating a positive working environment that engages and empowers staff to lead during times of change. Agency culture also encourages the staff to demonstrate behaviors that enable trust. The NRC staff completed many activities in 2021, including the following:

- created a change agent network of over 200 people from across NRC offices and regions to establish a forum to communicate and to foster an active community of practice in which to model the NRC's desired culture;

- created coaching aids and conversation guides to equip NRC supervisors with tools to: create a safe space to talk with employees; initiate a two-way dialogue that can help build trust, show support, and better understand employees' needs; talk with employees about how they can apply the NRC Leadership Model in their day-to-day behaviors at work to help them succeed;

- incorporated NRC Leadership Model narratives into Senior Executive Service performance plans to ensure structural elements are in place to reinforce behaviors consistent with Leadership Model expectations;

- partnered with the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer to incorporate NRC Leadership Model language into the update of Management Directive 10.72, "Awards and Recognition," to create a mechanism to formally recognize desired behaviors while accomplishing mission-related tasks;

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- incorporated NRC Leadership Model behaviors and culture improvement shifts into NRC-developed courses; and

- created five curriculum tracks to catalogue available learning and development resources in Percipio for each behavior shift, specifically customized to highlight key concepts and behaviors that are fundamental in supporting the cultural shifts.

Key Result 2: The Agency shows improvement in indicators of employee engagement and culture as measured by the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) administered in 2021 compared to 2020.

End-of-Year Results:

In 2021, our FEVS results showed a 2 percent decline in the Employee Engagement Index (EEI), with the EEI subindex measuring "Leaders Lead," and "Intrinsic Work Experience" demonstrating a five percent and one percent decline, respectively. Alternatively, the EEI subindex measuring "Supervisors" showed a modest gain of two percentage points. We recognize that there remain opportunities for us to improve our engagement, support, and trust, as well as leadership behaviors as levers to closing our culture gaps.

Key Result 3: In 2021, at least 25 percent of agency staff visit the Career Enhancement and Career Journey portals and complete a survey on the usefulness of the tools.

End-of-Year Results:

A total of 106 employees completed the Employee Journey survey, representing approximately 4 percent of the staff, and a total of 126 employees completed the Career Enhancement survey, representing approximately 5 percent of the staff. Although the agency did not achieve the 25 percent goal, the number of staff accessing these sites increased. Efforts will continue to encourage the staff to go to these sites, as they provide valuable interactive tools and resources to support current and future workforce needs.

Key Result 4: At least 75 percent of agency staff who complete the survey of the Career Enhancement and Career Journey portals in 2021 indicate that the information positively influenced their career path.

End-of-Year Results:

Based on the feedback provided, 75 percent of the respondents agreed that the Career Enhancement and Career Journey portals positively influenced their career path.

Objective 4: Employ greater application of technology, data, and data analytics across the agency in 2021 to strengthen our decision-making process and inform regulatory activities.

Key Result 1: In 2021, each office will share in the IdeaScale Success Gallery two cases in which they used data analytics to improve decision-making.

End-of-Year Results:

The staff submitted a total of 20 cases to the IdeaScale Success Gallery, which represented at least two cases each from five offices or regions, demonstrating a clear increase in staff engagement and interest. The result for this year demonstrates that the staff is seeking opportunities to enhance the accessibility of data and to be able to use data more effectively in the decision-making process.

The links below provide examples of the staff's use of data analytics to improve decision-making:

- Using Machine Learning to Evaluate Emergency Planning Zones—This project focused on clustering and population prediction to estimate the emergency planning zones population density around the location of a new site.

- Inspector Qualification Dashboard—The dashboard provides useful visuals of inspector qualification data that allow the region to identify the need for placing qualified inspectors.

- Using Data to Assess the Effectiveness of Virtual Public Meetings—The NRC staff leveraged technology by using Microsoft Forms to provide a direct link to public meeting attendees to gather meeting feedback and improve the conduct of the annual assessment meetings to enhance the agency's public outreach.

Key Result 2: In 2021, each office will identify at least two use cases for applying automation to improve a work process, which can be referred to the Office of the Chief Information Officer for inclusion in its Information Technology Roadmap.[1]

End-of-Year Results:

The NRC staff hosted challenge campaigns to identify processes in which automation could improve work processes. A total of 11 offices and regions participated in these challenge campaigns, submitting 88 ideas garnering a total of 600 staff votes. These ideas were provided to the Office of the Chief Information Officer for review and prioritization for execution within the Information Technology Roadmap.

The links below provide examples of ideas submitted in challenge campaigns:

- Making Code Development More Accessible and Collaborative at the NRC
- Automation of Reciprocity Process
- Regulatory Information Conference Theme for 2022
- Refresh of NUREG-0386
- Knowledge Management 2.0

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[1] Offices submitted ideas or cases for applying automation to improve a work process by conducting a challenge campaign in IdeaScale.

Key Result 3: At least 90 percent staff surveyed by NRC during 2021 agree that during the past year, the agency's use of technology, data, and data analytics has strengthened our decision-making and regulatory processes.

> **End-of-Year Results:**
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> The Culture Pulse Survey conducted in April 2021 showed that 81 percent of the respondents agreed that the agency's use of technology, data, and data analytics has strengthened NRC decisionmaking. Although the 90 percent goal was not achieved, the agency made progress, given that more than three quarters of the staff acknowledged the benefits of using technology, data, and data analytics for achieving NRC mission goals. The NRC staff will reassess and hope for an increase in this response in 2022. The Organizational Culture Inventory Survey will be conducted again in November 2022.

Key Result 4: At least 75 percent of external stakeholders (e.g., industry representatives, other government agencies, public interest groups) surveyed by NRC during 2021 agree that during the past year, the agency's use of technology, data, and data analytics has strengthened our decision-making and regulatory processes.

> **Progress:**
>
> The NRC staff launched a public survey on September 13, 2021, to seek external stakeholder perceptions of agency's transformation efforts. The survey is available until March 31, 2022, to provide ample time for all interested NRC external stakeholders to provide survey feedback, recognizing that external stakeholders participate in various NRC activities during different times of the year. As of March 14, 2022, the NRC had received 80 responses to the survey. The NRC staff will continue to collect responses and will assess the feedback.