

Collaborative effort between Hanford and WSU examines security awareness among site employees

A unique partnership of the U.S. Department of Energy, Fluor Hanford and Washington State University Tri-Cities recently produced a research study on security awareness at Hanford. The study, undertaken by students of the WSU Tri-Cities School of Business, culminated in a two-hour presentation in which students presented their recommendations to a group of senior DOE-RL, FH and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory managers.

“We will be looking to see how this material can be applied to our existing security awareness programs to help us enhance employee involvement with security” said Denny Sieracki, team leader for DOE-RL Personnel Security. “We will soon implement those ideas which have the most benefit to the overall program,” Sieracki continued.

WSU Professor Pam Henderson, who guided the study, said the joint DOE-RL and WSU study was “a win-win, for DOE, the university and especially the students who participated.”

“DOE-RL is always interested in new ways to improve security awareness, but before going too far, we needed an independent marketing assessment or baseline,” said Chet Braswell, Security Education and Awareness Program administrator for Day & Zimmermann Protection Technology Hanford, DOE’s primary site-security contractor. “The students worked very hard on this project. I estimate they spent over 800 hours on this assignment.”

One suggestion made by the WSU group is to partner more with safety. “There are benefits to be gained from safety’s established worker involvement levels by linking the ideas of safety and security together,” said a team member. There are also benefits to be gained by increasing manager involvement with security. Management was rated most important in improving security awareness.

The WSU team members who worked on this study are Kevin Higginson, Beth Klinski, Alison Marcum, Sophia Orozco, Kristin Sawyer and Dennis Walters. ♦