

2010 DLR Safety Culture Focus Group Summary

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<p style="text-align: center;">The Current Environment</p> <p>Describe the current environment within DLR? DLR Staff Responses: STRAINED</p> <p>Pluses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overall work environment is getting better; stress and workload are high. • Some staff feel free to share ideas and get good input from branch chiefs. • The work environment is positive. • Melanie has positively influenced the work environment. <p>Deltas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management is overly concerned about making milestones and does not understand what it takes to accomplish them; this creates a stressful work environment where quality is (at times) sacrificed. • Brian is very focused on upper management and not what is happening to the staff. • The overall environment is characterized by knee-jerk reactions, fire drills and reactive responses to external pressures. • The environment is stressful and full of pressure. Managers are reactionary. • The division does not plan well nor do managers allocate workload well. • High camaraderie among staff; however, the division is fractured. • Several senior PMs lack professionalism and have negative attitudes that discourage others. • Culture of blame – find out what went wrong and who's to blame. • Staff are not held accountable for maintaining a schedule or for producing quality documents. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Treatment: Trust & Respect</p> <p>How are people treated? DLR Staff Responses: FAIR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most people are rewarded for performance; however, there is inconsistent or low accountability for underperformers. • Some staff do not have the technical skills/experience to do the job; but because they are qualified, it is assumed they can do the work. • Uneven distribution of workload (across staff; high performers get all of the work). Staff members work on the weekends, or late in the evenings, only to be left to do the work when managers go home. • Some people feel respected, yet many there is a feeling of disrespect by branch chiefs (this varies by branch chief and individual). • Suggestions are made by staff, but are quickly thrown down by branch chiefs. • Significant focus on “safety” review; low focus on “environmental” review. • Staff are often questioned by managers, which creates a feel of distrust and insecurity. • In comparison to other offices/divisions (that DLR staff have worked in), trust in DLR is low. • Brian communicates “orders” that go against the regulatory process (Part 50 & 54 lines blurred – operating reactors vs license renewal mixed up - safety). Change dispositions on environmental. • Low cohesiveness among managers. Two branch chiefs do not get along. Branch chiefs are afraid of Brian (often reactive). • There are several dominating personalities (among staff). 	<p style="text-align: center;">Quality of Products (Division & Self)</p> <p>Do you feel that the Division is producing high quality products? Do you feel that you are producing high quality products? DLR Staff Responses: GOOD</p> <p>Division:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, the office produces quality products (based on ACRS comments). We know when ACRS is dissatisfied; when people are put on the spot. • Quality is not the focus when starting to develop products. However, quality should be the focus throughout the process. • There is a need for standard templates and better use of contractors. Some contractors do not produce quality deliverables and it creates rework. • The lack of structure can hinder staff (especially new hires). <p>Individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual quality has gone up lately because of increased guidance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ (A) Push to give tools to help employees ○ (B) More process steps (peer reviews) • Better environment/documents are done in house – BIG improvement (first lack of objections by EPA) • Quality has improved because of peer reviews; yet some people use reviews as an excuse for producing low quality products which becomes someone else's responsibility for completing.
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The Right Things	Communication	Areas for Improvement
<p>Do you feel that DLR is doing the right things? DLR Staff Responses: UNSURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There's something off (see responses to the Current Environment). • Nothing is taken seriously that will improve the situation. • Too few resources dedicated to "fixing" the Division. • Staff put up with things that just don't work well. • Things are getting better because Melanie is helping to refocus the division. • Quality is improving and materials are clearer and more focused. • Efficiencies from Lean Six Sigma did not work. <p style="text-align: center;">Tools</p> <p>Do you feel that you have the tools to do your job? DLR Staff Responses: GOOD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of training and material has greatly improved. • Staff have collaboration software to help with document sharing and review (e.g., SharePoint). • Integrated schedule helps in prioritizing work. • Tools are not used properly (ex., EPM). • Mentoring is not effectively used; more training is needed to address the specific technical aspects of the work. 	<p>Describe the level of communication in the Division? DLR Staff Responses: LOW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding Monday management meetings: staff are more interested in hearing what the Director and Deputy Director are focusing on. Other than knowing about management's displeasure, staff don't get very much communication about what's going on. • Some of the expectations are not talked about until we've actually made an error. • There is low feedback on performance, except when delays occur. The first time that staff hear about something that's gone wrong is when a product is late. • There is low communication feedback between teams. Branch chiefs don't want to rock the boat. • Quarterly division meetings have stopped, and there is limited ability to communicate on cross-cutting issues during the Tuesday meetings. • Staff need a forum to disagree and resolve issues; there's a lot of "stuff" that doesn't get addressed. • Low communication between Project Managers and Tech Reviewers. • One way communications; need more proactive communications about needs 	<p>What can be done to create a more effective Division?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up tools that are more helpful for PMs – bring back contractor support for report outlines/templates. • It takes savvy in knowing how to manipulate 900 page documents. Need administrative support for editing/formatting requirements. • Need to be sensitive to the need for PMs to have down time. Other people in the Division have breaks – it's not fair. • More cross training – PMs are expected to be reviewers. • Perhaps the Technical staff should have a class for PMs • Communicate: Talk to people and believe that people are trying to do a good job. We need to understand each other better: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide forum to discuss issues ○ Provide help i.e. provide opportunities for communication across branches • Look at workload within Division and balance workload better; pair senior staff with junior staff • Take time to address Division-specific needs; allocate management time attention to improve DLR • Focus on training and mentoring staff • Don't make knee-jerk reactions based on focus group results • Better communications between branch chiefs and from managers to staff • Provide onboarding/training opportunities

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Specific Staff Comments:

I Like	I Wish
My branch chief is very supportive of my work life balance	We continue integrated schedules
My current mix of PM and technical assignments, especially assignments related to my technical background	That there was better interaction between the different branches and that the work would be clearly identified as to who should be doing what
DLR because of the people that I work with. I enjoy working with them usually, and like being part of a team	There is more positive interaction between staff and management
DLR because it sharpens writing and reasoning skills	There was were consistency between branches (Tech and PM) Is accountability
The steps going forward for improvement	Had more time
The work	There would be consistency with the work products (EIS, SER)
DLR because I have good work/life balance	BCs would communicate amongst themselves more frequently/effectively
Division appears to be focusing on improving	Hold staff accountable
The fact that my work/opinions seem valued	Schedules/due dates would be adequately passed along and reviewers would be held accountable
Most of my coworkers, my boss, flexibility, new staff	There were more chanced for training/working with senior staff to improve my skills
That I am fairly busy with meaningful work and training although only recently starting	DLR mgmt would be more deliberated in addressing issues (take a deep breath get right people involved)
The people I work with	We had better coordination on process, projects, accomplishments etc
The peer work environment with DLR	That there was a document outlining how to best do my job. This document would of course still be supplemented by all existing documents in use
Flexible work schedules, effort to improve, people who speak their mind in the division without resorting to personal attacks	Things weren't so disorganized
Overall, I enjoy working here but there are some issues (like how to address generic concerns)	I can communicate and have better communication with upper management
The fact that the PMs work together well and can trust each other	There were more sense of ownership in meeting deadlines
The people, the mission	People had better writing skills
I had more structure in my tasks/responsibility	DLR would value the environmental side of the division. They need to replace (backfill) environment review staff when they leave
My branch chief	DLR division direct would not be so reactive but would listen and think about the issue before decreeing his decision
Type of work in DLR	Upper management cared about our input/feedback
Teamwork, collaboration	We had better management in DLR
DLR for the most part allows me a very flexible, low stress well paid job	Everything wasn't an emergency to finish; more mgmt attention paid to creating, updating procedures
Public meetings conducted	Certain high level PMs weren't so condescending and negative
	Detail and open inspection results impact on LR decision