

EHS Team:

This week our Optimization Plan was mentioned by Jim Krupnick at his All-Hands Meeting for Operations. For those of you who were not able to attend, he put up on the screen the question: Why is the EHS restructuring not taking effect until March?

It's a good question, and he had a good answer for it. Jim explained that this effort is complex and comprehensive, and we all want to get it right. I also feel that it is more important to work at this systematically, and figure out the details as best we can in advance, than to rush into it and have to make more adjustments later on. We are doing this, as I have said before, to build a more efficient, nimble, and responsive organization. We want EHS activities to be woven into the fabric of Berkeley Lab's planning and decision-making process. Our realignment will allow us to become for customer-focused, and to carry out our strategic plan, which as I have outlined previously includes five goals or strategies we will be working on through FY14. They are:

- Achieve a 10 percent increase in efficiency
- Implement EHS IT Systems Integration
- Improve working relationship with customers, division, and DOE.
- Improve EHS in Project design and execution
- Drive Safety Culture Improvement at LBNL

To keep you up-to-date on the progress of our plan, I can tell you that the job descriptions are being finalized for the two new Department Head positions we announced last week and will be posted no later than November 16 — this coming Wednesday. We are also in the process of setting up interviews with four candidates for the new position of Deputy Director for Client Support Services, so we are making progress on that front as well.

There will be a few occasions when it is important to implement decisions before March 30. With Dan Lunsford's retirement coming up, I will place the Site Access and Foreign Visits & Assignments programs as of Monday under Gita Meckel, who — as we announced earlier — will be the Deputy Director for EHS Operations under our realignment.

Jim's All-Hands presentation also touched on the budget picture, which he described basically as flat, which means a bit down as our benefit expenses rise. So...what about us? Funding challenges stemming from the Federal budget process and increased medical and retirement contributions did have an impact on our organization. The EHS FY12 Indirect Budget is ~6% lower than FY11 (adjusted for inflation). To meet this shortfall, we reduced staffing by 10 positions through a combination of VRIFs, not backfilling open positions, and reducing temporary positions and positions filled by contract labor. In most cases we were able to minimize the impact to the various groups by reorganizing functions, postponing project deadlines, and re-evaluating levels of support for specific services. I don't anticipate further budget cuts at this point, but should the budget scenario shift in the coming months, I will keep you appraised.

I've mentioned several times how pleased I was with your participation in the Customer Service Survey. We are now compiling the results and should be able to share them with you next week. As such, I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize the team that collaborated to develop this survey, and another going out to our customers in the next few days. The team was led by Richard DeBusk and included a nice cross section of individuals from throughout the Division; Maram Kassis, Ken Barat, Kurt Galloway, Mike White, Joe Dionne, and Patrick Thorson."

I hope these Friday e-mails continue to be informative. I appreciate the feedback I've gotten. Please tell us what you think.