

# Safety Conscious Work Environment

Lisamarie L. Jarriel, Agency Allegation Advisor

- **History**
- **Key attributes of a Safety Conscious Work Environment**
- **How we “regulate” SCWE at Vendors**



# Objectives

June 2012

NRC Workshop on Vendor Oversight for New Reactor Construction

## • **NRC Regulations**

- Quality Assurance Program (“Appendix B”)
- Reporting of Defects and Noncompliances (Part 21)
- Employee Protection (50.7 etc.)



# Background

June 2012

NRC Workshop on Vendor Oversight for New Reactor Construction

# • Quality Assurance Programs and Reporting Requirements

- QA Program (required by licensee contract) to provide adequate confidence that a system, structure or component will perform satisfactorily in service
  - Program attributes include: inspections, audits, corrective actions
  - Report defects and nonconformances (required by NRC regulation)
- NRC inspections
  - Notices of nonconformance
  - Notices of Violation



## Background

June 2012

NRC Workshop on Vendor Oversight for New Reactor Construction

## • Employee Protection Requirements

- Regulations prohibit discrimination for raising safety concerns
- Allegation Program
  - Formalized – 1982
  - Reassessment of Program – 1994
    - Establish Agency Allegation Advisor
    - SCWE Policy Statement and inspection guidance
- NRC Policy Statement on SCWE – 1996
  - RIS 2005-018, “Guidance for Establishing and Maintaining a Safety Conscious Work Environment”



# Background

June 2012

NRC Workshop on Vendor Oversight for New Reactor Construction

- **Safety Conscious Work Environment**

- An environment in which employees are encouraged to raise safety concerns, are free to raise concerns both to their management and to the NRC without fear of retaliation, where concerns are promptly reviewed, given the proper priority, and appropriately resolved, and timely feedback is provided.

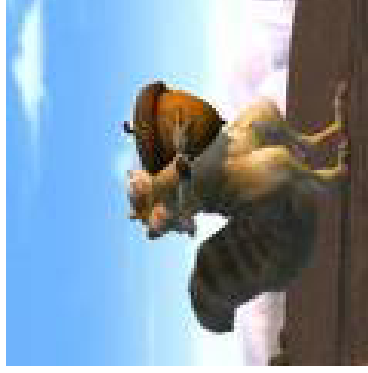
- **“Chilled” Work Environment**

- Employees perceive raising safety concerns is suppressed/discouraged.

- **“Frozen” Work Environment**

- An environment where concerns are no longer being raised.

## Definitions



Normal



Chilled



Frozen

June 2012

NRC Workshop on Vendor Oversight for New Reactor Construction

- **Key SCWE Attributes**

- Employees are comfortable raising and encouraged to raise safety concerns
  - policies; training; recognition
- Processes to find and address concerns are effective (e.g., Audits; Corrective Action Program; Employee Concerns Program)
  - Comprehensive; prioritized; resolved; feedback; appeals
- Management is effective at Detecting and Preventing Discrimination and Chilled Environment
  - Monitoring; accountability



# SCWE

June 2012

NRC Workshop on Vendor Oversight for New Reactor Construction

- **NRC Insights into SCWE**

- Inspection
- Allegations



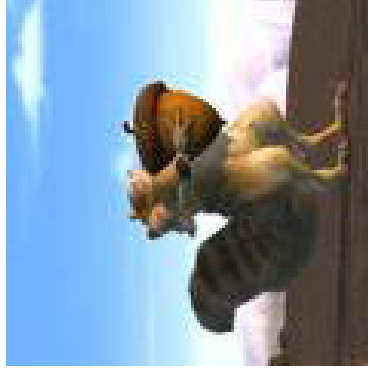
## **How Does NRC “Regulate” SCWE?**

June 2012

NRC Workshop on Vendor Oversight for New Reactor Construction

## • QA Inspection and SCWE Observations

- Interview employees/contractors
  - Key attributes
- Review vendor's assessment
- Review program files



# Oversight Inspections

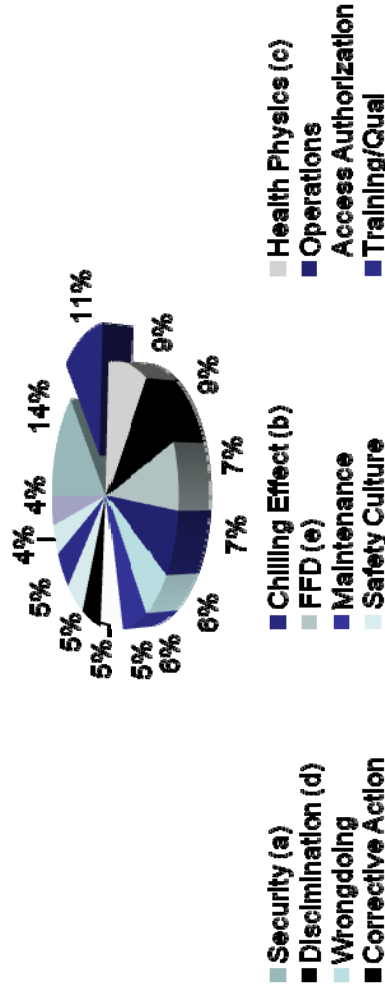
June 2012

NRC Workshop on Vendor Oversight for New Reactor Construction

## •Chilling Effect Allegations

- “I’m chilled and/or others are chilled because I’ve been discriminated against for raising nuclear safety concerns”
- “I’m chilled and/or others are chilled because someone else has been discriminated against for raising concerns”
- “Management behavior, other than discrimination, has chilled me”
  - “Management never addressed my previous concerns”
  - “Corrective Action Program is ineffective”
- “Supervisors calls people who write too many condition reports names”
- “Management worries more about meeting the schedule than safety”

## Allegations of a Chilled Work Environment



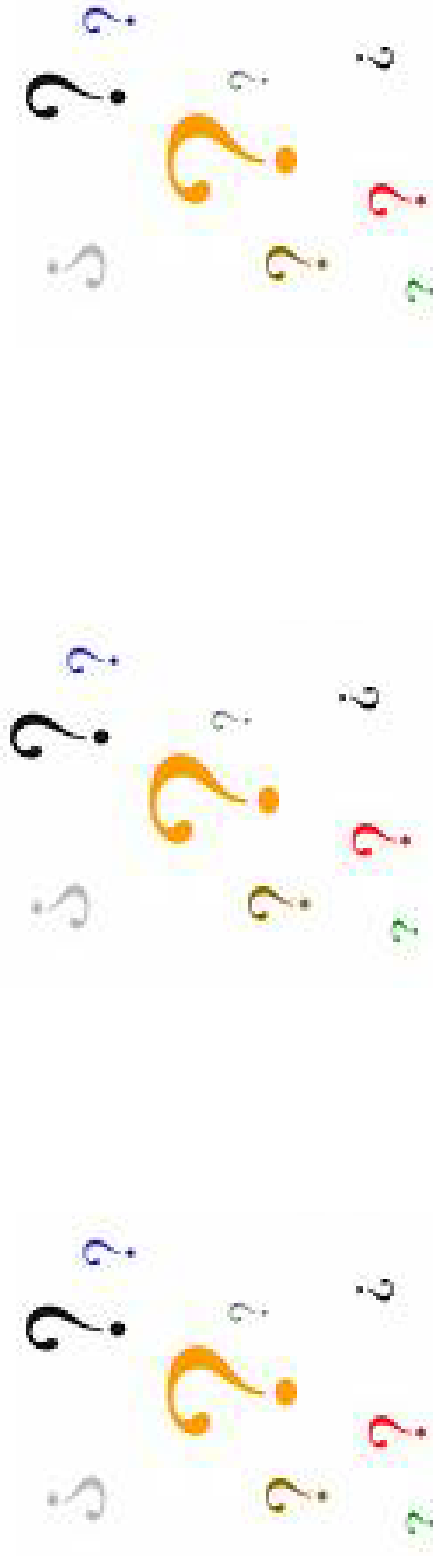
June 2012

NRC Workshop on Vendor Oversight for New Reactor Construction

## • Information Requested of Allegor

- Are there any specific concerns you or others haven't raised that you wish to raise now?
- What types of concerns are you hesitant to raise and why?
  - What is their impact on safety?
- Which avenues are you hesitant to use to raise concerns and why?
- Which organizations and how many people are impacted?
- Who is doing the "chilling" and what influence does s/he have?
- When was the event that chilled the SCWE?
- Is management aware of the chilling effect? Actions taken? Were actions effective?

## Allegations of a Chilled Work Environment

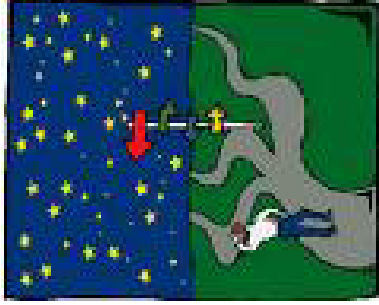


June 2012

NRC Workshop on Vendor Oversight for New Reactor Construction

- **NRC Response Options**
  - Reactive SCWE Inspection
  - Non-public request for information (RFI) to vendor
  - Public “Chilling Effect Letter”

## **Allegations of a Chilled Work Environment**



- **Reactive SCWE Inspection**

- Interviews
  - One-on-one vs. Focus Groups; Workers and Management
- Document Reviews
  - Policies/Procedures; Communications; Training Materials; Program Files; Self-Assessments; NRC Allegation Files; NRC QA Inspection Observations
- Observations
  - Pre-job Brief; All-hands Mtgs; Daily Site Status Mtgs;



## **NRC Inspection of a Chilled Work Environment**



June 2012

NRC Workshop on Vendor Oversight for New Reactor Construction

- **Reviewing Response to RFI**

- Was the evaluation independent?
- Was the scope of the evaluation sufficient to address the concerns
  - Interviews, document reviews, observations
- Is the conclusion supported by the facts
- Are corrective action plans, if proposed, sufficient to prevent reoccurrence?
- NRC independent verification

## **RFI Involving a Chilling Effect Allegation**



June 2012

NRC Workshop on Vendor Oversight for New Reactor Construction

- **CEL Purpose**

- Publicly notify vendor of NRC's concern about the SCWE
  - Informs workforce of NRC's focus on SCWE
- Request information re: assessment/corrective actions



## **Chilling Effect Letter**

June 2012

NRC Workshop on Vendor Oversight for New Reactor Construction

- **History**
  - Strong QA requires strong SCWE
- **Key attributes of a SCWE**
  - Encouraged; No fear; Effective programs; Leadership monitoring
- **How we “regulate” SCWE**
  - Inspections; Allegations



## In Summary

June 2012

NRC Workshop on Vendor Oversight for New Reactor Construction

# Thank You

