

## Differences in Technical Opinions Scenario – 2013 Awareness Training And the Winner Is...

### Overview

Differences in technical opinions and the free and open discussion associated with resolving these differences are encouraged, expected, and considered healthy aspects of the diverse technical competencies in the workplace.

- Members of the workforce are expected to first attempt to resolve differences within their line(s) of management. If issues have been escalated and cannot be resolved at or below the director level, then formal processes may be used, as appropriate.
- Sandia is committed to ensuring that differing opinions can be raised without fear of retaliation.
- Professional discourse and respect for the individuals and opinions of those involved are required in keeping with Sandia's core values.

### Assert, Challenge, Conclude (ACC) Methodology for Nuclear Weapons Product Realization

This procedure applies to all persons that have roles in the design, development, qualification, production or assessment of a nuclear weapon throughout its lifecycle. This process occurs at all levels of the organization from the staff level through the Center Director, however, it is intended that resolution of challenges occur at the lowest level possible and when needed, the management chain on both sides of the issue are used for escalation (product authority and challenger). If resolution is not reached at the Director level, participants shall exit this process and use the Nuclear Weapons Strategic Management Unit (NWSMU) Differing Professional Opinion Resolution procedure.

### Department of Energy (DOE) Differing Professional Opinion (DPO) Process Involving ES&H

When differing professional opinions arise over technical issues involving environment, safety, and health (ES&H), members of the workforce should first contact their management and try to resolve their concerns with line management and their organization's ES&H coordinator. If technical concerns cannot be resolved through this process, members of the workforce may report them using the DOE DPO process. Sandia is responsible for assisting DOE, upon request, in resolving the DPO and for reporting on implementation status, actions, and closure of DPO cases.

### Other differences in technical opinions

On a case-by-case basis, certain other differences in technical opinions in the workplace may utilize a similar methodology for review, assessment and resolution. Members of the workforce who have an unresolved difference in technical opinion in an area not covered by the NWSMU or DOE ES&H DPO processes should first contact their management. If additional assistance is needed, members of the workforce may call the Ethics Helpline at 505-844-1744.

NOTE: The following issues are outside the scope of a differing professional opinion process:

- Issues that have not yet been assessed by the management of the individuals or organizations with the differing opinions
- Topics previously considered, addressed, or rejected under one of these procedures, absent significant new information (e.g., test data, modeling, regulations, etc.)
- Personnel or administrative issues
- Issues related to wrongdoing; i.e., waste, fraud, abuse (these will be referred to the Sandia Ethics and Corporate Investigations Office and, if warranted, to the Office of Inspector General)
- Issues raised external to Sandia, except in cases where a Sandia member of the workforce chooses to represent the external position