

HOTLINE

The Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory is a United States Department of Energy Facility

Anderson Chairs National Council

PPPPL's Jack Anderson is the new Chair of the Department of Energy's National Laboratories Improvement Council (NLIC). Anderson, Head of PPPL's ES&H and Infrastructure Support Department, assumed the one-year post this summer.

The Council's goal is to hold meetings regularly for members to address common issues and share lessons learned, as well as to act on opportunities for improvement in administration and operations. The Secretary of Energy and National Laboratory Directors founded the NLIC in 1991.

"The DOE and the Laboratory Directors formed the Council to support a process of continuous improvement in program performance; environment, safety and health; and best business practices," said Anderson, who has been a member since 1996.

The Council includes representatives from DOE Federally Funded Research and Development Centers

(i.e., the Labs), the DOE National Nuclear Security Administration Defense Program, the DOE Office of Science, and the DOE Office of Program Analysis and Evaluation.

"The Council offers a forum where senior Laboratory representatives collectively can speak directly to DOE officials and vice versa. This enables a candid exchange of information and feedback, which promotes a better understanding between the DOE and Labs," said Anderson. ●



Jack Anderson

PPPL Hosts Small Business R&D Workshop

In August, PPPL hosted a workshop for small high-tech businesses to learn about government resources for grant funding. More than 125 people attended the "Small Business Innovative Research and Small Business Technology Transfer Workshop," which focused on collaborations with universities and federal laboratories. Topics included Intellectual Property and Government Rights, Cooperative Research and Development Agreements, and the Rutgers Small Business Development Center, as well as overviews of the Small Business Innovative Research program by government



At left, a workshop attendee picks up literature about PPPL in the Lobby. PPPL, as well as the Federal Laboratory Consortium and the New Jersey Technology Council, had displays. At right, PPPL's Lewis Meixler gave an overview of the Small Business Innovative Research and Small Business Technology Transfer programs.



agencies and academic institutions. Co-sponsored by the Federal Laboratory Consortium Northeast Region and the New Jersey Technology Council, the workshop included presentations of technologies at Princeton University, PPPL, the U.S. Navy at Lakehurst, and the U.S. Army programs at Picatinny Arsenal and Fort Monmouth in New Jersey. PPPL's Lewis Meixler, who helped organize the workshop, said, "Success of the event was largely the result of the teaming efforts of the Federal Laboratory Consortium, the New Jersey Technology Council, and PPPL." ●

New Computer Password Management System is Up and Running at PPPL

PPPPL computer users are gaining new independence — the ability to change their passwords on their own anytime, anyplace. What’s more, they now can synchronize their passwords across the UNIX operating system and Windows, e-mail, and SecureID system.

The Lab’s Computer Division recently began using a commercial product, P-Synch, which provides password and SecureID management through a self-service web interface. PPPL systems presently under P-Synch password management are UNIX Cluster, e-mail, PPPL Windows 2000 Domain, and SecureID badges. PC users will employ it the most, but Mac users may employ it for e-mail password management.

“The advantage is that P-Synch users can define one password for multiple systems, and then change or reset that password themselves anytime,” said PPPL’s Tom Carroll, who installed and tested the system. “Besides giving individuals greater independence, they won’t have to remember as many passwords since they can synchronize them across UNIX and Windows machines.”

Additionally, if someone has a SecureID badge for remote access to PPPL, P-Synch provides the user with mechanisms to manage the token and to troubleshoot and correct access problems. SecureID, a small badge with rotating numbers, is used by about 400 of PPPL’s staff and collaborators. It gives computer access to staff and collaborators who are offsite, allowing them a path through the Lab’s firewall.

P-Synch will be particularly useful to a PPPL researcher or collaborator who is working in another geographical location or after regular business hours. If a user is having access problems, he or she does not have to stop working and wait until PPPL’s Computer Division staff is available for assistance.

“P-Synch is especially nice for people who are working offsite and working late. We’ve just given them the ability to manage their own accounts,” said PPPL’s Lena Scimeca.”

Since staff members are asked to change their passwords annually, they now can do that on their own.

P-Synch is effective now. Individuals may begin using it by going to <http://password.pppl.gov/> on the web and filling in their user name, followed by a domain, UNIX, or e-mail password. Generally, the user name is the first letter of the first name and the first seven letters of the last name. Anyone who can’t remember his or her password can contact the Help Desk, which will change it. From then on, the individual can use P-Synch to change the password.

Tightening Cyber Security

“We’ve cut down on the number of passwords people need, while tightening cyber security,” said Carroll. “You still can get help from the Help Desk, but the advantage is that people can manage their own passwords, which assists them in continuing their work.” ●

More information about P-Synch is available on the web at <http://access.pppl.gov/p-synch>.



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The **HOTLINE** is issued by the Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory, a research facility supported by the United States Department of Energy. It is primarily an internal publication. Correspondence and requests to reprint material should be directed to the Editor, PPPL **HOTLINE**, P.O. Box 451, Princeton, NJ 08543; Interoffice correspondence should be addressed to MS-38, LSB Bldg., C-Site; fax 609-243-2751; telephone 609-243-2757; e-mail pwieser@pppl.gov.

A Reminder about PPPL's Signature Authority Policy

Maintaining control of PPPL's expenditures is vital. Since the Laboratory is funded by the Department of Energy, it must follow spending guidelines established by the Federal Government.

A key element of PPPL's system of internal financial controls is the expenditure approval process. Through this process, Department Heads and other responsible individuals at PPPL are granted "signature authority" status, which gives them the authority to sign off on expenses within specific areas.

"These individuals are primarily responsible for assuring that all costs charged to our prime contract with the Department of Energy are appropriate and reasonable," said Ed Winkler, Head of PPPL's Business Operations Department. "All expenditures must be approved by individuals who are formally authorized to do so."

Establishing Signature Authority

The Lab Director designates who has signature authority; Department Heads have the authority to revise the list as needed. The Accounting Division maintains a listing of authorized signatures for all the Laboratory's accounts.

Responsibilities of Signatories

Those with signature authority have the responsibility to ensure that:

- The expense being approved is incurred specifically for and benefits the mission and work of the account to which the expense will be charged.
- The expense is reasonable.
- The expense is allowable under the terms of PPPL's prime contract with the government.

Examples of unallowable expenses include:

- Travel on non-U.S.-flag carriers, unless prior approval from the contracting officer has been obtained.
- Cost of meals, and food costs generally, unless the employee is on official travel status.
- Entertainment costs.
- Cost of fines and penalties resulting from violations with Federal, state, or foreign laws.
- Costs incurred that do not benefit the Laboratory, or its projects or indirect activities.
- Costs incurred that are "unreasonable." A cost is reasonable if, in its nature and amount, it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person conducting a competitive business.

Only individuals with signature authority are allowed to approve transactions. If the primary approver on a cost center is unavailable, the requester must go to the next level up in the management hierarchy. For instance, if a division head is on vacation and a deputy position does not exist, the transaction must be approved by the cognizant department head. If that manager is unavailable, the requester must go to the Deputy Director or Director of the Laboratory for approval.

Special Expenditures:

When purchasing items for his or her own business use, an individual with signature authority — including a department head — must obtain approval from his or her supervisor, such as the division head, department head, or Deputy Director. Such expenditures include the following:

- Professional memberships. Membership to one professional organization requires Department Head approval. Additional memberships require the approval of the PPPL Deputy Director.
- Subscriptions to publications.
- Professional licenses.
- Travel.
- Equipment, materials, or office furniture costing \$1,000 or more.
- Desktop and laptop computers.
- Sensitive property.

Individuals with signature authority who are buying the following types of items for their own business use do NOT need the approval of a supervisor:

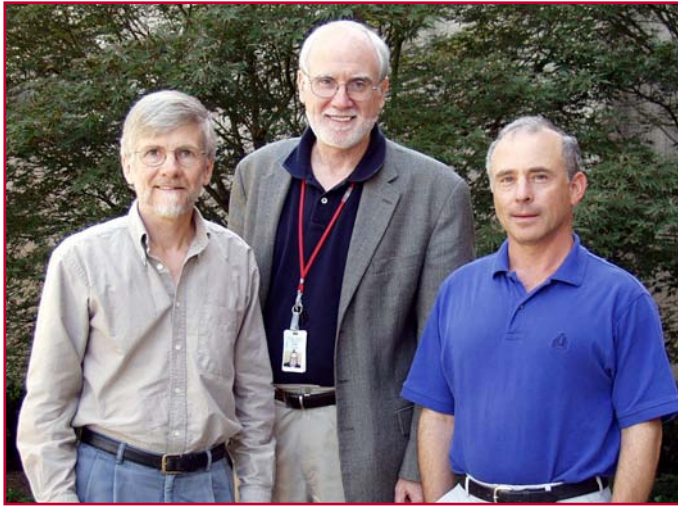
- General office supplies.
- Equipment, materials, and office furniture costing less than \$1,000.
- Desktop printers.

The Signature Authority list is available on the Accounting Home Page under "Accounting Transactions."

Said Winkler, "In addition to the signature authority process, members of the Business Operations Department routinely perform additional levels of transactional reviews to ensure allowability of expenses incurred. As a result of these procedures and processes, we are able to provide the Department of Energy with reasonable assurance that the Laboratory has adequate and appropriate internal administrative and financial controls in place to prevent the charging of unallowable costs to the government."

For more information please contact Tony Bleach at ext. 3621 or Ed Winkler at ext. 2218. ●

Colloquium Committee



The Colloquium Committee at PPPL for 2003-2004 includes (from left) Michael Bell, Gary Oliaro, and Harry Mynick. Please feel free to contact the committee either by e-mail or phone regarding any possible speakers or topics for future colloquia (mbell@pppl.gov or ext. 3282; goliaro@pppl.gov or ext. 3125; and hmynick@pppl.gov or ext. 2769.)

PPPL's Cohen Awarded

Photo by David DeBalko



In recognition of being an outstanding student in his role as a co-op, PPPL's Marc Cohen recently received the Outstanding Co-operative Education Partner Award from the Drexel University Alumni Association. Cohen was a Drexel University co-op student at PPPL last year and now is employed at the Lab as a Help Desk technician. From left are Drexel Alumni Board member Dennis Carlson, Cohen's father and mother, Michael and Leslee, Cohen, and PPPL's Harry Tower.

Holiday Schedule

The following is the Laboratory's schedule for the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's holidays.

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

The Laboratory will be closed Thursday, November 27, and Friday, November 28. These are University holidays.

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S HOLIDAYS

The Laboratory will be closed Wednesday, December 24, and reopen on Monday, January 5, 2004.

The University scheduled holidays are Thursday, December 25, Friday, December 26, Thursday, January 1, and Friday, January 2.

Staff may use optional holidays in conjunction with vacation days for the period of time that the Laboratory is closed other than the University holidays listed above between the period of December 24, 2003, and January 5, 2004.

If you have questions please call Susan Murphy-LaMarche at ext. 2224 or send an e-mail to smurphy@pppl.gov.