

Young, John, NMENV

General

From: Johansen, Mathew [mjohansen@doeal.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, November 16, 2005 9:57 AM
To: Young, John, NMENV; Cobrain, Dave, NMENV; Bearzi, James, NMENV
Cc: Whitacre, Thomas; Jean Dewart; Ordaz, John C.; Johansen, Mathew
Subject: NAS study plan
Attachments: Final GBEC PPlan of Action.RTF

John, James,

The Sept 14 version of this that I forwarded to you was draft. I believe the attached is final in that it has been approved by NAS management. I think the scope did not change. I think the scope is sufficiently broad to allow for focusing as the NAS evaluation proceeds.

We are now transferring \$ and NAS will probably begin within months.

You will see it in the scope of work, but it is worth mentioning here that John O and I want you to know that the key driver for engaging the NAS is DOE's need to have some form of external oversight for rad decisions. Although NAS will make only technical recommendations (not policy or regulatory) DOE hopes that their recommendations will be useful in ensuring sound DOE rad decisions that have staying power in the highly political arena known as LANL.

I talked to the NAS team lead (John Wiley) who wanted me to convey to you that the NAS will take care to not cross into RCRA policy or regulatory space. They will make technical recommendations that can provide a firmer technical underpinning.

John also said he will be very willing meet with NMED as you desire, but will look for your decision on that. Before NAS formally begins, he prefers that DOE coordinate any communications, so let us know if you want to contact NAS before they begin and we will set up a conference call.

The NNM CAB has requested the attachment, so they will be getting it soon as well.

Please call John O or me with questions/concerns.

Mat

LANL brand work, National Academy of Science Assessment of Safety Program



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11/17/2005

November 15, 2005

For Action
New Project

Division on Earth and Life Studies

Nuclear and Radiation Studies Board

ABBREVIATED STATEMENT OF TASK

The National Academies will undertake technical assessments of ongoing and planned environmental remediation and monitoring programs at the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) and provide recommendations to improve their technical and cost effectiveness and reduce worker, public, and environmental risks. This study will focus on specific scientific and technical issues related to groundwater monitoring and contamination migration at LANL.

Origin: External; Federal Executive; Informal
Keywords: Geology; groundwater; hydrogeology; monitoring

Origin:
John C. Ordaz
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PLAN OF ACTION

Statement of Task:

The National Academies will undertake technical assessments of ongoing and planned environmental remediation and monitoring programs at the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) and provide recommendations to improve their technical and cost effectiveness and reduce worker, public, and environmental risks. This study will focus on specific scientific and technical issues related to groundwater monitoring and contamination migration at LANL as follows:

1. General review of groundwater protection at LANL:

What is the state of the laboratory's understanding of the major sources of groundwater contamination originating from laboratory operations and have technically sound measures to control them been implemented?

Have potential sources of non-laboratory groundwater contamination been identified? Have the potential impacts of this contamination on corrective-action decision-making been assessed?

Does the laboratory's interim ground water monitoring plan follow good scientific practices? Is it adequate to provide for the early identification and response to potential environmental impacts from the laboratory?

Is the scope of groundwater monitoring at the laboratory sufficient to provide data needed for remediation decision-making? If not, what data gaps remain, and how can they be filled?

2. Specific data-quality issues:

Is the laboratory following established scientific practices in assessing the quality of its groundwater monitoring data?

Are the data (including qualifiers that describe data precision, accuracy, detection limits, and other items that aid correct interpretation and use of the data) being used appropriately in the laboratory's remediation decision making?

3. Recommendations to improve the future effectiveness of the laboratory's groundwater protection program with respect to:

Potential remedial actions for the groundwater contamination, especially for radionuclide contamination for which DOE is self-regulating; and

Monitoring for long-term stewardship.

The project is to be performed by:

Ad Hoc committee

Expertise Required:

Civil Engineering (groundwater monitoring well constructions); Civil Engineering (groundwater remediation); Chemistry (analytical, geochemistry, nuclear); Environmental law and regulation; Groundwater modeling; Groundwater monitoring; Hydrology and hydrogeology; Statistics

Consideration of Balance:

For this technical review we will seek to balance the views and expertise of field practitioners with those of basic researchers, all of whom are experienced in groundwater monitoring, modeling, and predicting contaminant fate and transport processes.

Preliminary Work Plan:

A committee of 10 members will be appointed by the National Academies to carry out this 15-month study. By the end of February 2006, the committee will issue an interim report that assesses LANL's groundwater monitoring plan (under part 1 of the Statement of Task). To produce the interim report the committee will hold one open meeting at LANL for briefings on the monitoring plan and one closed meeting. Subsequently to prepare the final report, which will give findings and recommendations, the committee will hold two open meetings at LANL/Santa Fe to obtain briefings from the study sponsor and other parties, and two closed meetings. The

closed meetings, to prepare the reports, will be at National Academies facilities. Both reports will be subjected to National Academies review before being released to the sponsor and the public.