Top-to-Bottom Review

Dr. Inés Triay

February 14, 2002
EM Is Responsible for the Cleanup of More Than 114 Sites

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Top-to-Bottom Review
Some 74 sites cleaned up by FY02, but remaining sites present enormous challenges.
I plan to examine DOE's cleanup program and identify those areas where we can make better progress in cleaning up and closing excess facilities and sites. I plan to work closely with you, the other Members of Congress, and also with the States and local communities that host these sites, to find ways to accelerate the pace of cleanup.

-- Statement of Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham to the Senate Armed Services Committee

February 8, 2001
Top-to-Bottom Report Came Out on February 4, 2002
One Might Observe...

- EM's recent annual budget appropriation has been steady.
- EM completes > 90% of their regulatory milestones on time or early.
- EM contractors earned > 90% of their available performance based fees.

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Another View of the EM Cleanup Program

- **Schedule issues:**
  - 1999 commitment: Close 41 DOE sites by 2006
  - 2002 commitment: Close 25 DOE sites by 2006

- **Cost estimate issues:**
  - 1998-1999 cost estimate increased $24.2 billion
  - 1999-2000 cost estimate increased $2.5 billion
  - 2000-2001 cost estimate increased $13.2 billion

- **Workscope issues:**
  - Surplus nuclear material remains unconsolidated across the country
  - Spent nuclear fuel remains in wet storage <1/4 mile from the Columbia River
  - High level waste inventory has grown, not reduced
The results of the Team’s review make clear that there is a systemic problem with the way EM has conducted its activities: the EM program’s major emphasis has been on managing risk, rather than actually reducing risk to workers, the public, and the environment.
Other Major Findings

- The manner in which EM develops, solicits, selects, and manages many contracts is not focused on accelerating risk reduction and applying innovative approaches to doing the work.

- EM's cleanup strategy is not based on comprehensive, coherent, technically supported risk prioritization.

- EM's internal business processes are not structured to support accelerated risk reduction or to address its current challenge of uncontrolled cost and schedule growth.

- The current scope of the EM program includes activities that are not focused on or supportive of an accelerated, risk-based cleanup and closure mission.
Recommended changes focus on one result

Accelerate risk reduction

Risk to public health
Risk to workers
Risk to the environment

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Report Recommends an Aggressive Course of Action

- Improve DOE's contract management
- Move EM to an accelerated, risk-based cleanup strategy
- Align DOE's internal processes to support an accelerated, risk-based cleanup approach
- Realign the EM program so its scope is consistent with an accelerated, risk-based cleanup and closure mission
Our Role - Implementing New Strategy

"National security will be improved through the consolidation of all special nuclear materials in modern safeguarded facilities and through accelerated disposal of transuranic (TRU) waste currently stored at sites around the country."

"To meet current acceptance requirements at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) and transportation requirements for shipment to WIPP, some TRU waste must be treated to remove organics. In addition, a limited amount of TRU waste is highly radioactive and must be handled remotely. Efforts to dispose of these materials in WIPP will be accelerated. Based on technical risk evaluations, some low-level TRU waste may be safe for disposal in a manner similar to low-level or mixed low-level waste."
Our Role - Managing Waste to Reduce Risk

"Shipments of transuranic (TRU) waste are often delayed because of size or weight limitations... the presence of organics, head-space gas measurements, and a very expensive certification process (up to $20,000 per 55-gallon drum). Substantially less costly methods could be employed to manage TRU waste while protecting the public, workers, and the environment."

"A superior approach would be to focus consistently on reducing risk to the public, workers, and the environment. In consultation with regulatory agencies and stakeholders, cleanup strategies should be developed on the basis of technical risk evaluation. Approaches to remedial action, immobilization, and isolation should be selected to be commensurate with the risk posed by the waste...will result in reduced life-cycle costs and time to program completion."
Our Role - Packaging and Transportation

“Current packaging and transportation policies and procedures are resulting in delays in the removal of materials from sites, causing increased cost and delayed risk reduction. In addition, options that would benefit many sites (e.g., use of ATMX cars for rail shipment of TRU waste... are not being pursued aggressively.”

“A better approach to packaging and transportation...will accelerate the removal of materials from sites, with associated risk reduction and cost savings.”

“Specific benefits anticipated from such improvements include...expedited shipment of TRU waste (e.g., shipment in ATMX railcars instead of by truck.”
Vision for 2003

- Maintain average receipt rate of at least 25 shipments of CH waste per week (primarily from RFETS and INEEL)
- Support limited shipments from SQS (Mound to SRS; ANL-E; NTS)
- Maintain WIPP site in compliance with DOE orders, and federal, state, and local requirements
- Implement RH waste programs