



Citizens Advisory Board
Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory

Draft U.S. Department of Energy Idaho Operations Office Strategic Plan

The Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL) Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) has reviewed the Draft Strategic Plan for the U.S. Department of Energy's Idaho Operations Office (DOE-ID), titled "Science-Based Engineering for America's Challenges..."

The INEEL CAB commends DOE-ID for undertaking a strategic planning process as it offers the opportunity to identify thoughtful strategies for the future, enable the organization to take full advantage of organizational strengths and support preparation for opportunities and challenges. We appreciate having an opportunity to review an early draft of the Strategic Plan.

Unfortunately, we had some trouble reviewing the draft document. Several initiatives were identified that we know nothing about. In addition, jargon and unfamiliar acronyms left us befuddled. Our inability to comprehend the document handicapped our review. We look forward to seeing the next draft. **The INEEL CAB recommends that DOE-ID attempt to remove jargon and acronyms from the Strategic Plan and to provide enough information about projects that a member of the public can understand the objectives and strategies.** It may be desirable to include an acronym list and a glossary to help the reader.

The INEEL CAB recommends that DOE-ID seek the input of all INEEL site employees, the Grand Junction Office (GJO), and its regulators before finalizing the Strategic Plan.

The INEEL CAB is still attempting to digest the changes in emphasis evidenced by the recent release of the Environmental Management Top-to-Bottom Review, DOE's Fiscal Year 2003 Budget Request, and the new Accelerated Cleanup Initiative. The complex interaction of these new developments warrants careful thought. **The INEEL CAB recommends that DOE-ID make the effort to fully comprehend the feedback from the Top-to-Bottom Review, adjust to the new realities of funding under this administration, and understand the implications of the Expedited Cleanup Account before finalizing the Strategic Plan.**

Conspicuously absent from the list of Environmental Cleanup Strategies is cleanup of the buried waste in the Subsurface Disposal Area. Such an omission warrants an explanation unless it was simply an oversight. **The INEEL CAB strongly recommends that the buried waste be included as Strategy in the Environmental Cleanup section.**

The INEEL CAB questions the practicality of dates throughout the document. We wonder whether all activities in support of achievement of this Strategic Plan can be completed at expected funding levels. In addition, some of the dates appear to be inconsistent with other planning documents. **The INEEL CAB recommends that milestones included in the Strategic Plan be consistent with commitments that have already been agreed to with regulators until those dates can be renegotiated in a manner that satisfies all parties.**

It is not apparent why some activities are addressed in the Strategic Plan and others are not. There is no mention of tank closure or long-term stewardship, for example. The calcine will pose little risk over the next ten years (through 2012), yet is included.

The INEEL CAB appreciated the overall format of the Strategic Plan, with parallel presentation of goals, objectives, and strategies. Some of the objectives appear to be strategies and some of the strategies appear to be objectives, however, especially in the Corporate Management section. We would suggest that a greater emphasis on consistency would benefit the document.

The “Mission and Vision” section is unclear. It should more clearly explain how the DOE-ID/INEEL/GJO missions fit beneath the overall DOE missions.

Throughout the document, there are multiple references to the INEEL serving as a “test bed.” We are not familiar with that terminology.

Listed below are more specific comments on the document:

- Too little is known by the INEEL CAB about National Security Strategies 1.3.2 and 1.4.1 to comment.
- The INEEL CAB would like to see Energy Security Strategy 1.1.1 expanded to include active pursuit of enhanced alternative energy technologies.
- The INEEL CAB is unfamiliar with the Western Regional Fossil Energy Test Facility (Energy Security Strategy 1.1.2).
- The INEEL CAB questions the rationale behind Energy Security Strategies 1.2.2, 1.2.4, and 1.2.5. Is INEEL the best location for this work?
- What is “whole crop utilization” (Energy Security Strategy 1.2.3)?
- The INEEL CAB does not support Environmental Cleanup Strategy 1.1.3 as a priority. It would not reduce risks sufficiently to warrant attempting completion by 2012.
- Review of the Environmental Cleanup strategies related to the INEEL high-level waste program imply that vitrification has been ruled out. We are unaware of any decision document that would make this determination.
- The INEEL CAB is unable to comment on Environmental Cleanup strategies 1.3.2, 1.3.3, and 1.3.4.
- Corporate Management Objective 1.1 appears to be overly aggressive, as it would require inactivation of an average of 20 buildings per year. The INEEL CAB could only support this effort if it could be demonstrated that it was warranted for risk reduction reasons and that sufficient funding can be assured.
- The INEEL CAB recommends the inclusion of another Corporate Management Objective (similar to objective 1.4) to “Build trust and establish a spirit of cooperation with regulators.”