

memorandum

DATE: May 21, 1991

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: EH-25

SUBJECT: Environmental Assessment for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
Explosive Detection System - Independent Validation and Verification Program
at Idaho National Engineering Laboratory, Idaho Falls, Idaho

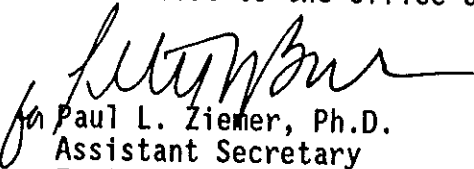
TO:
A. A. Pitrolo
Manager
Idaho Operations Office

This is in response to your request for approval of the subject environmental assessment (EA) and issuance of a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) for the proposed independent validation and verification program for the FAA's explosive detection system at Idaho National Engineering Laboratory, by your memorandum of March 7, 1990.

The Office of Environment, Safety and Health has reviewed the EA in accordance with our responsibilities under DOE 5440.1D regarding compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The EA incorporates comments provided by the Office of NEPA Oversight on a preliminary version of the EA. Your NEPA Compliance Officer has informed us (by memorandum of May 9, 1991) that the State of Idaho was provided an opportunity to review and comment on the pre-approval EA and provided no comments.

Based upon my staff's review and recommendations, and after consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that the EA is adequate for publication and that the proposed action is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, within the meaning of NEPA. Therefore, the preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required. The basis for the determination is explained in the attached FONSI.

Please note that the Idaho Operations Office is responsible for providing public notice of the availability of the EA and FONSI as required in Section 1506.6(b) of the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the NEPA. Please send five copies of the document and a copy of the distribution list to the Office of NEPA Oversight for our files.


for Paul L. Ziener, Ph.D.
Assistant Secretary
Environment, Safety and Health

Attachment

cc: T. Perkins, IDO
NEPA Compliance Officer

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION EXPLOSIVE
DETECTION SYSTEM - INDEPENDENT VALIDATION
AND VERIFICATION PROGRAM

IDAHO NATIONAL ENGINEERING LABORATORY
IDAHO FALLS, IDAHO

AGENCY: Department of Energy

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact

SUMMARY: The Department of Energy (DOE) has prepared an environmental assessment (EA), DOE/EA-0507, on the program to independently test explosive detection systems for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) at the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory (INEL) near Idaho Falls, Idaho. Based on the analyses in the EA, DOE has determined that the proposed action is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, within the meaning of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. Therefore, the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required, and DOE is issuing this finding of no significant impact (FONSI).

ADDRESS AND FURTHER INFORMATION: For additional information regarding the proposed project, contact:

Director, Office of External Affairs
Idaho Operations Office
U.S. Department of Energy
785 DOE Place
Idaho Falls, ID 83402-1118
(208) 526-1317

For general information on the NEPA process for the proposed project, contact:

Carol M. Borgstrom, Director
Office of NEPA Oversight
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20585
(202) 586-4600

PROPOSED ACTION: The proposed action would test the performance of recently developed, commercially available explosive vapor detection systems at an isolated location on the INEL.

The test program would consist of three independent phases, including:

1. Sensitivity and calibration,
2. Detector performance, and
3. Operational characterization.

The Class A explosives that would be tested are Water Gels, C-4, Flex-x Deta Sheet, TNT, and Semtex. These explosives have very low vapor pressures and the detection system must be capable of detecting quantities in the parts per trillion range.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT: Activities related to the proposed action would take place within an existing facility, the Water Reactor Research Test Facility (WRRTF), building TAN-646. No effluents or emissions are anticipated. Existing facility utilities are adequate to accommodate the relocation of 10 to 20 personnel associated with the proposed action. Excavation and clearing would be required for placement of a security cable trench and gravel storage pad. The trench would be located in a previously disturbed area. An archeological survey was performed in the WRRTF area in 1985. No impacts to cultural or biological resources are anticipated.

Explosive storage, handling, and transportation would be in accordance with (1) DOE 6055.9-STD, D.O.D. "Ammunition and Explosives Safety Standards; (2) DOE-ID Appendix 0550, Standard Operational Safety Requirements, Part 3, Subpart I, "Explosives"; (3) DOE/EV/06194, "DOE Explosives Safety Manual"; and (4) all other applicable requirements. Responsibilities, safety controls, training requirements, explosive delivery, transportation, storage, access and control, disposal, and handling procedures are outlined in a "Safety Plan" written for the project which would be strictly followed.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: The No Action alternative is the only alternative considered for the INEL in this environmental assessment. Other sites at the INEL were considered and eliminated for safety or administrative reasons. WRRTF is the preferred location due to availability, isolated location, and chemical cleanliness of the facility.

DETERMINATION: The proposed action to independently test explosive detection systems for the FAA at the INEL does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of the NEPA. This finding is based on the analyses in the environmental assessment. Therefore, the preparation of an EIS is not required for this proposed action.

Issued at Washington, D.C., this 21st day of May, 1991.

Paul L. Ziemer
for Paul L. Ziemer, Ph.D.
Assistant Secretary
Environment, Safety and Health