

memorandum



DATE: April 16, 2003

Audit Report No.: OAS-L-03-16

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: IG-35 (A03DC006)

SUBJECT: Audit of "Department of Energy's Nuclear Weapons Incident Response Program"

TO: Administrator, National Nuclear Security Administration

INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVE

The Department of Energy's (Department) Nuclear Weapons Incident Response Program (Emergency Response Program) provides a national capability to rapidly respond to any radiological emergency or nuclear accident within the United States and abroad. The program is comprised of seven major capabilities/assets, including the Search Response Team (SRT) and the Radiological Assistance Program (RAP). SRT provides technical assistance with activities involving lost or stolen nuclear devices, weapons, or materials. RAP, which is usually the first responder, assesses the emergency situation and determines what further steps should be taken to minimize the hazards of a radiological emergency. These capabilities are maintained primarily through participation in international, national, state, and local operations; exercises; and training. An all-volunteer force, primarily from the Department's nuclear weapons laboratories, makes up the cadre of deployment forces.

Since September 11, 2001, the Department has seen a significant increase in the number of emergency deployments. For example, in the year following September 11, 2001, emergency response teams deployed 227 times consuming about 88,000 man-hours at a cost of over \$13 million. Over 90 percent of these deployments were carried out by the RAP and SRT teams. Prior to September 11, 2001, teams deployed only a limited number of times.

Our objective was to determine whether the goals and objectives of the Emergency Response Program were being met. Specifically, we sought to determine whether selected emergency response teams deployed when required.

CONCLUSIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

The survey disclosed that the selected emergency response teams were generally able to deploy when required; however, the ability of the teams to continue to deploy at the

current level is at risk. Since September 11, 2001, the Department has experienced a significant increase in the number of deployments. The following examples illustrate the mission increase that now faces the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA).

- Prior to September 11, 2001, one of the Department's teams deployed, on average, about one to three times a year. The total cost of these deployments was about \$10,000. Since then, this same team has deployed at least 53 times, at a cost of about \$7 million.
- The teams from another program deployed on average about 7 times per year. However, in the 12-month period following September 11, 2001, this group deployed 158 times. These deployments consumed about 31,000 man hours at a cost of about \$4.7 million.
- Initially, managers determined that two fixed-wing aircraft and two helicopters would be needed to support the mission at one site. Since then, they have determined that an additional aircraft will be needed.

In spite of this significant increase in mission, the Emergency Response Program only received about \$ 20 million of the requested \$42 million of additional funds to cover the cost of these increased deployments. The Department has been able to keep pace with the emergency requests by reprogramming funds designated for other activities such as training and stockpile stewardship. Additionally, normal duties and responsibilities of personnel who volunteer for emergency response deployments have gone undone in support of the Emergency Response Program. Continuing to divert funds and personnel could impact the Department's ability to respond to an incident.

Since the events of September 11, 2001, Department managers have not performed an overall reassessment of programmatic missions and therefore, have not developed a written, coherent plan of how to proceed forward. However, during the week of March 3, 2003, program managers established a task force to prepare a strategic plan for the program. The report was initially due at the end of March but has been preempted by the current military crisis in Iraq. Managers planned to use the strategic plan as a basis for obtaining additional funds for the program. While it is unclear what the strategy will include beyond funding issues, we believe a comprehensive strategy is needed to address the future of the program. At a minimum, we suggest that it (1) address how the program will continue if additional funding is not provided, (2) study the impact of providing support to the Department of Homeland Security, and (3) reassess the mission and goals of the program.

The Office of Inspections recently completed a review of the Joint Technical Operations Team, one of the seven major Emergency Response Program capabilities/assets. The

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results of that review, which are contained in the Draft Report on *Inspection of the Department of Energy's Ability to Meet the Aircraft Requirements of the Joint Technical Operations Team*, are not for public distribution.

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The audit was performed from December 2002 to March 2003 at the NNSA, Washington, DC; Las Vegas Site Office, Las Vegas, NV; and Albuquerque Service Center, Albuquerque, NM. We also included the following sites: Sandia National Laboratories, Albuquerque, NM and Los Alamos National Laboratory, Los Alamos, NM. The scope of the audit was limited to determining whether selected emergency response teams deployed when required. We did not assess the quality of the deployments.

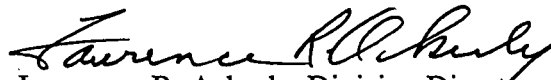
To accomplish the audit objective, we:

- Reviewed Federal and Departmental requirements related to emergency response;
- Reviewed prior external and internal reports regarding emergency response including the Federal Managers Financial Integrity Act;
- Determined the number of deployments and time spent deploying;
- Examined budgetary information including costs associated with various assets under the program;
- Reviewed work authorization orders to determine contractor assignments;
- Discussed emergency response with key Headquarters, Las Vegas Site Office, Albuquerque Service Center, and Sandia officials, and;
- Reviewed Performance Measures established in accordance with the Government Performance and Results Act.

The audit was performed in accordance with generally accepted Government auditing standards for performance audits, and included tests of internal controls and compliance with laws and regulations to the extent necessary to satisfy the audit objective. Accordingly, we assessed the significant internal controls related to the nuclear facilities. Because our review was limited, it would not necessarily have identified all internal control deficiencies that may have existed. Additionally, we did not rely extensively on computer-processed data. In addition, we reviewed the implementation of Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, as related to emergency response.

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Since no recommendations are being made in this letter report, a formal response is not required. We appreciate the cooperation of your staff during the audit.


Lawrence R. Ackerly, Division Director
National Nuclear Security Administration
Audits Division
Office of Inspector General

cc: Director, Policy and Internal Controls Management, NA-66
Team Leader, Audit Liaison Team, ME-2

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bcc: DPA (2)
AIG for Investigations
AIG for Inspections
Don Farmer, Investigations, Richland, WA
Wilma Slaughter
Gloria Jennings
Capital Region
Eastern Region
Albuquerque Audit, Las Vegas Audit, Livermore Audit, Los Alamos Audit, Y-12
Audit
Washington Audit Group
NNSA Audits Project File - A03DC006

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DATE: April 16, 2003

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: IG-35 (A03DC006)

SUBJECT: Final Report Package for "Department of Energy's Nuclear Weapons Incident Response Program"

TO: Director for Performance Audits and Administration

Attached is the required final report package on the subject audit. The pertinent details are:

1. Actual Staff days: 92

Actual Elapsed days: 125

2. Names of OIG audit staff:

Assistant Director: David Sedillo

Team Leader: Lynda Crowder

Auditor-in-Charge: John Wall

Audit Staff: Arlene Hunt

3. Coordination with Investigations and Inspections: We coordinated our efforts with the Office of Investigations and the Office of Inspections on December 24, 2002. We coordinated further with the Office of Inspections on April 14, 2003.



Lawrence R. Ackerly, Division Director
NNSA Audits Division
Office of Inspector General

Attachments:

1. Final Report (2)
2. Monetary Impact Report
3. Audit Project Summary Report
4. Audit Database Information Sheet

MONETARY IMPACT OF REPORT NO.: OAS-L-03-16

1. Title of Audit: Department of Energy's Nuclear Weapons Incident Response Program

2. Division: NNSA Audits Division/Washington Audit Group

3. Project No.: A03DC006

4. Type of Audit:

Financial: _____ Performance: X
 Financial Statement _____ Economy and Efficiency X
 Financial Related _____ Program Results _____
 Other (specify type): _____

5.

FINDING		BETTER USED		QUESTIONED COSTS			MGT. POSITION	POTENTIAL BUDGET IMPACT
(A)	(B) Title	(C) One Time	Recurring	(E) Questioned Portion	(F) Unsupported Portion	(G) Total	(H) C=Concur N=Noncon U=Undec	(I) Y=Yes N=No
			(D) Amount Per Year					
								N
TOTALS--ALL FINDINGS								

6. Remarks:

7. Contractor: None

8. Contract No.: None

9. Task Order No.: None

10. Approvals:

Division Director & Date: *[Signature]* 4/28/03
 Technical Advisor & Date: *[Signature]*

Office of the Inspector General (OIG)
 Audit Project Summary Report (APS)

Report run on: April 22, 2003 9:01 AM

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Audit#: A03DC006 Ofc: CFA Title: DOE NUCLEAR WEAPONS INCIDENT RESPONSE PROGRAM

**** Milestones ****

	Profile	Planned End of Survey	Revised	Actual	
Entrance Conference:	01-OCT-02	12-DEC-02	12-DEC-02	12-DEC-02	
Survey Completed:		12-MAR-03	12-MAR-03	12-MAR-03	
Field Work Complete:					
Draft Report Issued:		30-AUG-03			
Exit Conference:					
Completed with Report:	30-SEP-03	17-MAR-03	04-APR-03	16-APR-03	(R)
-----Elapsed Days	364	95	113	125	
-----Staff Days:	0	0		92	

Date Suspended: Date Terminated:
 Date Reactivated: Date Cancelled:
 DaysSuspended(Cur/Tot): 0 () Report Number: OAS-L-03-13

Rpt Title: DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY'S NUCLEAR WEAPONS INCIDENT RESPONSE PROGRAM

**** Audit Codes and Personnel ****

Aud Type: Not Found
 Category: OTH OTHER AD: 84 CROWDER
 DOE-Org: Not Found AIC: 236 WALL
 Maj Iss: 106 Not Found HDQ-Mon: 432 GAMAGE
 Site: MRA MULTI-REGION AUDIT ARM: 152 SEDILLO

**** Task Information ****

Task No:
 Task Order Dt: CO Tech. Rep:
 Orig Auth Hrs: Orig Auth Costs:
 Current Auth: Current Auth Cost:
 Tot Actl IPR Hr: Tot Actl Cost:

**** Time Charges ****

Emp/Cont Name	Numdays	Last Date
BOBIAN, D	0.5	25-JAN-03
CROWDER, L	4.8	05-APR-03
HUNT, A	26.8	19-APR-03
WALL, J	59.7	05-APR-03
Total:	91.8	

**** ATC Information ****

Atc Atc Rank Atcdesc

AUDIT DATABASE INFORMATION SHEET

1. Project No.: A03DC006
2. Title of Audit: Department of Energy's Nuclear Weapons Incident Response Program
3. Report No./Date: OAS-L-03-16, April 16, 2003
4. Management Challenge Area: No
5. Presidential Mgmt Initiative: N/A
6. Secretary Priority/Initiative: Yes
7. Program Code: NA-42
8. Location/Sites: Various Laboratories and Headquarters
9. Finding Summary: N/A
10. Keywords: (include as many as you like)