DRAFT/June 2, 2006

MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION

FROM JAMES F. DECKER
PRINCIPAL DEPUTY DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF SCIENCE

SUBJECT: External Independent Review Process for Office of Science Projects

Effective immediately, I have asked the Office of Project Assessment (SC-1.3) to serve as the principle point-of-contact between the Office of Science (SC) and the Office of Engineering and Construction Management (OECM) for the coordination of all External Independent Reviews (EIR) of SC projects. I am proposing this action for the near term to ensure EIRs for SC are effectively and consistently planned, budgeted, coordinated, and executed.

DOE Order 413.3 and DOE Manual 413.3-1 require that an EIR be conducted prior to Critical Decision (CD) 2 (Approve Performance Baseline) for Capital Asset projects, and a Readiness EIR prior to CD-3 (Approve Start of Construction) for Major Systems projects.

Currently, the SC Office of Budget and Planning (SC-1.2) receives EIR funding requests directly from OECM, which are made without providing the basis for funding amounts or the scope of work to be covered by the EIR. To ensure consistency in EIR planning for SC projects, the following process will be followed:

1. Each SC program is required, per DOE guidance, to fund the EIRs for projects funded by that program. The cost of EIRs should be accommodated when formulating the program's budget request.

2. At least six months before an EIR is required, but no later than October of the fiscal year during which the EIR will start, the SC program manager will inform SC-1.3 of the need to perform an EIR. The notification will include the scope of the review and the approximate EIR start date.

3. SC-1.3, working with SC-1.2, will determine availability of funding for the EIR. When funding is available, SC-1.3 will coordinate with OECM to define the EIR review scope, cost, schedule, and the required qualifications of EIR team members.

4. Once SC-1.3 and OECM have agreed upon the scope, cost, schedule, and review team members, SC-1.3 will then notify SC-1.2 to authorize the transfer of EIR funds to OECM.

I will assess the experience in implementing this process in six months and seek feedback from all involved parties before institutionalizing the process.

Additionally, several initiatives are underway that may further influence the conduct of EIRs including, the rewrite of DOE Order 413 with significant potential to change the overall EIR requirements and a National Research Council study of the EIR process which is intended to result in recommendations for improvements to the EIR process.

If you have any questions regarding this EIR process, please contact Daniel Lehman, Director, Office of Project Assessment.

DRAFT