



Nevada Site Specific Advisory Board

February 18, 2015

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*U.S. Department of Energy,
Nevada Field Office*

Mr. Robert F. Boehlecke
Environmental Management Operations Manager
U.S. Department of Energy, Nevada Field Office
P. O. Box 98518
Las Vegas, NV 89193-8518

SUBJECT: Recommendation for Assessment of the Underground Test Area (UGTA) Quality Assurance Plan (QAP) Implementation (Work Plan Item #8)

Dear Mr. Boehlecke,

The Nevada Site Specific Advisory Board (NSSAB) was asked to provide a recommendation, from a community perspective, to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) on possible improvements to the assessment process and/or the UGTA QAP.

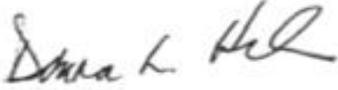
During the November 19, 2014 Full Board meeting, the NSSAB was provided a briefing on the UGTA QAP process. In support of this work plan, two NSSAB members attended and observed a two-day oversight assessment (OA) of Desert Research Institute (DRI) in December 2014. After an update by the members and Board discussion and deliberation at the January 21, 2015 Full Board meeting, the NSSAB recommends the following to the UGTA QAP process:

Item	Status	Issue	Recommendation
Notices	Sustain	DOE informed DRI via formal letter that OA would take place and attached specific assessment checklist	
Position Hand-off	Improve	New assessor on the team	A better hand-off by DOE to the new assessor could lead to better continuity in the assessment process.
Org Chart	Improve	Upon arriving, it was unclear who was giving direction. This created confusion among the different organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An OA Lead should be established prior to OA. • Briefing should be held to establish expectations, areas of responsibility, etc.
NSSAB Incorporation	Sustain	DOE, Navarro-Intera (N-I), and DRI were very patient, engaging, hospitable and accommodating of the observers from NSSAB	
Outlook	Sustain	Open transparency—both assessors and DRI established a positive outlook on the assessment experience. (Continuous Improvement) This leads to open, honest communication.	
Work in Parallel	Sustain	Three assessors broke off into separate functional area groups from the assessment checklist and worked simultaneously	
Approach	Sustain	Assessors were professional and thorough (evidence trail). Personable manner, and helpful throughout the questioning.	
Status Updates	Sustain	DOE/N-I continuously updated DRI representatives on status of the OA items (individual, briefings, debriefings, etc.)	
Work Distribution	Improve	Assessors' work load was unevenly distributed	
Personnel Availability	Improve	Not all the Subject Matter Experts (SME) were present for questions	Advanced notice could have been given to SME. DRI indicated they had no prior notice.
Material Availability	Improve	Some labels/equipment was not accessible by the personnel available for questions	Assessors could indicate these needs prior/DRI could pre-read assessment checklist and pull out in preparation.
Records Availability	Sustain	Pertinent procedures/records were provided to assessors prior to assessment. Other records were easily accessible throughout the assessment.	

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The NSSAB appreciates the opportunity to observe the DRI assessment and to provide this recommendation and extends a special thanks to the Assessment Team—Kevin Cabbie, Susan Krenzien, and Ann Koplow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donna L. Hruska". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Donna" being the most prominent.

Donna L. Hruska, Chair

cc: K. G. Ellis, DOE/HQ (EM-3.2)
M. R. Hudson, DOE/HQ (EM-3.2)
E. B. Schmitt, DOE/HQ (EM-3.2)
K. J. Cabbie, NFO
C. G. Lockwood, NFO
K. K. Snyder, NFO
S. A. Wade, NFO
B. K. Ulmer, N-I
NSSAB Members and Liaisons