

SUNSET COMMITTEE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Subcommittee members

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Overview

The research program designated under the Department of Energy Section 999 is to end on the 30th of September 2014. At present, it is understood that ongoing projects that have funding already allocated, will continue to be funded with the projects and funding to be administrated by the National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL).

The task of the Sunset Subcommittee has thus been to review the activities of the projects completed so far or ongoing, and to look towards the further continuation of the work as the program comes to its end. An important aspect of the termination of any research program is to ensure that the work done is well documented, and that sufficient effort is devoted in the future to maintaining an archive of the results, to making sure that the archive is accessible, and to taking active steps to bring the work to the attention of the relevant audience.

Findings and Recommendations

Finding No. 1: Current Projects

Current projects that show promising results to date are underway.

Recommendation No. 1

The current research program should be maintained, making sure that these projects are continued to completion even though the management of the research contracts is changed.

Finding No. 2: Documentation and Dissemination of Results

The committee members recognize that such research takes many years to develop, with continuing adjustment to the research targets as time goes on. We note the good work being done by both RPSEA and NETL in collecting and archiving the results of past and current projects. This work is important.

Recommendation No. 2-1

DOE should maintain documentation and dissemination of the results after the termination of active research when personnel previously associated with the program become engaged in new projects. Funding should be specifically allocated to this activity.

Recommendation No. 2-2

Active steps should continue to be taken to bring the results of the program to the attention of possible beneficiaries. This should include *inter alia*, the maintenance of a web site and making presentations at conferences. These presentations should not only concern the results of particular projects, but also bring the attention of the public to the existence of the archive itself.

Finding No. 3: Workings of the Advisory Committee

Members of the Subcommittee have enjoyed participating in UDAC activities with the diversity of the group providing interesting and stimulating discussions. We believe that forming the committee from a group that has expertise in many fields relating to petroleum engineering has been helpful in broadening the scope of projects that are being funded by the program. Since the current funding is aimed at a very broad target (to advance research in any aspect of ultra deepwater petroleum exploration and production) this was an ideal environment to address subjects that are not found in the more common, much more finely focused programs.

From time to time, we have requested that we be informed as to whether our recommendations have had an influence on the direction of the work, and this has generally been the case. The committee is interested in the research outcomes.

Recommendation No. 3-1

If other research efforts require an Advisory Committee similar to this effort, the committee should include a wide array of experts (not necessarily only from the field of petroleum engineering) so as to be able to consider a very wide range of research topics.

Recommendation No. 3-2

The committee recommends that the committee members continue to be informed as to the results from the research program and other related programs not only while the research is active, but also afterwards.