

U.S. Department of Energy
Washington, D.C.

ORDER

DOE O 452.6B

Approved: 08-05-2026

**SUBJECT: NUCLEAR WEAPON SURETY INTERFACE WITH THE DEPARTMENT
OF WAR**

1. PURPOSE. The content of this Department of Energy (DOE) Order is to define requirements for joint nuclear weapon surety activities for existing weapons and for proposed new weapon program starts as defined as one of the responsibilities of the Nuclear Weapons Council by 10 United States Code (U.S.C.) 179, Nuclear Weapons Council.
2. CANCELS/SUPERSEDES. This Order cancels and supersedes DOE Order (O) 452.6A, Chg. 1, *Nuclear Weapon Surety Interface with the Department of Defense*, dated February 23, 2021.

Cancellation of a directive does not, by itself, modify or otherwise affect any contractual or regulatory obligation to comply with the directive. Contractor Requirements Documents (CRDs) that have been incorporated into a contract remain in effect throughout the term of the contract unless and until the contract or regulatory commitment is modified to either eliminate requirements that are no longer applicable or substitute a new set of requirements.

3. APPLICABILITY.
 - a. DOE/National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Elements. Except for exclusions in paragraph 3.b., this Order applies to all DOE/NNSA elements involved in the Nuclear Explosive and Weapon Surety Program, including those created after the Order is issued. The most current listing of Departmental elements is available at <http://www.directives.doe.gov/>. The Administrator of NNSA must assure that NNSA employees and contractors comply with their respective responsibilities under this directive. Nothing in this Order must be construed to interfere with the NNSA Administrator's authority under section 3212(d) of Public Law 106-65, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000, to establish Administration-specific policies, unless disapproved by the Secretary.

- b. DOE/NNSA Contractors. The requirements of this Order shall be incorporated into applicable contracts, including Management and Operating contracts. The contractor is responsible for flowing down the requirements of this CRD, if applicable. Contractors shall comply with the requirements of applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations in carrying out the requirements of this Order unless relief has been granted in writing. Omission of any applicable law or regulation from the Order does not affect the obligation of the contractor to comply with such law or regulation. Contractors must comply with the requirements of this Order, except to the extent modified by the equivalencies or exemptions identified herein or issued to the contractor in writing by DOE utilizing the process outlined in DOE O 251.1E, including as amended or updated.
- c. Exclusions. The following Departmental Elements are excluded:
- (1) Office of the Chief Financial Officer.
 - (2) Office of the Chief Information Officer.
 - (3) Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs.
 - (4) Office of Economic Impact and Diversity.
 - (5) Energy Information Administration.
 - (6) Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability.
 - (7) Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.
 - (8) Office of Environmental Management.
 - (9) Office of Fossil Energy.
 - (10) Office of Hearings and Appeals.
 - (11) Office of Human Capital Management.
 - (12) Office of Intelligence and Counterintelligence.
 - (13) Office of Legacy Management.
 - (14) Office of Management.
 - (15) Office of Nuclear Energy.
 - (16) Office of Policy and International Affairs.
 - (17) Office of Public Affairs.
 - (18) Office of Science.

- (19) Bonneville Power Administration.
 - (20) Southeastern Power Administration.
 - (21) Southwestern Power Administration.
 - (22) Western Area Power Administration.
- d. Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program (Naval Reactors) Equivalency. In accordance with the responsibilities and authorities assigned by Executive Order 12344, Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program, codified at 50 U.S.C. §§ 2406, Deputy Administrator for Naval Reactors, and 2511, Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program, and to ensure consistency through the joint Navy/DOE Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program, the Deputy Administrator for Naval Reactors (Director) must implement and oversee requirements and practices pertaining to this Order for activities under the Director's cognizance, as deemed appropriate.

4. REQUIREMENTS.

- a. NNSA and the Department of War (DoW) shall conduct joint nuclear weapon surety activities to protect public health, safety, and the environment from potential adverse consequences of nuclear weapon operations. These activities shall inform dual-agency risk acceptance and judgements concerning nuclear weapon system safety, security, and use assurance throughout each nuclear weapon's life cycle.
- b. Nuclear weapon system assessments shall assess the joint concept of operations, procedural elements, accident prevention/mitigation and response measures, and controls implemented to reduce the likelihood, severity, or consequences of an accident or unauthorized act involving a nuclear weapon.
- c. NNSA is required to provide a voting member of the DoW-led Nuclear Weapon System Safety Group (NWSSG) and to provide nuclear surety data on relevant nuclear weapons systems. NNSA contractors are required to provide personnel to support the NWSSG reviews.
- d. Nuclear weapon system authorized use assurance shall include a combination of controls (e.g., physical security and access controls) and design features to prevent deliberate unauthorized access or deliberate unauthorized acts that could lead to a nuclear detonation. For nuclear weapons delivered to the DoW, the above positive measures shall be consistent with DoW operational requirements.
- e. If an issue arises during joint NNSA/DoW nuclear weapon surety activities that cannot be resolved at the NNSA and DoW agency level, it shall be escalated to the Nuclear Weapons Council Standing and Safety Committee and/or Nuclear Weapons Council for resolution.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES.

- a. Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs, or assigned delegate, must review and concur or non-concur with DoW-proposed nuclear weapon system safety rules.
- b. Principal Assistant Deputy Administrator for Stockpile Management, or assigned delegate must:
 - (1) Define and implement DOE requirements for joint NNSA/DoW nuclear weapon system surety activities;
 - (2) Serve as the lead for DOE's joint responsibilities with DoW for nuclear weapon surety activities;
 - (3) Administer DOE participation in the DoW nuclear weapon system safety program; and
 - (4) Assist the Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs with the review and concur or non-concur with DoW nuclear weapon system safety rules.
- c. Contracting Officer. For all applicable contracts and upon notification that a site/facility management contract is affected by this Order, Contracting Officers shall incorporate the requirements into the affected contracts via the "Laws, Regulations, and DOE Directives" clause of the contract, or through negotiation and modification, as appropriate.

6. INVOKED STANDARDS. This Order does not invoke any DOE technical standards or industry standards as required methods. Note: DOE O 251.1, *Departmental Directives Program*, current version, provides a definition for "invoked technical standard."7. DEFINITIONS. Definitions found in current directives are listed on the Directives website: https://www.directives.doe.gov/definitions#c2=all&b_start=0

- a. Dual-Agency/Joint Responsibilities. This DOE Order defines requirements for NNSA and the DoW to conduct joint nuclear weapon surety activities to protect public health, safety, and the environment from potential adverse consequences of nuclear weapon operations, including the responsibility to participate with the DoW in consideration of health and safety problems for nuclear weapons in DoW custody and to ensure that nuclear weapons and delivery systems can be operated in a safe and secure manner.
- b. Weapon Design Laboratories. Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Los Alamos National Laboratory, and Sandia National Laboratories.

8. REFERENCES.

- a. Presidential Policy Directive-35 (PPD-35), "United States Nuclear Weapons Command and Control, Safety and Security," dated December 08, 2015 (Secret), which provides the basis for the attainment and maintenance of a nuclear command and control system under the authority and direction of the President.
- b. DOE O 452.1, *Nuclear Explosive and Weapon Surety Program*, current version, which establishes NNSA objectives, standards, criteria, authorities, and responsibilities for the Nuclear Explosive and Weapon Surety Program.
- c. DOE O 452.2, *Nuclear Explosive Safety*, current version. The Order defines requirements for implementing the DOE Nuclear Explosive Safety Program, including those for Nuclear Explosive Safety Rules, Independent Oversight, and Records Management.
- d. NNSA Supplemental Directive 452.2, *Nuclear Explosive Safety Evaluation Processes*, current version. The supplemental directive defines requirements for a Nuclear Explosive Safety Study, Nuclear Explosive Safety Study Group, Nuclear Explosive Safety Change Evaluation, Operational Safety Review, and Nuclear Explosive Safety Change Control.
- e. Department of Defense (DoD) Directive 3150.02, *DoD Nuclear Weapon Systems Surety Program*, current version, which describes the DoW Nuclear Weapon Surety Program and specifies requirements and responsibilities for DoW personnel.
- f. DoD Manual 3150.02, *DoD Nuclear Weapon Systems Safety Program Manual*, current version, which prescribes procedures for implementation of the DoD Nuclear Weapon System Safety Program.

9. CONTACT. Questions concerning this Order should be addressed to the Nuclear Explosive Safety Division, NA-121.1.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF ENERGY:



JAMES P. DANLY
Deputy Secretary