

2017 DOE Accident Investigation and Prevention (AIP) Program Awards

The DOE Accident Investigation and Prevention (AIP) Program's principal purpose is to ensure that investigations of accidents are conducted consistently at the highest level of quality. The goal is to prevent future accidents by developing factual investigation reports that determine what happened and identify the causes (individual, systemic and organizational) that contributed to the accident so we can understand why it happened and share the lessons learned to promote the values and concepts of a learning organization across the DOE complex. The intent is to prevent recurrence and promote improved safety, health, environmental protection and security of DOE employees, contractors, and the public.

In 2017 the DOE AIP Program recognized the outstanding work that Mr. Robert (Bob) C. Seal and Ms. Terri L. Ackerman performed in support of the AIP Program. Both Bob and Terri significantly contributed to the DOE mission to protect the health and safety of the DOE Federal/Contractor workforce, and the public by their contributions to the AIP Program to improve DOE's safety performance across the DOE complex.

Bob Seal



From 2011 - 2017, Bob has supported the DOE AIP Program as: (1) the Lead Instructor for the EIP-400 Accident Investigation training course; (2) a member of the AU Quality Review Team for accident investigation reports; and (3) a consultant/advisor for several formal DOE Federal Accident Investigation Boards (FAIBs).

Accidents often occur at inopportune times, and Bob always promptly responded, even when away from home on travel for other work or vacation. His dedication extended beyond the job, as Bob has, for many years, been a dedicated volunteer, official, and officer at the local, state, and national level representing and providing support for Vietnam Veterans.

As a consultant/advisor for several DOE FAIBs, Bob had a well-earned reputation for “telling it like it is” and being “a straight shooter.” FAIB Board Chairpersons, Accident Investigators, and other Board members have all benefitted from the frank, honest and factually supported professional analysis, information, and advice Bob provided during these major investigations. His integrity has been demonstrated and proven to be solid and consistent.

These noteworthy accomplishments achieved by Bob (e.g., expert analysis, policy enhancements, and the promoting of lessons learned and safety culture) have contributed to the

DOE mission by protecting the health and safety of the DOE Federal/Contractor workforce, and the public by improving DOE's safety performance across the DOE complex.

In recognition of these accomplishments, Bob was presented with a recognition letter signed by the Associate Under Secretary for Environment, Health, Safety and Security (AU-1), during his last Accident Investigation training course at the Nevada Field Office, Las Vegas, NV on August 25, 2017.

Terri Ackerman



From 2016-2017, Ms. Terri L. Ackerman, Office of the Chief Counsel, Idaho National Laboratory Operations Office, provided valuable support to the DOE AIP Program. Specifically, Terri provided legal support for a Federal Subpoena Request received in December 2016 for the interview transcripts from a 2011 DOE Federal Accident Investigation Board (FAIB) Report.

Terri assisted the Office of Environment, Safety and Health Reporting and Analysis (AU-23) with upholding the confidentiality of information obtained during the FAIB, which is a requirement of the DOE Accident Investigations Order. Terri identified, proposed, and actively pursued various strategies to protect the confidentiality of the identities of the individuals in the transcripts.

Confidentiality is a foundational principle of our investigations to ensure full disclosure. To conduct a thorough and effective investigation, we need to receive truthful, accurate, complete, detailed, and factual information from each, and all parties involved. This can only be accomplished if all parties have no concern of adverse action, retaliation, invasion of privacy, or punishment.

Terri did an outstanding professional job of protecting our DOE FAIB Report transcripts to ensure the privacy of the witness statements, by taking extensive actions to minimize exposure, and ensure the transcripts were protected and viewed only under appropriate restrictions and limitations.

In recognition of this critical AIP Program support Terri was presented with a recognition letter signed by the Associate Under Secretary for Environment, Health, Safety and Security (AU-1), and awarded an AU Merit Performance coin as shown above being presented to her by Rick Provencher, Manager of the Idaho Operations Office on November 08, 2017.

For more information on the DOE Accident Investigation and Prevention (AIP) Program:

Gary T. Staffo, PE, CSP, CPE
DOE Accident Investigation and Prevention (AIP) Program Manager

Phone: 202-586-9577

Email: gary.staffo@hq.doe.gov