



March 11, 2019

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Mr. Mark A. Gilbertson, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Office of Environmental Management  
Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20585

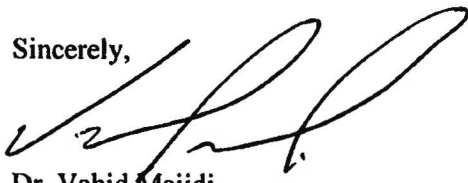
Dear Mr. Gilbertson:

**TYPES OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT NATIONAL LABORATORY NETWORK (EM NLN)**

In your role as Director of the Department of Energy Environmental Management National Laboratory Policy Office, you challenged the members to be more active and impactful. The Network in their regularly scheduled conference calls have discussed this matter and working within the guidelines of the Charter have developed the attached document. The document describes both informal and formal actions that the Network could undertake to benefit EM in terms of policy, assessments and informal technical reviews.

In a separate action and in compliance with the Network's charter signed in May of 2017, the Network has reaffirmed Dr. Steven Ashby as the Co-Chair for another year. The two Laboratory Directors will discuss potential rotational assignments as Co-Chair in six months with the National Laboratory Directors Council and determine a timeframe for transition to the new Co-Chair.

Sincerely,



Dr. Vahid Majidi  
Laboratory Director  
Savannah River National Laboratory



Dr. Steven Ashby  
Laboratory Director  
Pacific Northwest National Laboratory

wrw/vm  
Attachment

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## **Types of Activities for Environmental Management National Laboratory Network (EM NLN)**

The following is a description of the types of activities that would likely be executed through the Environmental Management National Laboratory Network (EM NLN) for the Environmental Management Senior Laboratory Policy Officer.

### **Technical Support**

#### *Definition*

These activities provide the Department technological answers to questions on specific issues, technology implementation difficulties, and/or specific programmatic requests, primarily in cases where there is not a pre-established engagement with a Department of Energy (DOE) National Laboratory. Technical Support efforts provide individuals or small teams of Departmentally-recognized experts to review and advise a contractor, field office or program office to:

- Facilitate the development of solutions that reduce technical risk and uncertainty
- Focus on science and engineering issues and strategic implementation of solutions
- Provide reviews to facilitate regulatory and stakeholder acceptance from an independent perspective

#### *Membership*

The EM NLN is a collaboration between national laboratories that bring together teams of scientists and engineers to provide recommendations for focused solutions to complex technical DOE EM challenges that balance cost, regulatory standards, stakeholder issues, and risk. Technical Support requests may also be in the form of a specific skill needed to augment resources for a defined period of time in which case, the EM NLN may assist with locating available resources.

#### *Source*

The most likely source of a request for these activities would come from the DOE Field Offices.

### **Independent Assessment**

#### *Definition*

An independent assessment is a more formal team activity in which a technical or programmatic issue is identified, boundaries are defined, and a specific set of outcomes are needed for implementation. The team (leader and team members) is composed of individuals without conflicts of interest. Independent assessment would also include activities like Technical Readiness Assessment and External Technical Reviews.

#### *Membership*

The EM NLN Leadership Team (one representative from each lab) will work together to assign the appropriate assessment lead. The Assessment Lead, working with other national laboratories, will define the expertise, qualifications, etc. needed to staff the resources for the Assessment Team and engage other institutions such as academia or industry, as needed.

#### *Source*

A request for an Independent Assessment could come from a number of entities. Over the past several years, the requests have come from Field Office managers, senior contractor officials, and program offices.

## **Policy Study**

### ***Definition***

Policy studies includes program evaluation, implementation impact studies, and policy design. These studies involve systematically examining the nature, causes, and effects of the establishment of public policies involving EM operations, with particular emphasis on reducing operational and closure risks and reduction in schedule/lifecycle costs.

### ***Membership***

The sponsor of the EM NLN will charter the network to develop the required expertise and technology specialties that are necessary to formulate a working group to execute the scope of the study. The Team membership will be formally approved by the Assistant Secretary for EM. The Assistant Secretary will utilize the EM NLN to advise on potential membership from the EM NLN institutions.

### ***Source***

The source of a Policy Study request will be through senior management of the Office of Environmental Management.

## **Congressional Activity**

### ***Definition***

Under its authority, Congress can impose specific obligations to report to or consult with Congress on any funded activity that is within their role of oversight. Such requests will be in the form of formal written requests, e.g., the National Defense Authorization Act. The DOE will be required to respond to a defined scope and schedule.

### ***Membership***

The membership for the team to perform the study or analysis will be developed through discussions with senior EM leadership, and the EM NLN Leadership Team.

### ***Source***

Congressional actions will be the source of these requests and communication via senior management of the Office of Environmental Management.

## **Response to Congressional Inquiries**

### ***Definition***

The Office of Environmental Management receives various requests for information from Congressmen or Congressional Offices that require resources to develop a written response that will be necessary in short turnaround timeframes.

### ***Membership***

If resources outside of EM are necessary to meet the response timeframe to develop the response, the EM NLN Leadership Team will be requested to respond to meet the timeline.

### ***Source***

These requests will come directly from individual Congressmen or Congressional Offices.