



INDEPENDENT OVERSIGHT PROGRAM APPRAISAL PROCESS PROTOCOLS

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Office of Enterprise Assessments
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Preface

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Enterprise Assessments (EA) is responsible for implementing an Independent Oversight Program for safety and security within the Department in accordance with DOE Policy 226.1B, *Department of Energy Oversight Policy*, and DOE Orders 227.1A, *Independent Oversight Program*, and 226.1B, *Implementation of Department of Energy Oversight Policy*. Effective oversight, including independent oversight, of DOE Federal and contractor operations is an integral element of the Department's responsibility as a self-regulating agency to provide assurance of its safety and security posture to its leadership, its workers, and the public.

DOE Order 227.1A outlines EA's responsibilities for conducting independent evaluations of DOE sites, facilities, organizations, and operations in the subject areas of safety and security. The Order further defines safety and security programs as: (1) programs for the protection of the public, the environment, and worker health and safety; and (2) programs for the protection of security assets, including special nuclear materials and sensitive and classified information in all forms. To implement this responsibility, EA's Independent Oversight Program conducts independent appraisals that are designed to enhance DOE safety and security programs by providing DOE and contractor managers, Congress, and other stakeholders with an independent evaluation of the adequacy of DOE policy and requirements and the effectiveness of DOE and contractor line management performance in safety and security. This responsibility includes assessing the performance of DOE programs and operations in the areas of nuclear and industrial safety; cyber, information, and physical security; and other critical functions as directed by the Secretary. Independent Oversight Program activities are selected and tailored to the unique needs of each DOE program and field office, and consider relative risks and past performance in determining specific assessment activities.

EA's safeguards and security and cyber security independent oversight activities directly support DOE's mission of national security by determining whether special nuclear materials, classified and sensitive matter, and other critical national assets entrusted to the Department are protected in accordance with laws, regulations, national-level policies and standards, and Departmental directives. EA's independent oversight of safety and emergency response capabilities helps ensure that workers and the public are protected from the hazards associated with the Department's operations and that the potential for adverse events is minimized. Such events have historically caused shutdown of operations and research, and thus impacted DOE's ability to perform its mission. One of the major focus areas of the Independent Oversight Program is ensuring that DOE and DOE contractors have established and implemented effective internal systems for self-identifying deficient conditions and taking appropriate corrective actions. Independent Oversight appraisals are unique in that they assess programs at the site level, as well as the multiple tiers of line management oversight associated with those programs, to provide perspectives on the overall effectiveness of DOE policies, programs, and performance in safety and security. Appraisals are designed to complement, not replace, line management's responsibility to monitor and oversee contractor safety and security programs and performance, manage contracts, and conduct self-assessments. EA's independence in reporting directly to the Office of the Secretary of Energy is intended to provide confidence that DOE's missions are being performed safely and securely.

These appraisal process protocols apply to EA and are part of a continuing effort to enhance the quality, consistency, and contribution of the Independent Oversight Program's activities and products. The protocols describe the general process and principal activities for evaluating both the effectiveness of DOE safety and security policies and the performance of DOE line management in implementing those policies. They also describe the overall philosophy, approach, scope, and methods to be used when conducting Independent Oversight appraisals. This edition of the protocols has been updated to reflect program changes that have been implemented to meet the expectations embodied in the Secretary of Energy's June 27, 2014,

memorandum announcing the establishment of EA. The two EA subordinate offices that are principally responsible for implementing the Independent Oversight Program – the Office of Cyber and Security Assessments and the Office of Environment, Safety and Health Assessments – have developed and implemented office-specific procedures and techniques for accomplishing their respective responsibilities in the areas of safety and security that complement the overall processes described in this document. These documents are available on EA’s websites.

These protocols have evolved through experience and have been developed to be flexible and easily adaptable as they are applied to the various policies, sites, facilities, organizations, and activities being evaluated. As part of the continuing effort to improve the Independent Oversight Program, EA anticipates making periodic updates and revisions to these protocols in response to changes in DOE program direction and guidance, insights gained from appraisal activities, and feedback from customers and constituents. Therefore, users of these protocols, as well as other interested parties, are invited to submit comments and recommendations to EA for consideration.

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Acronyms

DNFSB	Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
DOE	U.S. Department of Energy
EA	Office of Enterprise Assessments
FA	Focused Assessment
ISM	Integrated Safety Management
NNSA	National Nuclear Security Administration
NRC	Nuclear Regulatory Commission
NTC	EA National Training Center
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
QRB	Quality Review Board
SSIMS	Safeguards and Security Information Management System

Definitions

Appraisal: An Independent Oversight activity conducted by the Office of Enterprise Assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of line management performance and risk management or the adequacy of DOE policies and requirements. [DOE Order 227.1A]

Best Practice: A safety or security-related practice, technique, process, or program attribute observed during an appraisal that may merit consideration by other DOE and contractor organizations for implementation because it: (1) has been demonstrated to substantially improve safety or security performance of a DOE operation; (2) represents or contributes to superior performance (beyond compliance); (3) solves a problem or reduces the risk of a condition or practice that affects multiple DOE sites or programs; or (4) provides an innovative approach or method to improve effectiveness or efficiency. [DOE Order 227.1A]

Deficiency: An inadequacy in the implementation of an applicable requirement or performance standard that is found during an appraisal. Deficiencies may serve as the basis for one or more findings. [DOE Order 227.1A]

Directives: Described in DOE Order 251.1, *Departmental Directives Program*.

DOE: U.S. Department of Energy. References to DOE in this protocol, unless specifically indicated otherwise, encompass the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA).

Closeout Briefing: A verbal summary of the appraisal results given to DOE/NNSA management and the responsible DOE/NNSA contractor(s). Closeout briefings are normally conducted by the appraisal team leader before departing the facility or site that was subject to the appraisal.

Cognizant Manager: The DOE field or Headquarters manager who is directly responsible for program management and direction, and the development and implementation of corrective actions. Cognizant managers may be line managers or managers of support organizations. [DOE Order 227.1A]

Findings: Findings are deficiencies that warrant a high level of attention on the part of management. If left uncorrected, findings could adversely affect the DOE mission, the environment, worker safety or health, the public, or national security. Findings define the specific nature of the deficiency and whether it is localized or indicative of a systemic problem, and identify which organization is responsible for corrective actions. [DOE Order 227.1A]

Imminent Danger: Conditions or practices in the workplace where a danger exists that could reasonably be expected to cause death or serious physical harm either immediately or before the abatement of such danger, through normal procedures, would otherwise be required. [DOE Order 227.1A]

Line Management: The unbroken chain of responsibility that extends from the Secretary of Energy to the Deputy Secretary, to the Secretarial Officers who set program policy and plans and develop assigned programs, to the program and field element managers, and to the contractors and subcontractors who are responsible for execution of these programs. It is distinct from DOE support organizations, such as the Office of Environment, Health, Safety and Security, the Office of Management, and the Office of the Chief Information Officer, which also have support responsibilities and functions important to security and safety. [DOE Order 227.1A]

Major Vulnerability: A vulnerability that, if detected and exploited, could reasonably be expected to result in a successful attack causing serious damage to the national security. [DOE Order 227.1A]

National Security Interests: Activities performed at DOE or DOE contractor, subcontractor, consultant, or other facilities or installations that involve classified matter, special nuclear materials, nuclear weapons, nuclear weapons components and devices, critical infrastructure, government property that is of high value or that would impact DOE program continuity, or other assets that are deemed important.

Opportunities for Improvement: Opportunities for improvement are suggestions offered in Independent Oversight reports that may assist cognizant managers in improving programs and operations. While they may identify potential solutions to findings and deficiencies identified in appraisal reports, they may also address other conditions observed during the appraisal process. Opportunities for improvement are provided only as recommendations for line management consideration; they do not require formal resolution by management through a corrective action process. [DOE Order 227.1A]

Performance Testing: Activities conducted to evaluate all or selected portions of safety and security systems, networks, or programs as they exist at the time of the test. Performance testing includes, but is not limited to, force-on-force exercises, tabletop exercises, knowledge tests, limited-scope performance tests, limited-notice performance tests, penetration testing, vulnerability scanning, continuous automated scanning, and cyber security “red teaming.” Performance testing can be conducted as part of a scheduled appraisal activity (i.e., announced), or without prior knowledge of the entity being tested (i.e., unannounced). [DOE Order 227.1A]

Policy: The term “DOE policy” or “policy” when used in lower case in this document is meant to include all documents describing the philosophies, fundamental values, administration, requirements, and expectations for operation of the Department. It includes but is not limited to DOE Policies and other types of directives issued under DOE Order 251.1. [DOE Order 227.1A]

Program Secretarial Officers: Heads of DOE Departmental Elements as listed at https://www.directives.doe.gov/references/doe_departmental_elements.

Ratings: Ratings are indicators of management system performance levels. The three ratings are: Effective Performance (green), Needs Improvement (yellow), and Significant Weakness (red).

Recommendations: Recommendations are suggestions for senior line management’s consideration for improving program or management effectiveness. Recommendations transcend the specifics associated with findings, deficiencies, or opportunities for improvement and are derived from the aggregate consideration of the results of the appraisal. [DOE Order 227.1A]

Safety and Security Programs: Include: (1) programs for the protection of the public, the environment, and worker health and safety; and (2) programs for the protection of security assets to include special nuclear materials and classified and sensitive unclassified information in all forms. Safety and security programs include cyber security and emergency management programs. [DOE Order 227.1A]

Validation: The process by which the Independent Oversight Program ensures the factual accuracy of collected data and ensures that identified deficiencies, and their impacts, are effectively communicated to responsible managers and organizations.

Section 1 – Introduction

Vision

The Independent Oversight Program’s vision is to stimulate improvements in U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) safety and security programs by providing independent, objective, accurate, timely, and credible information regarding the status and effectiveness of those programs, and by identifying potentially useful and effective program improvements. The Independent Oversight program is implemented by the DOE Headquarters Office of Enterprise Assessments (EA), which reports to the Office of the Secretary of Energy. EA managers orchestrate an independent oversight program for the DOE enterprise that systematically analyzes DOE safety and security performance to identify key areas of risks, vulnerabilities, emerging trends, and best practices. Appraisals yield the basic building blocks of information that EA uses to analyze the safety and security of the DOE enterprise.

Mission

The Independent Oversight Program’s mission is to provide the Secretary of Energy and senior DOE managers with an independent assessment of the effectiveness of DOE policy and performance in the areas of safety and security, and other critical functions as directed by the Secretary. This effort is designed to support all mission areas of the Department in a manner that promotes innovation and efficiency, while at the same time providing necessary assurances for the health and safety of workers, the public, and environment, and the protection of national security assets. The Independent Oversight Program is the exclusive focal point for independent evaluation of DOE sites, facilities, organizations, and operations in the subject areas of safeguards and security, cyber security, nuclear safety, emergency management, and occupational safety and health. Within that broad scope, the main focus of the program is on the independent oversight of high consequence activities, such as nuclear operations, and the protection of the highest value security assets, such as special nuclear material and classified matter and information. Authority for the program is established by DOE Order 227.1A, *Independent Oversight Program*, as well as other DOE directives (e.g., DOE Policy 226.1B, *Department of Energy Oversight Policy*; DOE Order 226.1B, *Implementation of Department of Energy Oversight Policy*; DOE Order 151.1C, *Comprehensive Emergency Management System*; and DOE Order 205.1B, *Department of Energy Cyber Security Program*), which identify responsibilities for independent oversight in the areas of safety and security.

Organization

The Independent Oversight Program is structured to meet mission requirements. The appraisals that form the basis of the program are conducted by two EA offices:

- Office of Cyber and Security Assessments
- Office of Environment, Safety and Health Assessments.

Additionally, the EA Office of Outreach and Analysis provides analytical support to the Independent Oversight Program. EA’s National Training Center (NTC) uses the information in Independent Oversight appraisal reports, where appropriate, to enhance its safety and security training curricula and convey lessons learned. EA’s Office of Enforcement evaluates Independent Oversight appraisal reports for potential non-compliances with DOE safety and security regulations.

Independence

EA is charged with the independent oversight of safety and security programs throughout the Department. Independence is assured by EA's direct reporting relationship to the Office of the Secretary of Energy, outside any line management reporting chain. The EA offices that conduct Independent Oversight appraisals (identified above) have no direct responsibility for facility operations, protection program management, information systems management, or policy formulation.

EA exercises independence in the conduct of all Independent Oversight Program activities. While the selection and scheduling of appraisal activities is independent of line management, EA considers line management's assessment schedules and activities during planning to promote effective and efficient use of the Department's resources. EA also consistently seeks line management input into the scope and schedule of appraisals to promote high value, timely, and efficient appraisals. Appraisals are performance-based assessments of how sites and organizations implement the requirements established in Federal and DOE regulations and directives, with an emphasis on whether the program elements being evaluated are effective in achieving the intended level of protection or risk reduction. The Independent Oversight Program also provides feedback on whether DOE directives are effective and adequately establish effective program requirements. To achieve these goals, the Independent Oversight Program uses a standardized and tested process, coupled with the unbiased professional judgment of experienced staff.

Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibilities for conducting the Independent Oversight Program rest with the Office of the EA Director and, along topical lines, with the two subordinate offices that perform Independent Oversight appraisals.

Office of the Director

The EA Director and Deputy Director provide strategic direction (e.g., setting priorities, establishing internal policies, reviewing appraisal plans, administering the office, and developing and maintaining the necessary infrastructure) and quality control (e.g., reviewing and approving reports, ensuring effective validation processes, and establishing Quality Review Boards) for the Independent Oversight Program. This office also provides communication, coordination, and feedback with the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and other senior DOE managers to identify issues and concerns and to support interface with DOE program offices and field elements, congressional staff, and other stakeholders. Strategic priorities for all of the EA offices are established in an annual EA Operational Plan developed for each fiscal year.

Specifically, the EA Director:

1. Directs and manages the Department's Independent Oversight Program.
2. Develops, maintains, and ensures adherence to Independent Oversight Program policies, procedures, standards, and guidelines.
3. Ensures that senior EA management oversight is provided for all appraisal planning, conduct, and reporting.
4. Provides DOE managers with independent assessments of safety and security policies, programs, and implementation. Assessment results may be provided in various written formats (e.g.,

assessment reports, operational awareness records, appraisal summaries, and lessons learned or “rollup” reports).

5. Briefs senior DOE officials, including, when appropriate, the Secretary and Deputy Secretary; Under Secretaries; Secretarial Officers; and DOE policy organizations on the results of appraisal activities.
6. Coordinates with the DOE Inspector General when appraisal activities identify concerns that may have criminal or waste/fraud/abuse implications.
7. Develops and maintains this protocol document for conducting safety and security appraisals to address appraisal priorities and scheduling; appraisal planning; data collection, analysis, and validation methods; development of ratings, findings, deficiencies, best practices, and opportunities for improvement; report preparation; and follow-up activities, as appropriate.
8. Ensures that subsequent appraisal activities review the effectiveness of corrective actions using a tailored approach based on significance and complexity.
9. Works with cognizant DOE line managers to resolve disagreements on appraisal schedules, results, findings, or ratings, and works with cognizant policy organizations to ensure proper application and characterization of DOE policies and directives in appraisal reports.
10. Cooperates with the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB), including providing ready access to appraisal results, and responds to DNFSB inquiries and recommendations, as applicable.
11. Ensures that lessons learned from Independent Oversight activities are integrated into NTC safety and security training courses.
12. Informs Program Secretarial Officers when Independent Oversight findings have not been resolved effectively or in a timely manner.

Subordinate Oversight Offices

The following responsibilities are common to the Offices of Cyber and Security Assessments and Environment, Safety and Health Assessments in the performance of Independent Oversight Program activities associated with their respective subject areas:

- Developing and maintaining detailed plans, guides, procedures, and protocols as necessary to assist in accomplishing office-specific missions and responsibilities
- Coordinating the scheduling, notification, and planning of appraisals with appropriate Headquarters and field element managers
- Conducting independent assessments of DOE sites, facilities, organizations, and operations in subject-specific programs
- Advising appropriate managers promptly of major vulnerabilities or imminent danger identified during appraisal activities

- Developing, publishing, and disseminating final reports of the results of independent assessments to effect appropriate line management cognizance of issues, effective sharing of lessons-learned, and stakeholder awareness of oversight activities
- Evaluating DOE policies related to subject-specific programs
- Coordinating with the applicable DOE policy organization to ensure accurate interpretation of requirements and convey any inadequacies associated with DOE policies and requirements
- Coordinating with the NTC to incorporate pertinent information gleaned from appraisal activities, such as innovative practices and lessons learned, into training curricula
- Performing ongoing analyses to identify trends and emerging issues in assigned safety and security subject areas
- Reviewing and commenting on the adequacy of corrective action plans developed in response to appraisal reports when requested by the cognizant DOE manager or directed by the EA Director
- Performing follow-up assessments as appropriate to evaluate progress and effectiveness in implementing corrective actions for previously identified issues
- Performing complex-wide, cross-cutting studies of subject-specific program issues of interest
- Identifying recommendations and opportunities for improving subject-specific program performance
- Maintaining broad situational awareness of field operations and conditions, missions, challenges, and management capabilities
- Maintaining an enterprise-wide analysis of key areas of risk, vulnerabilities, emerging trends, and best practices for assigned mission areas
- Reviewing other governmental and commercial subject-specific programs to provide benchmarks for DOE performance
- Providing resources, as necessary, to participate in special assessments.

In addition to the common responsibilities for the two Independent Oversight Program subordinate offices, specific Independent Oversight responsibilities for each of those offices are outlined below.

Office of Cyber and Security Assessments

The Office of Cyber and Security Assessments is responsible for the independent evaluation of the effectiveness of safeguards and security (including information security) policies and programs throughout the Department. The office comprises two sub-offices: the Office of Cyber Assessments and the Office of Security Assessments. Appraisal activities are intended to provide assurance that special nuclear material, critical infrastructure, classified matter, classified and sensitive information, and computer networks are protected from theft, sabotage, diversion, loss, or unauthorized disclosure, including the actions of a possible malicious insider. The Office of Cyber and Security Assessments also performs follow-up

assessments to ensure that corrective actions are effective and that complex-wide issues and systemic weaknesses in safeguards and security and information security are appropriately addressed. The programs that are evaluated include the following functional areas:

- Protection program management
- Personnel security
- Classified and unclassified cyber security
- Physical security systems
- Nuclear material control and accountability
- Classified matter protection and control
- Protective force.

The office's appraisal activities focus primarily on:

- Performing periodic appraisals of safeguards and security and cyber security programs, including the conduct of performance testing at DOE sites possessing significant amounts of special nuclear material, classified information, or other national security interests
- Maintaining a Composite Adversary Team to perform force-on-force performance exercises
- Maintaining an Engagement Simulation System program to support safe, but realistic, execution of force-on-force exercises
- Implementing a limited-notice performance testing program designed to maximize realism in evaluating safeguards and security response capabilities
- Evaluating the implementation of insider threat programs mandated by Federal and DOE requirements
- Maintaining capabilities for performing remote network testing through penetration testing, and for simulating realistic adversarial attacks on DOE computer networks to identify vulnerabilities
- Conducting annual evaluations of cyber security for DOE national security systems and DOE intelligence systems, and providing input for the annual evaluation of DOE unclassified information security programs and the annual evaluation of U.S. Intelligence Community elements as required by the Federal Information Security Modernization Act
- Conducting annual "red team" computer security evaluations (i.e., unannounced penetration testing) of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) national laboratories
- Evaluating the effectiveness of cyber security tools.

Office of Environment, Safety and Health Assessments

The Office of Environment, Safety and Health Assessments evaluates nuclear safety and worker safety and health programs, integrated safety management (ISM) performance, and emergency response capabilities to determine their status and to provide feedback to line management for needed improvements. The office comprises three sub-offices: the Office of Nuclear Safety and Environmental Assessments, the Office of

Worker Safety and Health Assessments, and the Office of Emergency Management Assessments. Appraisal activities are intended to ensure adequate protection of the public, workers, and the environment, particularly at DOE sites with nuclear facilities or conducting nuclear or radiological activities. For sites with nuclear facilities or activities, the office has implemented a Site Lead program in which EA assigns a staff member to monitor site activities and maintain operational awareness of nuclear facilities and operations, and to use this information to plan and coordinate Independent Oversight assessment activities. The office's appraisal activities focus primarily on:

- Evaluating the status of nuclear safety at DOE nuclear facilities, including the functionality of vital safety systems and other nuclear safety programs and functions
- Conducting assessments of design and construction of new or significantly modified nuclear facilities
- Conducting targeted, multi-site nuclear safety assessments of selected focus areas that are of interest due to known performance deficiencies, high risks, or recent changes in requirements
- Evaluating emergency response capabilities at DOE sites with nuclear activities and significant quantities of hazardous materials
- Conducting assessments of site work planning and control processes to evaluate the effectiveness of hazard identification and control mechanisms
- Conducting assessments of safety programs at sites or within organizations where performance may present significant risk (e.g., less than expected safety performance and/or serious or recurring incidents or violations of requirements)
- Evaluating line management feedback and improvement processes.

Interface with Other Organizations

The Independent Oversight Program places significant emphasis on working with policy organizations, Headquarters program offices, and field organizations to ensure that identified deficiencies are accurately characterized and adequately addressed. This approach has met with considerable success because of the combined effort of DOE field and Headquarters organizations and the support of senior DOE management. EA also routinely interfaces with organizations external to DOE, such as Congress and the DNFSB.

Section 2 – Independent Oversight Appraisals

Introduction

The Independent Oversight Program’s appraisal process provides a disciplined and consistent approach to monitoring, evaluating, and reporting the status of the implementation of safety and security programs within DOE. The process has been developed and refined over time and tested through repeated use during many different types of assessments. This section describes the essential elements of that process, all of which are closely tied to established Independent Oversight Program goals and philosophy.

These appraisal process protocols provide an overview of the general process that applies to all independent oversight appraisal activities. The subordinate oversight offices maintain more detailed program plans, guides, procedures, and protocols as necessary to assist in accomplishing their specific missions and responsibilities. Most of these are available through EA’s assessments web page at <http://energy.gov/ea/services/assessments>.

Program Scope

EA conducts independent oversight activities for the entire Department, including the NNSA. The focus of most Independent Oversight appraisal activities is on high hazard activities, such as nuclear operations, and the protection of high-value security assets. However, EA is authorized to conduct Independent Oversight activities regarding all aspects of Departmental safety and security programs except:

- The Naval Nuclear Propulsion program
- Aviation safety (oversight is performed by the Office of Aviation Management, within the Office of Management)
- Nuclear explosives safety (oversight is performed by the NNSA)
- Water impoundment structures and dams (oversight of structural integrity is performed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission via a memorandum of agreement with DOE).

The Independent Oversight Program generally conducts only limited oversight of activities that are licensed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) or subject to regulation by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). The scheduling of any Independent Oversight appraisals pertaining to these activities will first consider the inspection and assessment activities of the NRC or OSHA in order to eliminate or minimize duplication of effort. However, the Independent Oversight Program retains the authority to conduct oversight of these activities when necessary to ensure that DOE safety and security interests are being managed effectively.

Appraisal Types

All Independent Oversight Program activities are designed to satisfy mission requirements. The oversight function is *independent* from DOE’s line program offices (line management) in that the EA oversight offices have no responsibility for operations, projects, programmatic activities, or policy development. EA managers also ensure that no appraisal team members have a conflict of interest with the organizations or subject areas that they are tasked to evaluate.

The Independent Oversight Program conducts a number of activities, collectively referred to as appraisals, related to evaluating DOE policy and DOE and contractor line management performance in the areas under its purview. Appraisals can generally be grouped into three general types of activities: (1) assessments, (2) operational awareness activities, and (3) unannounced or limited-notice performance tests.

Regardless of the type of appraisal activity, EA publishes a validated report. Most of these reports, other than those for operational awareness activities (described below), include recommendations or opportunities for improvement for line management to consider as possible program enhancements. Depending upon the results of the appraisal, reports may identify findings, which require corrective action by line management; and deficiencies, which line management is expected to handle in accordance with the issues management processes it has established in accordance with DOE Orders 226.1, *Implementation of Department of Energy Oversight Policy*, and 414.1, *Quality Assurance*. For larger appraisals, such as multi-topic assessments, EA also provides the cognizant program office Assistant Secretary or Program Director an opportunity to convey written comments on the conclusions and recommendations of the final draft report. If provided, this management reaction is reflected in an appendix to the final assessment report. Some reports may also include ratings, as described in Section 5 of this document.

EA also routinely publishes “rollup” reports that summarize the results of a series of appraisals covering similar topical areas or activities. The intent of these reports is to characterize broad, systemic issues or cross-cutting challenges faced by the Department and offer recommendations to address those challenges based on the perspectives gained by Independent Oversight personnel in evaluating multiple programs and organizations in the DOE complex. EA may also publish an annual report for the Secretary identifying the highest priority issues that warrant senior management’s attention in order to maintain DOE’s high standards of safety and security performance and effect continuous performance improvement.

Assessments

Assessments are typically either system-level appraisals that are broad in their program coverage and technical span, or comprehensive and in-depth evaluations of a particular functional area or program. Periodic assessments are scheduled activities that determine the adequacy of program performance at a specific site or location, and are most commonly used in conducting independent oversight of security-related programs. Assessments usually include performance testing to the greatest extent possible, which may comprise large-scale and limited-scope performance tests, force-on-force testing, evaluation of site emergency response exercises, or remote scanning or penetration tests of cyber security capabilities.

Other types of assessments are:

(A) Focused Assessments

Focused assessments (FAs) are generally smaller in scope than assessments and are usually based on an analysis of current events or conditions at a particular site or location, rather than on a periodic basis. FAs typically focus on a particular facility, operation, organization, program, or project at a site or location. FAs may include performance testing, but such testing is usually of limited scope when compared to performance testing conducted as part of assessments. FAs are a common appraisal activity of the nuclear safety Site Lead program within EA’s Office of Nuclear Safety and Environmental Assessments. FAs may encompass Independent Oversight activities that are conducted in conjunction with a DOE line management assessment activity or an assessment sponsored by another DOE Headquarters staff office (e.g., Office of the Chief Information Officer, Office of Classification).

(B) Follow-up Assessments

EA conducts follow-up assessments to determine the status and progress of corrective actions and other actions taken in response to deficiencies previously identified by Independent Oversight appraisals or DOE line management oversight activities. Follow-up assessments are aimed at evaluating the effectiveness and sustainability of corrective actions.

(C) Targeted Assessments

EA conducts targeted assessments to address concerns that transcend performance at a specific site or location. They might address the effectiveness of program elements as implemented across DOE by analyzing complex-wide program issues, or they might analyze the implementation of a specific policy item throughout the complex. Targeted assessments are also performed to address an area, concern, deficiency, or weakness within a program, and might focus on the status of a specific program element, the adequacy of specific policies, or the implementation status of specific policies throughout DOE.

(D) Special Assessments

EA conducts special assessments at the request of the Secretary or other senior DOE managers, often on a “rapid response” basis, to provide specific needed information about DOE safety and security programs and policies, or other critical DOE functions. Special assessments directed or requested by the Secretary or other senior DOE officials may address areas outside safeguards and security, cyber security, nuclear safety, emergency management, or ISM programs. Alternatively, the EA Director may propose that an Independent Oversight Program special assessment be conducted if other EA activities suggest a need to do so.

Operational Awareness Activities

EA conducts operational awareness activities to obtain current information about operations, activities, and initiatives at a site or within a program, and may involve touring facilities and attending meetings. These activities serve a vital role in ensuring that Independent Oversight Program managers have up-to-date and accurate information upon which to base decisions about appraisal priorities, schedules, and scopes. A template for reporting on operational activities is provided in Appendix F.

Unannounced or Limited-Notice Performance Tests

In addition to announced performance testing, the Independent Oversight Program routinely conducts unannounced and limited-notice performance tests. These tests are intended to maximize realism by limiting participants’ foreknowledge of the test’s timing and content; such tests also allow EA to test a broad set of conditions with only limited staff resources. Unannounced performance tests, such as automated scanning and network penetration testing, are typically employed to remotely evaluate cyber security measures, consistent with common industry practices. Limited-notice performance tests are more often used to evaluate such safeguards and security topics as protective force response practices, operability of physical security systems, and accuracy of inventories. Unannounced and limited-notice performance tests are usually conducted as discrete activities but may also be conducted before or in conjunction with a broader assessment. As with all performance tests, safety and security are of paramount importance in planning and conducted unannounced and limited-notice appraisal activities and require close and careful coordination with designated trusted agents.

Appraisal Goals

The goals of the Independent Oversight Program's appraisals are to:

- Determine whether the implementation of safeguards and security, cyber security, nuclear safety, ISM, and emergency management programs meets the requirements established by DOE policy and whether those programs are effective in providing worker, public, and asset protection and mitigating risks.
- Determine whether DOE policies and policy guidance in the areas of safety and security are effective.
- Assess the impact of identified deficiencies, taking into account mitigating factors, compensatory measures, and current or planned corrective actions.
- Determine the status of actions relative to previously identified deficiencies.
- Present potential enhancements for consideration in strengthening implementation of safety and security programs or addressing identified deficiencies.
- Identify safety- and security-related best practices that merit consideration for implementation by DOE and contractor organizations.

Appraisal Philosophy

To accomplish its mission and achieve its goals, the Independent Oversight Program employs a set of carefully developed and experience-based principles.

- 1. Planning is the foundation of all appraisals and appraisal selection and prioritization.** Careful and deliberate strategic planning must ensure that appraisal activities are directed toward the areas of greatest vulnerability to Departmental operations and the safety and security of workers, the public, and DOE national assets. Detailed and coordinated planning must then precede each specific appraisal and continue through to its conclusion. Planning is discussed in more detail in Section 3, and a sample appraisal plan is provided in Appendix C.
- 2. Coordination with DOE Headquarters elements and the field is essential.** The ultimate objective of the Independent Oversight Program is to improve DOE's performance, which can best be achieved through coordination and openness at all levels. EA oversight managers are expected to engage cognizant senior DOE managers when developing appraisal schedules and early in the planning for specific appraisals to discuss and obtain feedback on priorities, scope, and objectives for all proposed oversight activities.
- 3. Appraisals must be based on established standards.** National standards established by Congress, DOE, and other executive agencies are the basic requirements with which DOE programs must comply. DOE policy is promulgated through DOE directives and regulations. Other national standards are exemplified by applicable public laws, regulations, executive orders, and other directives. Program-specific standards are requirements established by Program Secretarial Officers for sites and programs under their cognizance. Local standards are those imposed by local DOE site offices, the facility contractor, or subordinate contractors responsible for administering

programs within their areas of operation. Program-specific and local standards usually pertain to site-specific implementation of national requirements, and may impose more stringent requirements. These types of standards are promulgated through DOE program and site office implementing instructions, contractor procedures, site safeguards and security plans, cyber security program plans, ISM plans and procedures, and emergency plans. Independent Oversight Program appraisals use appropriate program-specific and local standards to evaluate programs, especially if they differ from or cover areas not addressed by national requirements.

4. **Appraisals must be fair, reasonable, and factual.** The Independent Oversight Program strives to be fair, reasonable, and factual in conducting appraisals and interpreting how DOE policies and standards are applied to specific programs. All data used in the evaluation process are validated at multiple levels to ensure correctness.
5. **Performance is the most accurate indicator of a program's effectiveness.** Whenever possible, the Independent Oversight Program uses existing performance indicators and conducts performance tests to assess the adequacy of a program or program element. Through the review of performance data and performance test results, the Independent Oversight Program determines the effectiveness of a safety or security program in implementing the intent and objectives of DOE policy.
6. **The review of policies must be performed from a holistic and practical perspective.** In determining the adequacy of DOE policies, the Independent Oversight Program considers such things as whether the policy sufficiently defines expectations, the expectations are clearly articulated, and the requirements are able to be implemented in real-world conditions. Independent Oversight Program personnel maintain a strong dialogue with applicable policy organizations to ensure an in-depth understanding of the intent of policy as part of evaluating its effectiveness.
7. **Appraisals must provide meaningful, accurate, and current information.** The reports developed as a result of appraisals must clearly present the results of the appraisal, identifying and analyzing the impacts of strengths and weaknesses. Additionally, when possible and appropriate, potential recommendations and opportunities for improvement are identified for consideration.
8. **The cooperation of field elements is essential in conducting thorough, efficient, and fair appraisals.** Local representatives provide detailed site and system knowledge for planning; arrange administrative and logistical support; expedite data collection activities; and identify the local points of contact who participate during scoping, planning, data collection, validation, and closeout activities. Relationships between Independent Oversight Program and local representatives should be cordial, open, and professional in order to facilitate the efficient execution of appraisal activities.
9. **The qualifications and objectivity of Independent Oversight Program appraisers are of paramount importance.** It is essential that appraisal team members be knowledgeable of applicable standards, technically competent in their assigned areas, cognizant of the Independent Oversight Program's philosophies and goals, free from any conflicts of interest with organizations subject to appraisal, and able to successfully perform all necessary functions related to their appraisal responsibilities. Independent Oversight Program Federal staff training and qualification programs are intended to maintain and continually improve mission performance. These programs are implemented consistent with DOE Order 426.1, *Federal Technical Capability*.

Appraisal Phases

All appraisals can be characterized by four major activities or phases.

- 1. Planning (including scoping).** The planning phase includes the activities necessary to prepare for all aspects of an appraisal, both on and off site. These activities include coordination within the Independent Oversight Program and with cognizant DOE and contractor entities, including senior managers, as applicable; research of facilities and topical areas to be reviewed; development and issuance of assessment plans (see example in Appendix C); document requests from the site and other DOE organizations; logistical arrangements; information technology resource needs; security and training considerations; and similar considerations. When necessary, EA may conduct onsite scoping or operational awareness activities to identify which operations or facilities will be the subject of the assessment. Major appraisals include an interview with the cognizant program office Assistant Secretary and/or Program Director to discuss and garner feedback on the proposed scope and objectives of the appraisal. Similar discussions are conducted at lower levels of management for appraisals with more limited scopes.
- 2. Conduct (including informal validation).** The conduct phase is the portion of the appraisal principally devoted to collecting and validating data obtained through interviews, review of documents and operating data, observations of operations, and performance testing, such as tabletop and force-on-force exercises. Although EA collects most data at the site, some activities may be accomplished via document reviews or performance tests at remote locations. EA continuously validates the collected data by cross-referencing sources, meeting with site counterparts, and other means. At the end of onsite data collection activities, EA convenes an exit meeting with site management to convey preliminary observations and describe the process for subsequent factual accuracy review of the draft appraisal report. For assessments, this exit meeting typically consists of a formal briefing that summarizes the information conveyed in a draft report (see below). For smaller appraisals, the appraisal team leader is expected to provide a written summary of preliminary results to the field element manager and laboratory director (if applicable) at the time of the exit meeting (see example in Appendix E).
- 3. Reporting (including formal validation).** While EA conducts informal validation as data is being collected, the report preparation and formal validation phase involves data integration and analysis, deficiency and finding identification, rating determination (if applicable), draft report preparation, and quality review. For assessments, most of this phase is conducted at the site or facility being evaluated and a draft report is left with site management and provided to the applicable program office for final factual accuracy review after the exit meeting. For smaller appraisals, report writing occurs at Headquarters and then the draft report is transmitted to site management for review and validation.
- 4. Closeout.** The closeout phase includes disposition and resolution of comments and final report issuance. For some appraisals, this phase may also include solicitation of senior DOE management's reaction to the final draft report and, once the report is issued, Headquarters briefings, external briefings (e.g., Congressional committees), and reviews of proposed corrective actions.

Although these phases are identified by the primary activities they encompass, actual component activities may overlap significantly. For example, data may be collected during the planning phase, and planning (particularly for performance testing) can extend into the data collection phase. Similarly, analysis begins

during data collection and continues throughout the process. Subsequent sections of this document describe the activities and expectations associated with these major appraisal phases.

Security and Safety Standards of Conduct

Appraisal team personnel often handle classified and controlled unclassified documents and information while conducting appraisals. This information and documentation may be provided by the facility or organization being visited, or may be generated or provided by appraisal team members. Additionally, team members may use classified word processing, scanning, copying, and destruction equipment in performing such duties as recording data and writing reports. Team members are frequently required to access security-sensitive work areas where they must not bring in certain electronic equipment and other prohibited items.

While working at DOE Headquarters facilities and field sites, team members are expected to comply with security-related postings and placards that indicate the boundaries of Limited Areas and security areas, as well as prohibited articles. Team members are required to comply fully with all applicable DOE and local security policies and requirements, such as restrictions on the introduction and use, in sensitive security or limited areas, of prohibited and controlled articles such as personal digital assistants, thumb drives, cell phones, and pagers. Additionally, team members are expected to comply with all information security and cyber security policies on the use of classified and unclassified computers and the control and handling of documents containing classified or controlled unclassified information.

Team members may also encounter industrial hazards and/or require access to radiological or other posted areas while performing their appraisal activities. In addition to fulfilling any training or badging requirements needed to gain general access to a particular site, team members must comply with all site-specific requirements for training, personal protective equipment, and escorting for access to facilities or areas they will visit. Whenever possible, the team should make arrangements with site points of contact to obtain required training in advance of the appraisal. Team members should also ascertain before an appraisal whether they will need to supply their own protective equipment (e.g., safety shoes) and take action to obtain such equipment.

Professional Conduct and Relations with Site and Headquarters Personnel

As stated in the appraisal philosophy section above, the cooperation and assistance of representatives of organizations subject to an appraisal, whether at Headquarters or in the field, are crucial in conducting a successful appraisal. Independent Oversight Program appraisals evaluate line management at the DOE Headquarters, DOE field element, and facility contractor levels. Appraisal team personnel are required to maintain the highest standards of conduct when dealing with representatives of line management, including supervisors, managers, workers, and other personnel encountered during appraisal activities. Professional conduct and other guidelines regarding relationships with personnel subject to oversight appraisals are explained in more detail in Appendix A.

Interested DOE Headquarters organizations (such as the Office of the Chief Information Officer, the NNSA Office of Emergency Operations, and program offices)—which may or may not be in the line management chain—sometimes send representatives to observe Independent Oversight Program appraisal activities. Because appraisals are conducted openly, appropriate participation by such organizations is welcomed. Such representatives are encouraged to participate as observers—on a non-interfering basis—in such activities as tours, meetings, and other appropriate data collection activities; however, they are not members of the appraisal team.

Field Augmentation Program

The Independent Oversight Program has implemented a field augmentation program that includes subject matter experts from DOE field elements and site contractors as members of Independent Oversight appraisal teams and has made this program a normal part of the Independent Oversight Program's process. The positive aspects of the field augmentation program for the Department and the Independent Oversight Program are that it:

- Provides augmentees (and through them, their managers and sites/organizations) with insight into the Independent Oversight Program's performance-based evaluation approach that can be taken back to their sites and used to improve local survey and self-assessment programs
- Enhances working relationships between Independent Oversight Program staff and site personnel
- Facilitates increased inter-site exchange of approaches, practices, and procedures when augmentees view site operations subject to appraisal and/or discuss home site operations with those being appraised
- Allows the Independent Oversight Program to take advantage of the considerable subject matter expertise and experience that resides in the field
- Broadens the Independent Oversight Program's perspective (i.e., adds field perspective) in identifying and analyzing potential issues.

The following general program concepts are followed to ensure the integrity of the field augmentation program:

- Augmentees must be volunteers who are recommended by field element and contractor managers and who are selected and approved for participation by EA.
- Augmentees are restricted from participation in assessments of their own sites or organizations; contractor augmentees are further restricted from participating in assessments of other sites operated by their employers.
- Augmentees are fully integrated into assessment teams and fully participate as members of the topic team to which they are assigned.

Observers

EA will accommodate observers of its appraisal activities provided that the presence of the observers does not adversely impact the site or EA's ability to accomplish the appraisal objectives. In particular, EA will encourage senior managers from the Headquarters line organization to observe appraisals to promote awareness of EA's evaluation methods, analytical practices, and validation processes.

Section 3 – Appraisal Process Planning

Introduction

Independent Oversight Program planning is a continuous process, involving a myriad of activities and essentially all staff members. Thorough planning at the strategic, program, and individual appraisal level is the foundation of the Independent Oversight Program.

This section outlines the Independent Oversight Program’s general planning processes and responsibilities for developing appraisal schedules and conducting individual appraisal activities. Additional details regarding program-specific planning processes are contained within the subordinate offices’ program documentation. Independent Oversight’s general approach to site prioritization and appraisal scheduling is outlined in Appendix B.

Goals

The goal of the Independent Oversight Program is to ensure that its appraisal activities focus on Departmental facilities and programs that have high-value assets, conduct high-risk operations, and/or pose conditions that have the potential to cause the Department and/or United States irreparable harm, while also maintaining assurance of the overall effectiveness of security and safety programs across the entire Department. The goals of the planning process are to facilitate EA’s ability to identify and execute a suite of appraisal activities that collectively address the most significant safety and security vulnerabilities faced by the Department, and to provide recommended actions to the Secretary and other senior managers for use in allocating resources and targeting remedial actions. The goal when planning appraisal activities is to anticipate every action necessary to meet mission requirements and conduct the highest quality appraisal possible with the available resources.

Strategic and Program Planning

Strategic planning is the responsibility of the EA Director and Deputy Director, with input from the Office of the Secretary and the directors of the two subordinate oversight offices. Strategic planning involves taking a long view of evolving threats and conditions, and adjusting the organization’s resources, processes, capabilities, and schedules to meet the strategic needs of the office and the Department. For example, the increasing number and sophistication of cyber security attacks against DOE computer networks and the desire of terrorist groups to obtain special nuclear, radiological, chemical, and biological materials for use in attacks against U.S. targets have required the Independent Oversight Program to continually enhance its capabilities and employ new assessment techniques to evaluate DOE protection strategies in these areas. Similarly, DOE initiatives to build new nuclear facilities to replace aging infrastructure and support large-scale cleanup operations have required a renewed focus on assessing the design and construction of major nuclear facility projects.

To accomplish strategic planning, EA routinely convenes meetings of all EA managers and appropriate EA subject matter experts to share, analyze, and confer on all of the safety and security performance and compliance information that is collected from a myriad of information sources. These sources include EA appraisal, enforcement, and operational awareness activities; Departmental corporate reporting databases; Departmental discussion and issues management forums (e.g., the DOE Cyber Council and Information Management Governance Board, Information Sharing and Safeguarding Governance Board and Core Working Group, Insider Threat Program Working Group, and DOE Nuclear Safety Coordinating

Committee); and external entities (e.g., DNFSB, DOE Inspector General, Government Accountability Office). These strategic planning meetings may focus on a specific DOE site or organization or a particular topical area of interest. The intent of these meetings is to evaluate all available information in the aggregate to facilitate decisions regarding appraisal priorities and focus areas. The outcomes from these meetings contribute to the formulation of EA's annual Operational Plan and, where applicable, annual assessment schedules.

EA recognizes that its Independent Oversight Program is one of many elements of the Department's overall approach to providing assurance of the effectiveness of its safety and security programs. Other major elements include the line management contract performance mechanisms mandated by Federal and Departmental acquisition regulations, field element and program office assessment programs, field element oversight of contractor assurance systems, self-assessment programs, and the regulatory enforcement program (also implemented by EA). Thus, the Independent Oversight Program works closely with Headquarters and field elements when scheduling and planning appraisal activities to maximize efficient and effective use of resources and minimize unnecessary duplication of effort, while also ensuring that appropriate Federal oversight depth and coverage is devoted to those assets and operations that demand it based on risk and complexity. While the Independent Oversight Program endeavors to accommodate DOE line management input on appraisal priorities and schedules, EA must ensure that its own activities collect, analyze, and validate sufficient information to effectively fulfill its independent function as mandated by the Secretary.

Appraisal Planning

Thorough planning is the foundation of all appraisals. Appraisal planning comprises management and team activities and responsibilities, and requires the gathering and analysis of large amounts of information from many sources, decision-making based on that analysis, and appraisal preparation based on those decisions. The quality of planning significantly affects all other appraisal phases. Because only limited time and other resources are available for planning, these efforts must be focused and efficient.

While the directors of the subordinate oversight offices establish detailed planning requirements and procedures to meet their specific needs, their activities fall within the scope of the general process outlined in this section. The overall planning process described in these protocols applies to all appraisals, regardless of the nature of the appraisal—assessment, operational awareness activity, or performance testing—or the size of the team involved. Planning requirements may vary in magnitude for different activities, but the essential elements of planning do not.

Management Planning

Management planning responsibilities are continuous throughout an appraisal's cycle. Most of the early planning requirements are management's responsibility, not the team's. Once an appraisal has been approved and tentatively scheduled, the director of the responsible office or the designated team leader (depending on the anticipated scope of the appraisal) initiates planning activities, which usually include:

- For major appraisals, meeting with the cognizant Headquarters program office managers to discuss the scope and objectives of the appraisal
- Contacting the managers of affected field sites and laboratories to begin ongoing coordination
- Determining the tentative scope and focus of the appraisal

- Developing and coordinating a site visit schedule with the site(s)/organizations(s) to be visited
- Identifying documents and other information needed for more detailed planning, and issuing a data call tailored to the appraisal objectives
- Conducting an initial review of available information to assist initial decisions regarding activity scope and focus
- Identifying and acquiring the personnel resources to accomplish both the technical and administrative support aspects of the appraisal, including determining whether participants in the field augmentation program (see Section 2) will be included on the appraisal team
- Identifying and satisfying logistics needs, such as onsite workspace, hotel accommodations, computer and other equipment support, and access authorizations and training
- Directing and overseeing team planning activities at team planning meeting(s) or site planning visit(s)
- Overseeing necessary ongoing planning throughout the course of the appraisal.

The results of management planning activities, with appropriate input from appraisal team planning activities, are used to create a formal appraisal plan, which defines the scope and approach for the conduct of the appraisal. A sample Independent Oversight assessment plan is shown in Appendix C.

Team Planning

Detailed planning for data collection activities—the essence of all Independent Oversight Program appraisals—typically begins once the team has been established, and continues through initial visits to and communications with the site or organization being assessed. For some appraisal activities, planning meetings for the appraisal team may be convened at Headquarters if necessary, based on the judgment of the team leader. During the course of planning, the team will normally be expected to:

- Become familiar with the results of previous appraisal activities.
- Review the objectives and proposed parameters of the appraisal, and any management guidance and expectations.
- Review and analyze available documentation.
- As needed, tour key facilities at the site.
- As needed, conduct preliminary interviews with DOE and contractor field element, program, and facility managers.
- Meet with stakeholders, as appropriate.
- Contact and conduct appropriate information exchanges with designated counterparts from Headquarters and field organizations.

- Provide input to the appraisal plan and recommend any modifications to activity scope and focus resulting from planning activities.
- Determine appropriate data collection methods; review and/or establish planned lines of inquiry or criteria, review and approach documents; and develop any additional data collection or appraisal-related documents necessary (e.g., performance test plans, safety plans).
- Develop a schedule of data collection and related activities.
- Identify additional information and support requirements and communicate them to the team leader.
- Brief or otherwise inform the team leader of planned activities.

Much of the detailed planning for an appraisal is accomplished before the appraisal team arrives on site, but it should be recognized that planning is an ongoing effort and may continue well into the conduct phase of the activity. Both team leaders and team members are expected to remain flexible and ready to modify plans in response to unexpected circumstances that may arise during any phase of an appraisal.

Section 4 – Conducting Appraisals

Introduction

The conduct phase of an appraisal normally encompasses that period when most of the needed data is collected. This phase may consist of a concentrated effort during a relatively short period of time, as during an assessment, or it may occur over an extended period, as in some targeted or special assessments. For some types of appraisals (e.g., assessments, operational awareness activities), the conduct phase takes place almost exclusively on site; for other types of activities, such as cyber security scans and penetration tests, team members may be located remotely from the subject site. The conduct phase is tailored to the unique needs and objectives of each specific appraisal. This stage is crucial to the success of an appraisal because during this stage, team members collect most of the information that will form the basis of their analyses and conclusions (and ratings and recommendations, when appropriate).

This section addresses the goal of appraisal conduct, data collection methods, data validation procedures, and important related topics.

Goal

The goal when conducting an appraisal is to accomplish all planned data collection activities in a fair, impartial, and professional manner and to validate the technical accuracy of the data collected.

Data Collection

Since data is critical to a successful appraisal, the appraisal team must collect sufficient amounts of accurate, pertinent data by using appropriate data collection methods. Five basic methods of data collection are available to team members: document reviews, interviews, observations, knowledge tests, and performance tests. Since each of these methods has inherent advantages and limitations, the team must carefully select the specific methods and use them in combination with others to ensure that all necessary data is collected and cross-checked.

Data collection activities generally follow the plans and schedules developed during the formal planning process. While team members focus on accomplishing the planned activities, data collection activities sometimes require adjustment to accommodate changing conditions. For example, early data collection results may necessitate reduced or expanded activities in planned areas of emphasis and investigation of areas not originally identified for review. If circumstances or conditions necessitate deviating substantively from the planned scope of the appraisal, the appraisal team leader will notify line management as soon as practicable and work with line management to accommodate the revised scope. The appraisal team will not ignore issues or potential issues that become apparent during the course of data collection simply because they were not identified during formal planning.

Document Reviews

Document reviews are a basic method used in virtually every appraisal. Every DOE program or activity that is reviewed normally has associated policy guidance, procedures, records, and other information in documentary form. Even in preparation for employing other data collection methods, such as performance tests, document reviews are usually essential. Document reviews are not limited to paper documents; information in computer databases, computer system directories, and automated logs of computer activity

are included in this category. When requesting documents to review, team members are expected to exercise judgment to tailor their requests based on the appraisal scope and review topics, and share collected documents to eliminate any duplicate requests.

Interviews

Interviews can provide useful data that is not readily available from other data collection methods. Interviews are most effective in determining perceptions and individual understanding of policies, procedures, duties, and management expectations. While both formal and informal interview techniques may be employed, deliberate preparation is necessary before any interview. Interview techniques are discussed in Appendix D.

An Independent Oversight Program Federal staff member should normally be present whenever a Federal manager is being interviewed; an Independent Oversight team leader or office director should be present when a senior Federal or contractor manager is interviewed.

Observations

Observations allow team members to see how personnel actually do their jobs and to evaluate their performance under normal conditions. Such observations provide valuable data about whether personnel understand and follow established procedures, operate equipment properly, etc. However, under some conditions the observer's very presence may skew the performance being observed; consequently, observations are made judiciously. Observations can also be useful in determining how systems and equipment are designed, installed, operated, and maintained.

Knowledge Tests

Job knowledge may be best assessed through various techniques including interviews, observations, and performance tests. However, formal knowledge tests—particularly written tests—are an efficient and time-saving way to determine whether a large number of people possess a specific body of knowledge. Knowledge tests may be written or oral, or a combination of the two, and appropriate sampling techniques are used in selecting personnel to take the tests. Team members develop knowledge tests in conjunction with site trusted agent subject matter experts to ensure that the tests are fair and factually accurate, and access to test materials is strictly limited and controlled to preclude participants' knowledge of the contents in advance. Team members understand that knowledge tests indicate only whether personnel are knowledgeable in certain areas, not whether they can apply that knowledge or perform related duties.

Performance Tests

Performance testing is one of the most valuable data collection methods available, and is preferred over knowledge testing. In contrast with knowledge testing, performance testing is designed to determine whether personnel have the skills and abilities to perform their duties, whether procedures work, and whether systems and equipment are functional and appropriate. Virtually any skill, duty, procedure, system, or item of equipment can be performance tested. Performance tests may vary in complexity from simple limited-scope testing (e.g., tabletop or specific skill testing) to more complicated facility- or site-level exercises.

Some tests can be conducted under completely normal conditions, where the subject is unaware of the testing (e.g., cyber security penetration testing). Other tests must be conducted under artificial conditions,

although maximum realism is always a primary consideration (e.g., force-on-force exercises and limited-notice and/or limited-scope security performance tests). While most performance tests must, by their very nature, be conducted on site, some tests, such as cyber security scans and penetration tests, may be conducted from remote locations.

Before any performance test is conducted during an appraisal, all test activities are appropriately coordinated with site trusted agent representatives or other responsible individuals or organizations. To promote safety and realism in performance testing, Independent Oversight Program representatives are required to establish formal protocols for planning and conducting certain performance tests. These are detailed in organizational process guides or office-specific protocol documents.

Independent Oversight personnel are not limited to the five basic data collection methods specified above. Different or hybrid methods may be used, and personnel are encouraged to employ the best techniques available for a specific task. For example, a survey or questionnaire, appropriate for some types of appraisals, may share characteristics with the document review, interview, and knowledge test methods.

Validation

Validation is the process that the Independent Oversight Program uses to verify the accuracy of the information from data collection activities. It is a critical element in the conduct of all appraisals. While validation occurs throughout the conduct phase of the appraisal, a more formal validation of the appraisal results occurs when the draft appraisal report is provided for review as described in Section 5. Validation is a continuous process to ensure that:

- All collected data is factually correct and can legitimately be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the program, project, or activity.
- Points of contact and site Federal and contractor management are aware of the data that has been collected. They must acknowledge its accuracy, provide correct information, request that further data be collected, or provide mitigating information. Representatives of the affected DOE and contractor organizations, and any affected policy office, should participate in validation as appropriate to provide feedback on the factual accuracy of information related to their organization.

All Independent Oversight appraisals include a process for ongoing validation activities. Depending on the scope and length of an appraisal, this process may include validating information with the point of contact as it is collected or as soon thereafter as practical; during daily validation meetings with points of contact; at management briefings conducted daily (or at another specified frequency) throughout the conduct phase; during summary validation meetings at the end of data collection; and during reviews of draft reports.

Communication/Integration

Communication among team members, between the team and the site or organization being evaluated, and between the team and Headquarters is an essential element of all appraisal activities to ensure the integration of collected data and keep site management and relevant Headquarters organizations informed of progress and identified deficiencies. Methods may include face-to-face discussions, daily team meetings, daily site management debriefs, daily reports, and mid-point “rollups.”

As various team members collect data throughout the appraisal, it is important that they share all appropriate information with other team members in a timely manner. Information collected by one team member may

directly impact a line of inquiry conducted by another. When teams are large—and particularly when several sub-teams are involved and each focuses on a different area or discipline—the team must make a conscious and deliberate effort to integrate information. Specific methods for achieving integration vary from formal to informal, are influenced by the team size and type of activity involved, and may include team meetings, shared data collection notes, and daily reports to managers. Specific integration methods are left to the discretion of the responsible appraisal team leader.

Equally important is communication between the appraisal team leader and site management regarding the progress of appraisal activities and potential issues identified by team members. Communication at this level typically takes place through informal daily management debriefs, although the nature of the appraisal and the presence of external stakeholders may require more formal methods. Daily debriefs provide the opportunity for the appraisal team leader to present the team’s observations to site management and give site managers an opportunity to provide additional information.

The team may use an “Issue Form” to inform site management of significant issues (such as an imminent danger or a major vulnerability) or to convey an emerging issue that may be more clearly or more effectively communicated in writing before the team’s report is developed and validated. A template for an Issue Form and procedures for its use are provided in Appendix E.

Appraisal team leaders are also responsible for keeping their Office Director informed of appraisal activities. The Office Director, in turn, conveys pertinent appraisal information to senior EA management. For assessments, verbal and/or written reports are typically provided to EA management on a daily basis. Communication with Headquarters organizations (e.g., program office, policy office) is also conducted as appropriate to validate or clarify team observations, especially if potential deficiencies in policies or program implementation are identified.

At the conclusion of onsite data collection activities, the appraisal team leader conducts an exit meeting with site management. In some cases, site management receives the draft appraisal report for formal validation at the end of the exit meeting. In other cases, the team provides a less formal listing of preliminary results (see example Preliminary Results Form in Appendix E) and drafts a report or other record of the appraisal after returning to Headquarters. In either case, the exit meeting conveys the team’s preliminary perspectives, and in some cases preliminary conclusions, and the expectations for completing the appraisal process.

Response to Major Vulnerabilities or Imminent Danger

EA is required to notify the cognizant DOE manager verbally as soon as possible and in writing within 24 hours when appraisal activities indicate any of the following conditions:

1. Conditions or practices in the workplace where a danger exists that could reasonably be expected to cause death or serious physical harm either immediately (imminent danger) or before the abatement of such danger could otherwise be accomplished through normal work control processes.
2. A major safeguards and security or cyber security vulnerability (e.g., unacceptable risk of special nuclear material theft or diversion, radiological or industrial sabotage, espionage, or significant compromise of classified information).

This notification is typically initiated by the appraisal team leader and is communicated as soon as possible directly to the DOE site manager. The Issue Form in Appendix E can be used to provide the written notification.

Section 5 – Appraisal Reporting and Formal Validation

Introduction

The report preparation and formal validation phase of an appraisal generally takes place after data collection is complete (although, at times, these activities may identify additional data needs). Data must be organized, assimilated, and analyzed in order to form conclusions and report the results. This section discusses the goals and integration needs of this phase and the various tasks to be accomplished, including analysis of results; determination of deficiencies and findings; assignment of ratings (if appropriate); consideration of opportunities for improvement, recommendations, and best practices; identification of policy inadequacies; and report preparation.

Goals

The primary goals of this phase are to thoroughly analyze all available data, draw valid conclusions from that analysis, and, based on the analysis and conclusions, prepare a report that accurately reflects the status of the program, program element, facility, or activity being examined and provides managers the information they need to develop and effect necessary corrections.

Integration

The information integration discussed in the previous section continues to be important during the report preparation phase. During data analysis, team members must consider all pertinent information, regardless of who collected it, in the effort to reach valid conclusions. Team members must share not only the raw data, but also the conclusions and other results of analysis, as appropriate.

Analysis of Results

While analysis is an ongoing process during all phases of an appraisal, it culminates during the report preparation phase. Analysis involves a critical review of all data collection results, particularly any identified program deficiencies, strengths, and weaknesses, and leads to logical, supportable conclusions regarding how well the program functions or the program element has been implemented.

If no deficiencies are identified, analysis is a relatively simple matter. However, if performance deficiencies are identified, the analysis must consider these observations individually and collectively, and then must balance them against identified strengths or mitigating factors to determine the overall impact on the program's effectiveness. Factors considered during analysis include:

- Whether an observed deficiency is isolated or systemic
- Whether program managers and other line managers knew of the deficiency and, if so, what actions were or are being taken
- The importance or significance of the deficiency in comparison to the applicable standard
- Mitigating factors, such as the effectiveness of other programs or program elements that may compensate for the deficiency

- The deficiency's actual or potential effect on mission performance or accomplishment
- The magnitude and significance of the actual or potential vulnerability to DOE interests resulting from the deficiency.

The analysis must result in—and support—conclusions regarding how successfully the program or program element meets requirements.

Deficiencies and Findings

One product of appraisal analysis may be the identification of deficiencies and findings. A deficiency is an inadequacy in the implementation of an applicable requirement or failure to meet a performance standard that is identified during an Independent Oversight appraisal. Findings indicate more significant deficiencies, or safety or security issues that warrant focused attention on the part of management (see Definitions, page vi). Team members are responsible for determining which appraisal results are designated as findings or deficiencies and for reporting them with a focus on improving performance and linkage to applicable requirements. Any program element or system that does not comply with DOE policy or that does not meet DOE performance standards may be identified as a finding. However, teams are expected to exercise judgment in determining findings; minor and non-systemic deficiencies must be appropriately identified so that they can be corrected, but they are normally not designated as findings.

The report presents findings and deficiencies in a manner that identifies both the specific problem and the appropriate DOE (or other) reference. If multiple potential findings each address specific aspects of a single standard, the findings may be “rolled up” and reported as a single finding *if* the single finding statement can clearly and completely convey the problems observed. Findings are always worded to express the specific nature of the deficiency, clearly indicate whether the deficiency is localized or indicative of a systemic problem, and clearly identify which organization (DOE Headquarters or field element, facility contractor, etc.) is responsible for corrective actions. Typically, assignment of a finding includes a discussion of the impact of the condition described, including any mitigating factors and compensatory measures.

Ratings

For assessment activities, the conclusions reached through analysis of results may lead to the assignment of ratings. The appraisal team is responsible for recommending ratings; however, final approval of ratings rests with the EA Director, with input from the cognizant EA office director. Although findings often identify conditions that adversely impact a program’s rating, findings do not necessarily impact the rating.

- **Effective Performance (Green):** Assigned when the system being evaluated provides reasonable assurance that the identified protection or program needs are met (overall performance is effective). The element being appraised is normally rated Effective Performance if all applicable standards are met and are effectively implemented. An element is also normally rated Effective Performance if, for all standards that are not met, other systems or compensatory measures exist that provide equivalent protection, or if the impact of failure to fully meet an applicable standard is minimal and does not significantly degrade the protection provided. Line managers are expected to effectively address any specific deficiencies identified.
- **Needs Improvement (Yellow):** Assigned when the system being evaluated only partially meets identified protection or program needs or is not sufficiently mature and robust to provide assurance

that the protection or program needs are fully met. The element being appraised is normally rated Needs Improvement if one or more of the applicable standards are not met and are only partially compensated for by other systems, and the resulting deficiencies degrade the effectiveness of the system under evaluation. Line managers are expected to provide sufficient attention to ensure that identified areas of weakness are effectively addressed through corrective actions and/or ongoing initiatives.

- **Significant Weakness (Red):** Assigned when the system being evaluated does not provide adequate assurance that the identified program needs are met. The element being appraised is normally rated Significant Weakness if one or more of the applicable standards are not met, there are no compensating factors to adequately reduce the impact on system effectiveness, and the resulting deficiencies seriously degrade the effectiveness of the system under evaluation. Line managers are expected to apply immediate attention, focus, and resources to the deficient program areas.

Opportunities for Improvement, Recommendations, and Best Practices

Independent Oversight Program appraisal team members have a broad range of knowledge in their individual areas of expertise, and also have the advantage of observing methods of program implementation across the entire DOE complex. When deficiencies, issues, or inefficiencies in program implementation are identified during an appraisal, it is useful for team members to provide insight on approaches that line management could adopt to improve program performance, often by reference to successful approaches observed at other DOE sites. Specific opportunities for improvement are identified for inclusion in appraisal reports but are provided only in the context of recommendations for line management consideration, not as directed action. Opportunities for improvement that correlate to findings normally offer suggested approaches that line management may consider in their corrective action plans. Additionally, opportunities for improvement are routinely provided when a performance deficiency does not rise to the level of a finding, or for other conditions noted during the appraisal.

In some cases, appraisal reports may include recommendations. Recommendations are typically broader in scope than opportunities for improvement and aim to improve management systems, rather than particular deficiencies. Reports that include recommendations may also include opportunities for improvement that provide suggested steps or actions for addressing the deficiencies embodied in a recommendation.

Some appraisal reports, particularly rollup reports that cover a series of related appraisals, may also identify best practices. Best practices are implementing methods, techniques, processes, or program attributes that have been observed during Independent Oversight appraisals and that EA believes may merit consideration by other DOE and contractor organizations to enhance performance or operate more efficiently or effectively. Best practices are typically beneficial methods or processes that other DOE sites and facilities can readily adapt for use, or innovative approaches for addressing a condition that poses a challenge for multiple sites or organizations. A template for documenting best practices observed by EA is provided in Appendix E.

Policy Inadequacies

Appraisals sometimes uncover deficiencies or issues that stem from policy inadequacies (e.g., lack of policy, unclear policy, ambiguous or contradictory policies, inappropriate policy, or inappropriate implementation guidance). In such cases, the cognizant EA office director or appraisal team leader first engages the Headquarters element responsible for the policy or subject area to ensure that the team has a correct understanding of the applicable policy or its effect on the observed condition. In some cases, this communication may necessitate a request for a written interpretation of the policy or requirement and its proper application; either EA or the organization subject to the appraisal may initiate such a request. If the observed policy weakness is not a matter of interpretation, EA communicates the issue to the appropriate Headquarters element, typically via a memorandum that identifies the subject, provides necessary background information, states the problem, discusses its implications, and, if appropriate, recommends a course of action.

Report Preparation

The report is the formal product of any appraisal. Reports are the only published records of specific appraisals, and are intended for dissemination to the appropriate managers at DOE Headquarters and field elements (including, when appropriate, facility contractors). Appraisal reports vary in format, and the appraisal team leader selects the most appropriate format for the specific purpose and with consideration of the scope and nature of the appraisal activity. Most reports include an executive summary targeted at senior management. Appendix F provides guidance for preparing an executive summary.

Draft Report

During the later stages of an appraisal, the appraisal team develops a draft report that includes all the necessary elements of the final report. The draft report is reviewed by a Quality Review Board (QRB) to ensure that it is readable and logical, and that it contains adequate information to support the conclusions (and, if appropriate, findings and ratings). The QRB normally consists of EA managers and senior personnel (usually former senior DOE managers) who support EA. The QRB is responsible for providing a “reality check” by knowledgeable individuals who have not been close to the data collection effort, and who can therefore evaluate the report’s contents and presentation through fresh eyes, and on its own merits. The QRB review may be conducted at the site, at Headquarters, or at another location, depending upon the nature and scope of the appraisal and the travel schedule of the QRB members. The draft report may be altered or revised based on the QRB’s comments and recommendations.

In some cases, an appraisal team member may not agree with the report’s contents. If the disagreement cannot be resolved between the team member and team leader, the team member is encouraged to document the issue and submit it to the cognizant EA office director for review. If the office director cannot resolve the disagreement, the issue must be submitted to successively higher levels of EA management for evaluation and discussion.

After the QRB review and management approval, EA submits the draft report to the responsible field element manager and Headquarters program office representative, as appropriate, for factual accuracy review based on an agreed-upon schedule. In some cases, the draft report may be provided for formal review and comment at the conclusion of the onsite exit meeting. Line management organizations and other responsible DOE organizations may provide draft reports to personnel within their organizations for review. Where multiple organizational layers are involved in reviewing a draft report (e.g., secretarial

officer and field element manager), the organizations are expected to provide a consolidated set of comments on the factual accuracy of the draft appraisal report in accordance with the appraisal schedule.

Section 6 – Appraisal Closure

Introduction

This section addresses responsibilities and tasks for finalizing the appraisal report (including offering senior line management the opportunity to provide a management reaction), developing an appraisal summary, communicating policy inadequacies, reviewing corrective actions, conducting requested or required briefings, effecting Headquarters coordination, and gathering information for internal process improvement. All of the responsibilities and tasks addressed in this section apply to assessments; some may be applied to other types of appraisals only when appropriate.

Goals

The primary goals of the closure phase are to prepare and disseminate an accurate account of the appraisal results through a final report, conduct appropriate briefings on the appraisal results, provide public information as to a report's existence or availability, and conduct policy issue discussions as necessary with the senior managers of appropriate Headquarters organizations.

Final Report

The appraisal team reviews all factual accuracy comments that EA receives during the formal review and validation phase and makes appropriate changes in the draft report. In many cases, resolution of the comments requires additional dialogue with site personnel. EA office directors review the proposed responses to factual accuracy comments to ensure that the team is objectively responding to the feedback, and also make the EA Director aware of any significant comment resolution issues remaining before he concurs on the final report. For major appraisals, EA also gives the cognizant Headquarters Assistant Secretary or Program Director the opportunity to review the final draft appraisal report and provide a Management Reaction memorandum conveying comments on the conclusions and recommendations of the report. The team prepares the final report after comment resolution or receipt of the Management Reaction memorandum, if applicable, and then submits the revised report to the EA Director and Deputy Director for final approval before issuance.

The approach to distribution of the final report depends on the nature and scope of the appraisal activity. Assessment reports are typically distributed to the cognizant Under Secretary, Assistant Secretary or Deputy Administrator/Associate Administrator, and field element manager, and may be transmitted to the Secretary and/or Deputy Secretary. Focused assessment reports are typically transmitted to the field element manager, with a copy to others who are in the line management organization or have a vested interest in the appraisal results. Targeted and special assessment reports covering activities at multiple sites are generally more widely distributed. All appraisal reports that contain only publicly releasable information (i.e., no classified or controlled unclassified information) are posted on an EA website. For reports that contain information that cannot be publicly released, only the report title is provided on an EA website. Appraisal reports pertaining to safeguards and security topics are appended to the Safeguards and Security Information Management System (SSIMS) database. Any requests received by EA for access to reports that are not readily available are typically forwarded to the organization subject to the appraisal for a determination on whether the report may be released to the requestor.

Appraisal Summary

For most appraisals, EA develops a short summary (typically one page) to communicate the overall results of the appraisal to senior DOE managers. To facilitate communication of appraisal results, Independent Oversight strives to develop summaries that contain only unclassified or controlled unclassified information. An example of an appraisal summary is provided in Appendix E.

Communication of Policy Inadequacies

On returning to Headquarters, the appraisal team leader completes, if necessary, a memorandum documenting any inadequacies that were identified in DOE policies or directives during the appraisal, and provides it to the Office Director for transmittal to the manager(s) of the appropriate Headquarters organization(s). Such a memorandum can also be prepared based upon an analysis of a series of appraisals in the same subject area. EA responds, as needed, to requests for discussion or additional information pertinent to the issue(s) raised.

Corrective Actions

The responsible DOE line managers are required to ensure that corrective actions are developed and implemented to address findings identified in appraisal reports. DOE line management and contractors must manage the corrective actions and track them to completion using site- or program-specific issues management processes, and systems as set forth in DOE Order 226.1, *Implementation of Department of Energy Oversight Policy*. For findings in Independent Oversight reports pertaining to safeguards and security (excluding cyber security), the line management organization subject to the appraisal must ensure that the findings and corrective actions are entered into the SSIMS database, which is maintained by the DOE Office of Environment, Health, Safety and Security, in accordance with DOE Order 227.1A, *Independent Oversight Program*.

If requested by the responsible DOE manager, the appraisal team reviews the corrective action plans and provides comments to the manager for consideration. In rare cases, the EA Director may require the entity subject to an appraisal to submit corrective action plans to the cognizant EA office for review and comment, if the safety or security significance of an issue or the extent of its impact across one or multiple sites demands this additional review, or if repeated attempts to resolve an issue through corrective actions have been unsuccessful.

Thereafter, the Independent Oversight Program conducts selected appraisals to evaluate the timeliness and adequacy of corrective actions, verify and validate the effectiveness of corrective actions, and confirm the closure of findings as part of appraisal activities. The timing and extent of these appraisal activities are based on the significance and complexity of the finding and the extent and complexity of the actions necessary to address it.

Briefings

The closure process for appraisals can include briefings to appropriate managers on the process, results, and conclusions of the activity. Briefings fall into several categories:

- In some cases, EA may conduct a site briefing when the draft or final report is complete. If EA leaves a draft report with site management after onsite data collection activities, this briefing is the exit meeting described in Sections 2 and 4.
- EA may conduct Headquarters briefings for key Headquarters managers immediately before or after the final report is issued.
- EA may also conduct briefings for the Secretary's Chief of Staff team to keep them abreast of pending EA reports.
- When appropriate, EA conducts external briefings for key stakeholders, such as Congressional staff and the DNFSB, after issuance of the final report and completion of all internal DOE briefings. The cognizant DOE management for the activities or organizations subject to the appraisal also have the opportunity to attend these briefings and address corrective actions in response to the appraisal.

The need for briefings associated with non-assessment-related appraisals depends on the specific nature of the activities. The structure, level of detail, and specific content of briefings are tailored to the needs of the audience and the specific information that needs to be communicated. All such briefings are coordinated with the affected cognizant DOE management.

Headquarters Coordination

As appropriate, EA coordinates with Office of the Secretary, Public Affairs, Congressional liaison, the applicable Under Secretary, and affected DOE line management organizations to develop an approach for providing results of appraisals with significant Congressional or media interest to external stakeholders. Individual appraisal team members are instructed to not respond to media or other external inquiries directly.

Process Improvement

The Independent Oversight Program consistently strives to improve its internal processes as part of a continuing effort to improve its products and the value it provides to DOE. During the closure phase of each major appraisal, EA Office Directors and team leaders are expected to solicit information from team members that can be used for process improvement. The format for such solicitations (questionnaire, roundtable discussion, after-action report) is determined by the responsible manager, and may vary depending on the type of appraisal being reviewed and the perceived need for improvement.

EA Office Directors are also expected to maintain an ongoing dialogue with their field and program office counterparts and routinely discuss line management views on potential improvements in EA's appraisal processes. Periodic meetings with senior leaders from the program offices are also used to solicit feedback on EA's appraisal processes.

Section 7 – Records Management

Introduction

Final appraisal reports provide the formal record of the results of Independent Oversight Program activities. However, much of the detailed information regarding the conduct of appraisal activities, the results of data collection efforts, and the deliberations and analyses of team members is not specifically included in the final reports. While the Independent Oversight Program’s goal is to include sufficient detail in each report to fully justify its conclusions and enable the report to stand on its own, there is a need to retain some documentation that provides additional information about various aspects of an appraisal activity. Consequently, it is the Independent Oversight Program’s policy to archive certain types of information associated with appraisal activities to enable an accurate response to potential queries for additional detail.

Records Retention Requirements

The Independent Oversight Program follows the DOE Administrative Records Schedules found at <http://energy.gov/cio/administrative-records-schedules> that are maintained by DOE’s Office of the Chief Information Officer. Records associated with each appraisal activity are assembled and archived for a period of ten years from the date of the final report of the activity. At a minimum, the archives contain the following types of information, in either electronic or hard copy form:

- Assessment Plan*
- Correspondence pertinent to the appraisal, as determined by each EA office director
- Performance test documentation, if applicable
- Issue Forms, if utilized*
- Site’s written response to any Issue Form utilized*
- Site and program office factual accuracy comments*
- EA briefing materials*
- Appraisal summaries*
- Management responses to the appraisal
- Final report and report transmittal memorandum*

Note: * If these items are not classified, they are posted in the EA Share master document library

Additional information may be retained as necessary to fully document an appraisal activity. The EA Office Directors identify, in their individual office appraisal process document, the types of records that are to be collected and archived, including the minimum set of records listed above.

Appendix A – Professional Conduct

Independent Oversight Program personnel occupy sensitive and highly visible positions and must maintain the highest standards of personal and professional conduct. While conducting appraisals, Office of Enterprise Assessments (EA) team members are considered official representatives of the Office of the Secretary of Energy. Their behavior must always be beyond reproach. This includes being tactful, courteous, and properly attired. An appraisal team member's conduct should always enhance the professional stature of the appraisal team and the Independent Oversight Program.

While on site, team members must follow all local rules, entry and exit procedures, safety and security regulations, parking requirements, and other employee and visitor guidelines. Team members are responsible for familiarizing themselves with all local policies. When in doubt, they should consult their team leader. If they encounter a problem or if local requirements alter essential appraisal activities, the team member should inform the team leader as soon as possible.

Appraisal team members come into contact with numerous individuals during appraisal activities, including supervisors, managers, and workers, and other site personnel who are not associated with the programs being evaluated. Independent Oversight Program personnel must be well received and looked upon as professionals. Professional image and support can quickly erode when team members openly criticize the site or its personnel or make unfavorable comparisons with other sites. If criticism of the site is warranted, it should be included in the proper section of the appraisal report.

Team members are responsible for promoting good relations with site personnel. Appraisal teams work especially closely with points of contact, trusted agents, and other Federal and contractor personnel who have been assigned specific appraisal support responsibilities. During initial meetings, team members should ensure that each of these individuals fully understands what is expected. In dealing with points of contact and trusted agents, team members should be open, candid, and straightforward. A close working relationship is necessary and desired, but must be kept on a professional level. Team members need to be sensitive to the pressures and stress experienced by the people undergoing the appraisal. Their stress is amplified when significant problems are identified. At these times, team members can be the object of intense scrutiny, and may be questioned or criticized by personnel from the organizations being evaluated. Establishing good relations at the outset can significantly relieve these stressful situations.

Improper conduct of any kind will not be tolerated. It is important that all team members understand that EA fully supports the prevention of sexual harassment. All Independent Oversight Program managers and team members should be alert to conditions, regardless of how innocent they appear, that could produce an incident of sexual harassment. Immediate action must be taken to correct problems, respond to requests for assistance, and prevent future occurrences. It is imperative that all Independent Oversight personnel understand their right to a harassment-free work environment and their responsibility for eliminating conduct that could lead to sexual harassment. One of the most important factors in determining what constitutes "unwelcome behavior" and "sexual conduct" is that it depends more on effect than intent, and effect can be determined only by the recipient. Thus, whether the perpetrator intentionally or unintentionally sexually harasses another person is not the only issue. How that behavior is received is central in determining whether harassment took place.

Team members may socialize and relax at appropriate times and locations while on appraisals. However, these activities must be in good taste. Team members must be particularly circumspect when socializing with personnel or friends from the facility being evaluated to minimize the chance of social contacts being perceived as compromising the objectivity of the appraisal.

Contractors serving on appraisal teams must be extremely careful to avoid any conflict of interest, potential conflict of interest, or appearance of a conflict of interest. Discussing future work possibilities at the site, mentioning individual or corporate capabilities and experience as they apply to current site problems, and any other similar activity is unacceptable. Such actions cast doubt on appraisal objectivity and the Independent Oversight Program's mission, and can result in the team member's removal from the site. If any potential conflict of interest is encountered, it must be reported to the responsible Office Director immediately.

The information provided here is not intended to be an exhaustive discourse on personal and professional conduct, or on ethical standards. The intent is to provide a condensed treatment of these subjects as they pertain to the Independent Oversight Program. On the whole, professional conduct stems from good judgment, consideration for others, civility, and a genuine concern for the prestige of the organization one represents. Appraisal team members should treat others with respect and behave and dress in a way that presents the best possible image of their capacities. As a highly visible organization responsible for oversight of programs on behalf of the Secretary of Energy, EA management expects the highest standards of conduct from those who represent it.

A Standard of Professional Conduct for Independent Oversight Program Personnel

- As an official representative of the Office of the Secretary of Energy, your behavior should always be beyond reproach.
- Be tactful, courteous, and properly attired.
- While on site, comply with all local rules and regulations.
- Avoid criticizing the site or site personnel.
- Avoid adversarial relationships.
- Be sensitive to the pressures and stress experienced by the people being evaluated.
- Establish good relationships with site personnel.
- Avoid actions that could be interpreted as sexual harassment.
- Be discreet when socializing.
- Avoid any conflict of interest or appearance of conflict of interest.
- Develop a good, professional relationship with points of contact and trusted agents.

Appendix B – Appraisal Selection, Prioritization, and Scheduling

Purpose

This appendix describes the Independent Oversight Program’s approach to establishing oversight and appraisal priorities and the frequency of assessments for the activities and assets subject to periodic Independent Oversight evaluations. The Office of Enterprise Assessments (EA) oversight offices are expected to identify key areas of risk, vulnerabilities, emerging trends, and best practices in order to have an enterprise view of performance in their assigned mission areas. While complemented with broad situational awareness and analysis of performance metrics and line management data, the conduct of appraisals is the most basic data collection tool that enables EA to provide timely, independent information to line managers and the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Energy on the safety and security of the enterprise. EA oversight managers determine the types and subjects of appraisals most suitable for analyzing performance. Appraisals of some safety and security disciplines (such as physical security, cyber security, and emergency management) are used to determine the readiness of the operating organization to implement timely responses to accident conditions or malevolent acts and primarily based upon a periodic (calendar-based) assessment of a particular site. Other appraisal strategies and methods are used to evaluate performance of the routine operational processes that are relied upon to protect national security assets, workers, the public and the environment. These are scheduled based on program and discipline-specific priorities for a given year.

Overview of Selection, Prioritization and Scheduling Process

The Independent Oversight Program employs a formal process for prioritizing its appraisal activities based on a standard set of criteria for each of three disciplines: safeguards and security, cyber security, and safety/emergency management. For safeguards and security and cyber security, the priority assignments contribute to the development of appraisal schedules by providing a guideline for determining how often a site will be subject to scheduled Independent Oversight appraisal activities. However, a number of factors (e.g., a facility’s recent assessment results; changes in management approaches, contractual arrangements, or protection strategies or technologies; new safety- or security-related initiatives; recent site, Departmental, or national events; and available resources) may affect how often a given site is subject to a particular appraisal.

Priority Assignment Process

Each site subject to independent oversight is associated with a priority designation that is based on the various criteria described below. These criteria are applied using available empirical data and the professional judgment of Independent Oversight Program staff. EA conducts a review of a site’s priority designation when significant changes occur in the site’s physical plant, mission, or operations. The standard set of criteria is used to determine site status, and the priority designation may be changed as appropriate.

Criteria for Determining Safeguards and Security Priority Designations

Priority I: Sites with high-value assets or with high risk; includes all sites with Category I special nuclear material in accessible and transportable form. These sites are typically assessed every 30 months.

Priority II: Sites with medium-value assets or with medium risk; includes Category II or III special nuclear material in accessible and transportable form. These sites are typically assessed every 36 to 48 months.

Priority III: Sites with primarily non-national defense missions and no Category I or II quantities of special nuclear material. These sites are typically assessed only in response to significant or recurring security incidents, or are subject to targeted assessments of specific security functions (e.g., performance of armed protective forces).

Other factors to be considered in determining the priority:

- Amount of special nuclear material present on site
- Amount and sensitivity of classified matter on site (e.g., intelligence, special access)
- Amount and sensitivity of controlled unclassified information on site
- Other assets that require protection
- Identified risks/risk levels associated with the protection system
- Compensating or mitigating factors
- Management and program stability (e.g., contract changes, reductions in force, changes in program implementation approaches, newly deployed technologies).

Criteria for Determining Cyber Security Priority Designations

Priority I: Major weapons production sites, weapons laboratories, and scientific laboratories with large classified computer networks containing high-value information assets, and/or information systems requiring a high degree of assurance of data integrity or availability. These sites are typically assessed every 30 months.

Priority II: Sites with classified computing assets and substantial unclassified computer networks containing controlled unclassified information, and/or information systems requiring a high or moderate degree of assurance of data integrity or availability. These sites are typically assessed every 36 to 48 months.

Priority III: Sites with only unclassified computer networks and a limited amount of controlled unclassified information, with most systems only requiring a low degree of assurance of data integrity or availability. These sites are typically assessed on a sampling basis, in response to significant or recurring cyber security incidents, or upon request.

Other factors to be considered in determining the priority:

- The threat environment impacting classified and unclassified information systems
- Amount and sensitivity of classified information (e.g., Restricted or Formerly Restricted Data, weapons design information)
- Amount and sensitivity of controlled unclassified information (e.g., personally identifiable information, Unclassified Controlled Nuclear Information, Official Use Only information)

- Use of supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) systems for control of large-scale electrical power distribution or control of critical nuclear and non-nuclear facility operations
- Effectiveness of management, operational, and technical controls to mitigate cyber security risks
- Compensating or mitigating factors
- Management and program stability (e.g., contract changes, changes in program implementation approaches, network reconfigurations, susceptibility to new threats, newly deployed technologies).

Criteria for Determining Nuclear Safety, Worker Safety and Health, and Emergency Management Priorities

For nuclear safety, a site lead is assigned for all sites with hazard category 1, 2, and 3 nuclear facilities. Assessment priorities for each site are informed by the site lead's operational awareness activities. In addition, cross-cutting assessments of nuclear safety management programs are performed to evaluate performance across the Department in mitigating risks associated with nuclear materials and operations. For major nuclear facility design and construction, EA focuses its oversight on hazard category 2 and above projects. EA conducts sampling of essential processes including safety basis, design of safety systems, quality assurance, construction quality, startup, and readiness. Emergency management assessments focus on sites requiring an Operational Emergency hazardous material program. Priorities are further refined and assessments tailored based on the assessment results for each site. Worker safety and health assessments focus on performance and are supplemented by cross-cutting assessments to ascertain performance across the Department in mitigating risks to workers. These cross-cutting assessments are prioritized based on performance and also include evaluating programs for controlling hazards that present unique risks, such as those associated with biological safety, chronic beryllium disease prevention, explosives safety, and nano-scale material use. Work planning and control assessments are utilized for large sites with significant hazards.

Schedule Development Process

Annually, approximately three months before the start of a fiscal year, the subordinate oversight offices:

1. Identify periodic and other assessment requirements (e.g., follow-up activities, targeted assessment topics, or special assessments) in their areas of interest for the upcoming calendar year. The objective of this phase is to outline major appraisal activities that require significant advanced planning, recognizing that many appraisal activities are also scheduled and planned with much shorter lead times based on changing conditions, the stage of a particular activity or operation, and ongoing observations of performance.
2. Coordinate with the cognizant line managers to ensure that Independent Oversight activities are integrated into line management assessment schedules. This typically includes meeting with points of contact in the Headquarters program offices to ascertain overall program office priorities, plans, and schedules for line oversight activities in the coming year, and then coordinating with site managers and staff to identify optimal time frames.
3. Submit the proposed activities and a general schedule to the EA Director and Deputy Director for approval.

4. Coordinate with Headquarters, field managers, and key points of contact to identify and address scheduling conflicts.

Upon approval and coordination of activity dates, normally by November 1 of each year, EA provides the schedule for the following calendar year to the affected Headquarters and field elements.

Appendix C – Sample Appraisal Plan

This appendix provides an example of the types of information that may be included in an Office of Enterprise Assessments (EA) appraisal plan. Plans will vary in the level of detail and sequence of information based upon the specific type of appraisal to be conducted and the office or offices conducting it.

**DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
OFFICE OF ENTERPRISE ASSESSMENTS
PLAN
FOR [APPRAISAL TYPE] OF [TOPIC]
AT THE [____] SITE OFFICE AND [SITE]**

Date

Approved by:

Appraisal Team Leader

Date

EA Oversight Office Director

Date

**DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
OFFICE OF ENTERPRISE ASSESSMENTS
PLAN
FOR THE [APPRAISAL TYPE] OF [TOPIC]
AT THE [____] SITE OFFICE AND [SITE]**

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Attachment: Appraisal Team Composition

NOTE: For safety-related assessments, appraisal criteria, review, and approach documents are maintained on an EA website. For security-related assessments, the appraisal lines of inquiry are typically provided as part of the appraisal plan.

**DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
OFFICE OF ENTERPRISE ASSESSMENTS
PLAN
FOR THE [APPRAISAL TYPE] OF [TOPIC]
AT THE [____] SITE OFFICE AND [SITE]**

I. INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the activities currently planned by the [applicable EA Office], within the Department of Energy's (DOE) independent Office of Enterprise Assessments, for [topic] activities at the [Site]. Additionally, the [EA Office] will evaluate activities at the [____] Site Office that directly support the [Site] [topic] program. This [appraisal type] will be conducted in accordance with DOE Order 227.1A, *Independent Oversight Program*, which establishes the foundation for the program's appraisal activities, appraisal process guidance that is available at <http://energy.gov/ea/services/assessments/cyber-and-security-assessments> or <http://energy.gov/ea/services/assessments/environment-safety-and-health-assessments>, and this plan. While this plan outlines projected evaluation activities, it should be understood that changes to specific activities and assessment focus areas may be made in response to emerging concerns and requests from key Site Office, [Site], and Headquarters managers. Site representatives will be kept informed of significant changes in proposed activities and appraisal focus areas.

II. BACKGROUND

In [date], the [applicable EA Office] conducted an assessment of [topic] at the [site/facility]. The assessment resulted in [#] findings and provided a number of opportunities for improvement for line management to consider as the project transitioned from commissioning to operations. Since that time, the contractor has completed corrective actions from the [date] review, prepared updated hazard analysis documentation, and begun pre-operational testing of the project's major facilities and equipment.

The results of this [appraisal type] will also be used to support a broader evaluation of the quality of pre-operational readiness testing across the Department based on assessments conducted at multiple sites. A rollup report of the results of those assessments is expected to be published by the end of this calendar year.

III. SCOPE

This assessment will focus on selected elements of a [discipline] program as described in DOE Order [X]. Performance effectiveness will be evaluated against applicable national standards, program and site office procedures, and locally approved [site] program plans and operating procedures [include a list of specific relevant requirements document as appropriate]. To achieve the objectives of this appraisal, the following topical areas will be evaluated:

[Listing the subtopics/program elements subject to review]

IV. SCHEDULE

The appraisal process is divided into several stages, including offsite and onsite planning, onsite assessment activities, report writing, and validation and closeout. Offsite planning for this appraisal will include brief discussions with site personnel to understand the current organization and operations, a request for and review of relevant site procedures and other documents, preparation of performance test plans and agreements, and designation of and coordination with trusted agents. The onsite portion of the appraisal will be conducted [dates]. During this period, activities such as interviews, facility walkdowns, limited-scope performance tests, and document reviews will be conducted. Following completion of the onsite activities, a draft report will be prepared and made available to line management for review and feedback. The overall schedule is provided below.

Scoping Visit	[Dates]
Planning Visit	[Dates]
Onsite Data Collection	[Dates]
Report Preparation and Validation	[Dates]
Draft Report Comments Due	[Dates]

V. TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS

[Name/Title] will be the senior DOE official managing the appraisal activities and the primary point of contact with site management. He will be assisted by a staff of technical specialists and administrative support personnel. The team leader and staff will ensure that the appraisal is conducted fairly and in accordance with this plan.

The team will be divided into several subject/topical areas as follows:

[list team composition, assignments, and contact information or provide in an appendix]

DOE Order 227.1A assigns responsibility to the heads of field elements to assist the Office of Enterprise Assessments in performing an effective and valid appraisal. This responsibility includes the provision of (1) site access and support, (2) points of contact, and (3) validation of the factual content of the appraisal data and report.

VI. APPRAISAL PROCESS

Independence

The Office of Enterprise Assessments is charged with implementing an Independent Oversight Program for DOE safety and security programs. Independence is assured by the Office's direct reporting relationship to the Secretary of Energy (i.e., outside any line management reporting chain). Further, the Independent Oversight Program does not have any direct responsibility for site operations, policy formulation, or safety or security program implementation.

The Office of Enterprise Assessments exercises independence in the conduct of appraisals. Scheduling is independent of line management, although line management assessment schedules and activities are considered when planning and selecting independent oversight activities, and valid concerns of site and DOE management are accommodated whenever possible. Appraisals are

performance-based assessments of site implementation of the requirements established in Federal, state, and local regulations and DOE directives. The Independent Oversight Program may also provide feedback on the effectiveness of regulations and directives and whether they adequately establish effective program requirements.

Data Collection

This appraisal team will utilize the following criteria, review and approach documents and/or lines of inquiry to facilitate data collection. These documents are available on [provide web address if applicable].

Appraisal Closeout

The appraisal process will culminate in the issuance of a report that documents the scope and results of the appraisal. Line management will be provided a draft report for factual accuracy review and comment prior to issuance of the final report. The report may identify “findings,” which are used to communicate significant deficiencies or safety or security issues that warrant focused attention on the part of management.

Findings are clearly identified in the appraisal report, define the specific nature of the deficiency, clearly indicate whether the deficiency is localized or indicative of a systemic problem, and identify which organization is responsible for corrective actions. Appraisal reports may use terminology other than “findings” to be consistent with terminology used by program- or site-specific issues management systems to identify items of an equivalent nature. Findings or their equivalent must be addressed through corrective actions and managed in accordance with the issues management process that [organization/site] has implemented in accordance with DOE Order 226.1B, *Implementation of Department of Energy Oversight Policy*.

The appraisal report may identify other deficiencies that do not rise to the level of a finding. These deficiencies or issues are expected to be evaluated by line management for correction and entry into applicable issues management systems. Most appraisal reports also identify opportunities for improvement, which are suggestions offered by the appraisal team that may assist in identifying options and potential solutions to various issues identified during the conduct of the appraisal.

**OFFICE OF ENTERPRISE ASSESSMENTS
[SITE] APPRAISAL TEAM**

Dates

Team Leader

Team Members

Administrative Support

Appendix D – Interview Techniques

The interview is an invaluable instrument for obtaining data and information. Although there are several different interview types, Independent Oversight appraisal team members are primarily interested in the data determination interview, which is used to secure data and information from the interviewee. Each interview will differ to accommodate the type of interview, the parties involved, and the complexity of the topics discussed. However, to be successful, every interview should involve a two-way discussion and be *properly planned*.

Frequently, the goals of the two parties involved in an interview may be dissimilar or even opposite. One purpose of the interview would then be to find common ground for discussion. At times, the personalities of the individuals involved may be quite different, which can create challenges. To alleviate, if not eliminate, these types of issues, the appraisal team member needs to plan the interview, designate and communicate the objectives to be achieved, and be sensitive to the other person's needs and feelings. During the interview, the team member also needs to listen with intelligence and understanding and use interviewing tools effectively.

Planning the Interview

Interviews are more successful when the interviewer takes time to establish objectives and review general methods and techniques. Appraisal team members are expected to devote time and effort to the following areas.

Purpose

Appraisal team members should refrain from discussing too wide a variety of topics or cover topics that are not applicable to the appraisal. Those actions detract from efficient use of time and may unnecessarily generate confusion or misunderstanding. Team members must be flexible during an interview, but they must also plan ahead. The team member should consider establishing objectives with the interviewee to facilitate securing pertinent facts, reaching decisions, or selecting a specific course of action to obtain additional information.

Research

Interview time is typically limited, so the interviewer must use the time with the interviewee efficiently to accomplish the interview objectives. Appraisal team members are expected to do their “homework” by reviewing relevant documents ahead of time and having important reference sources on hand during the interview, in order to maximize the time spent discussing and understanding the key objectives of the interview.

Key Questions

The benefit from any interview will be maximized if interviewees are willing and able to express themselves freely. In many cases, team members may achieve these conditions by asking the right kinds of questions. Queries such as “How would you reorganize the operation?” or “What action do you recommend for solving the problem?” may motivate the interviewee to respond openly and freely.

Sensitivity

Appraisal team members should recognize the interviewee's perceptions, expectations, and personality. Everyone reacts to interviews differently. Some will respond openly and freely with one approach; others may respond better to another. A moment or two spent prior to the discussion in attempting to determine the individual's personality, perceptions, and needs is often time very well invested.

There are other actions that team members may take to prepare for the interview. The point is that proper planning almost always results in a fruitful interview.

The Interview in Action

Appraisal team members typically adapt the interview to the persons involved. However, in every instance, it is important to use the following tools of interviewing to maximize their effectiveness:

1. **Establish a comfortable climate.** When people are treated courteously, honestly, and respectfully, they usually respond positively. If the exchange is to be open, honest, and free, the climate must help to attain those goals.
2. **Articulate the purpose of the interview.** It is helpful to both parties if a common understanding is reached as to the purpose of the interview and the subjects or issues to be discussed.
3. **Obtain the interviewee's input.** Because of the nature of appraisals, both the appraisal team member and the interviewee may tend to allow the interviewer to dominate the discussion. This is not desirable. The interviewee should participate freely and thoroughly. Without this participation, appraisal team members will find it difficult to gather the data necessary to accurately evaluate the area being evaluated.
4. **Question, listen, observe, evaluate.** These points are the keys to a successful interview. Questions should be carefully worded and should elicit a response from the interviewee beyond “yes” or “no.” Since the purpose is to gather facts and information, the appraisal team member should refrain from arguing, correcting, explaining, or preaching. It is a time to listen—listen attentively, understandingly, skillfully, and sensitively. While listening, the team member should also observe the nonverbal communication of the interviewee. With tactful questioning, sensitive listening, and thoughtful observation, the team member should be positioned to accurately evaluate the information that the interviewee conveys.
5. **Terminate effectively.** Interviews should not be terminated abruptly so as to avoid diminishing whatever cooperative climate was developed between the appraisal team member and interviewee. An effective conclusion to the interview is important. A recap of the key points noted by the team member is an effective way to end the discussion and gives the interviewee an opportunity to provide any needed clarification or suggest additional sources of relevant information.

The interview can be among the most important of all the appraisal team's data collection tools. It provides an excellent method for determining facts and confirming or refuting information gathered.

Interviews require time, but this is usually time well spent. A good exchange will often give the appraisal team valuable information and put the interviewee at ease regarding the objectives of the appraisal and

interview. Interviewees have the opportunity to express themselves and the satisfaction of having someone listen. This is particularly true if interviewees are proud of their achievements and areas of responsibility.

Table D-1 summarizes the protocols for conducting effective interviews.

Table D-1. Interview Protocols

- Prepare questions and lines of inquiry in advance.
- Schedule interviews well in advance and arrive for interviews promptly.
- Explain the purpose of the interview.
- Do not "lead" interviewees in answers and conclusions.
- Conduct interviews in the interviewees' work location whenever possible to promote easy access to applicable documents and minimize disruption in the employee's work day.
- Limit team attendance to one or two interviewers unless a group interview is being conducted. The number of interviewers should not overwhelm the interviewees. Limit attendance by line personnel to the individual or individuals being interviewed, unless the interviewee requests the attendance of a manager or union representative. In most cases, to ensure an open and candid interviews and exchange of information, requests from individuals, including managers, to attend interviews are not normally entertained unless specifically requested by the interviewee and such attendance has been coordinated in advance with the appraisal team leader.
- Ask other attendees not to respond to questions asked of the interviewee but to provide only advice and support to the interviewee.
- Pace questions to allow a full response, and avoid creating a threatening or anxious atmosphere, particularly when multiple interviewers are involved.
- Question tactfully, listen sensitively, observe thoughtfully, and evaluate accurately.
- Provide the interviewee an opportunity to ask questions about the interview or the appraisal process.
- Take good interview notes. Do not rely on memory.
- Summarize the interview at the end to assure that interviewer conclusions and interviewee concerns are appropriately captured.

Appendix E – Issue Form, Sample Preliminary Results Form, Sample Appraisal Summary, and Best Practice Observation Form

E.1 Issue Form Use and Template

In accordance with U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Order 227.1A, the Office of Enterprise Assessments (EA) is required to notify the cognizant DOE manager verbally as soon as possible and in writing within 24 hours when appraisal activities indicate one of the following conditions:

- An imminent danger or condition that presents an unacceptable immediate risk to workers, public health, or the environment
- A major vulnerability (e.g., unacceptable risk of special nuclear material theft or diversion, radiological or industrial sabotage, espionage, or significant compromise of classified information).

The appraisal team can use the issue form, shown on the next page, to document and communicate such conditions during assessments. However, preparation of the issue form must not delay verbal notifications to line management.

At the team leader's discretion, the issue form can also be used to document emerging significant issues. The team leader should consider using the issue form to:

- Document and communicate particularly complex issues to the site being evaluated.
- Document weaknesses that require site personnel to take time-critical mitigative and/or compensatory actions.
- Solicit a written response from line management on a time-critical issue associated with an appraisal activity to aid the team's understanding of the site's perspective.
- Help improve communications among the appraisal team, DOE line management, and contractors regarding, for example, a particularly contentious issue.

**OFFICE OF ENTERPRISE ASSESSMENTS
INDEPENDENT OVERSIGHT PROGRAM
ISSUE FORM**

The purpose of this issue form is to convey to cognizant managers potentially significant information from an ongoing Independent Oversight Program appraisal activity and solicit feedback. EA requests additional information pertaining to this issue (including mitigation actions, if appropriate), along with management's comments on factual accuracy. The information conveyed by this issue form is preliminary data that is not meant to communicate the entire picture of performance for a program or at a site. Consequently, this form should be provided only to those who have a need to know the information, and used only in the context of ensuring effective communications among cognizant DOE management, the site, and the Office of Enterprise Assessments.

SITE: _____

SUBJECT: _____

Notification of an imminent danger or major vulnerability in accordance with section 4.e. of DOE Order 227.1A, *Independent Oversight Program*? Yes _____ No _____

1. Issue:

2. Impact:

3. Requirement/Standard:

Originating Team / Staff Member _____ Date _____

Approval:

Team Leader / Office Director _____ Date _____

E.2 Sample Preliminary Results Form

For appraisals where a draft report is not provided at the end of onsite data collection, the appraisal team leader provides the field element manager with a summary of preliminary results to communicate the “positive attributes” or strengths and the “issues requiring attention” or weaknesses found during an appraisal. An example is shown below.

**OFFICE OF ENTERPRISE ASSESSMENTS
PRELIMINARY RESULTS FOR THE [DATES] FOCUSED ASSESSMENT
OF [TOPIC] AT [SITE]**

The following information provides a summary of the preliminary results of the Office of Enterprise Assessments appraisal. This information is subject to change as more analysis is conducted and the appraisal report is drafted.

Scope of Assessment

- Activity-level work planning and control
 - o Manufacturing Division
 - o Hydrostatic Testing Facility
 - o Waste Transfer Facility
- Contractor Feedback and Improvement
- DOE Field Element Oversight

Results – Activity-Level Work Planning and Control

Positive Observations

- Pre-job briefings were observed to be very thorough. Workers routinely demonstrated a questioning attitude and healthy concern for safety.
- Subject matter experts are consulted frequently during the work planning process and have been instrumental in ensuring the proper selection, use, and application of engineered controls.
- Use of the waste transfer mockup facility has resulted in additional engineering controls to minimize worker radiation exposure.
- The new hazardous waste tracking system has significantly improved the accuracy of the chemical inventory and reduced the amount of chemicals needing to be procured each year.

Potential Deficiencies

- The work control process is not well documented, leading to wide variances in the degree of hazard analysis and types of hazard controls being applied to similar kinds of work conducted in different facilities on site.

- Many workers are confused about what constitutes an approved work control document, particularly when numerous pen and ink changes have been made to a document or a “stop work” is called and then the work restarted using the same work control documents.
- Some work packages do not contain all of the required permits and Safety Data Sheets in an organized and readily accessible fashion for ease of reference by workers at the work location.

Potential Findings

The site-level work control procedure does not contain sufficient detail and explanatory information to ensure that work planning requirements are applied consistently among organizations and that workers have sufficient information to ensure work is performed in accordance with the applicable work control documents.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Consider using a cross-organizational team to update the site-level work control procedure to benefit from the variety of practices being used to plan and analyze work.
- Consider adding an index and using a standardized sequence of documents within a work package to improve usability for workers.
- Consider updating worker training to better address the requirements for restarting work following either a safety pause or stop work condition.

Results – Contractor Feedback and Improvement

Positive Observations

- A well-indexed and searchable web-based database of lessons learned and work package feedback is maintained that is promoting work planning and operating procedure improvements.
- The contractor has initiated a cross-organizational peer review program to evaluate its work planning and control programs across the site.
- Assessments conducted by site-designated subject matter experts are providing high quality feedback on both compliance and performance and the assessment results are well characterized to identify the impacts on programs and operations.
- Managers and supervisors are frequently present in the field and at job sites and were observed to have positive and productive relationships with the work force.

Potential Deficiencies

- Requirements and expectations for prioritizing, selecting, planning and staffing topic-specific and organizational self-assessments are not well developed and documented.
- The high degree of turnover in the employee concerns program and lack of consistent follow-up to address reported safety issues is undermining the program’s effectiveness.

Potential Findings

None

Opportunities for Improvement

- Consider expanding the strategy developed at the Hydrostatic Testing Facility to identify and prioritize required and desired assessments for the year.
- Consider including a representative from the facility being assessed on the subject matter expert assessments to enhance communications and ownership of the identified issues and resulting corrective actions.
- Consider developing a database and scheduling system to ensure that timely actions are taken on employee concerns when target deadlines for an expected action are approaching or have passed.

Results – DOE Field Element Oversight

Positive Observations

- The field office assessment schedule is well designed to provide the requisite information to support the end-of-year evaluation of safety-related elements in the contractor performance evaluation and management plan.
- The field office re-evaluated its Facility Representative and cognizant system engineer coverage and has been successful in acquiring additional resources for these programs.
- The field office conducts thorough, high quality closure package reviews for contractor corrective actions that require these reviews.

Potential Deficiencies

- The field office has limited expertise in certain areas (e.g., industrial hygiene, emergency management) and the designated reach-back resources are often not available to provide timely resolution of issues when needed.

Potential Findings

None

Opportunities for Improvement

The field element should consider working with the program office and service center to establish a prioritization system for reach-back assistance requests.

E.3 Sample Appraisal Summary

For major appraisals, a short summary is prepared to facilitate communication of key results to senior field and Headquarters leadership. A standard format with the EA logo is used for all such summaries so that readers can easily identify them as EA products. The summary is usually unclassified. If it is not unclassified, the summary is reviewed by the appropriate classification reviewer and then marked and handled consistent with requirements for classified or controlled unclassified information, as appropriate. For smaller appraisals, the report executive summary (see Appendix F) serves the purpose of the appraisal summary.

SAMPLE APPRAISAL SUMMARY



Report Abstract

Scope and Conduct

The independent Office of Enterprise Assessments (EA) conducted a comprehensive review at the [site] in [date]. The review examined the adequacy of program, site, and facility plans in addressing compliance with national requirements and Departmental directives; the efficacy of Federal and contractor line management in implementing the requirements; and the effectiveness of the site programs in protecting significant quantities of sensitive matter and nuclear materials. This review also assessed the status and adequacy of corrective actions stemming from deficiencies identified during previous independent reviews and self-assessments, and selected elements of the site's insider threat mitigation strategy. EA activities consisted of work observations, written knowledge tests, large-scale performance testing, evaluation of security documentation, and interviews.

Office of Enterprise Assessments [Topic] Review at [Site] [Date]

The security protection posture implemented at the site contains several positive program measures – most notably in the protective force and physical security systems programs. While positive attributes were identified, this review revealed a number of deficiencies, many of which stem from insufficient analysis and reporting of risk management factors. Some of these concerns were influenced by key risk decisions being made locally without appropriate program office oversight or involvement. Management attention is warranted to fully address these issues and ensure that the overall effectiveness of the site's protection posture is maintained at an acceptable level. The most significant concerns included:

- In some cases, risk assessment and planning efforts have not included the appropriate rigor to ensure accurate characterization and consideration of security protection measures.
- Protection measures do not always meet applicable performance standards and/or national policy requirements. Deficiencies were identified in managing sensitive matter and using destruction/sanitization equipment. Also, the site has not sufficiently applied access controls for site personnel working in sensitive areas.
- Corrective actions developed as part of the site issues management process do not consistently prevent recurrences of similar findings.

The expedient and successful resolution of these concerns is essential to more accurately determine, validate, and communicate residual risk and risk tolerance, and to apply appropriate protection measures where gaps exist.

Recommendations

EA recommends that the DOE Under Secretary evaluate locally accepted risks and remediate security weaknesses where risks are intolerable to the Department.

E.4 Best Practice Observation Form

The Secretary of Energy has challenged EA to communicate additional best practices that can be shared across the enterprise to recognize DOE successes and assist sites and organizations in addressing their most challenging issues. Best practices documented by EA are intended to describe methods, processes, or program attributes observed during appraisals that may merit consideration by other DOE and contractor organizations for implementation because they: (1) substantially improve safety or security performance of a DOE operation; (2) represent or contribute to superior performance (beyond compliance); (3) solve a problem or reduce the risk of a condition or practice that affects multiple DOE sites or programs; or (4) provide an innovative approach or method to improve effectiveness or efficiency. Best practices documented by EA will include contact information for obtaining additional information about the best practice from the organization or site that implemented it.



OFFICE OF ENTERPRISE ASSESSMENTS
BEST PRACTICE OBSERVATION



Title:

Topical Area:

Site/Facility:

Description of Best Practice:

Why is this considered a best practice?

Benefits of this practice:

Reference Documents:

Site Point of Contact for Further Information:

Appendix F – Reporting Formats and Objectives

To meet its oversight obligations, the Independent Oversight Program conducts numerous activities of varying scope and intensity. These include periodic assessments, risk-informed and site-tailored focused assessments, multi-site targeted assessments, limited-notice performance testing, and operational awareness activities. The Independent Oversight Program also conducts such activities as special assessments and follow-up assessments. These activities share some common elements, but each type of activity is also different in significant ways. It is appropriate that the reports issuing from these various activities be tailored to best represent and communicate the essential facts relating to the activity. They should all be written in clearly understandable terminology for the audience, contain executive summaries suitable for senior leaders, and limit the amount of descriptive text not necessary to support key results.

Appraisal reports represent the primary product of the Independent Oversight Program. If appraisal teams do not do a good job of reporting, the considerable effort and resources devoted to planning, data collection, and analysis will not achieve the ultimate objective of providing information that can be used to make improvements. Independent Oversight appraisal reports provide information about what was done, what was found, the significance of what was found, areas that are in need of corrective actions and management attention, and suggestions on methods for improving performance. This information is intended to benefit the managers, supervisors, and staff who administer and operate the various programs. Appraisal reports also serve as input for an Office of Enterprise Assessments (EA) annual report to the Secretary of Energy that identifies the most significant challenges impacting safety and security in DOE and recommendations for addressing those challenges.

Most of the reports that the Independent Oversight Program produces are of three types:

- Long reports, often including numerous appendices and containing considerable detail, such as assessment reports
- Shorter reports, often 5 to 25 pages, usually associated with focused assessments and assessments
- Operational Awareness Records documenting operational awareness activities or short-duration site visits.

For longer reports that address multiple program areas or organizations, or contain considerable technical detail, an executive summary or similarly formatted front section of the report may be utilized. The summary incorporates the essence of the significant details provided in the body of the report or its appendices, an overall analysis of program status and needs, and conclusions regarding the adequacy of the program(s) evaluated. It must include sufficient information for senior managers, in particular, to understand the significance of any issues or weaknesses identified and the potential impacts, both short- and long-term, of not addressing those issues. It may also include recommendations for addressing the most important, and typically systemic, areas of weakness. For a comprehensive assessment report, the executive summary or “front end” is typically five to ten pages long. Many shorter reports, such as those for cyber security or nuclear safety assessments, have executive summaries of one to two pages.

For some shorter reports documenting more narrowly-scoped activities, the results may be provided in the body of the report without an executive summary or front section. In any case, the body of the report typically includes the following sections:

- Purpose – describing the reason the activity was conducted and its objective

- Background – providing context for the activity, such as the status of relevant site operations and results of prior evaluations
- Scope – programs, facilities, subjects, topical areas, and/or organizations evaluated
- Results – observations, discussion, and characterization of the areas evaluated
- Conclusions – an overall assessment of the areas evaluated and the impact of any deficiencies identified
- Opportunities for Improvement or Recommendations – items for management consideration in improving performance
- Findings (if applicable), Deficiencies, or Items for Independent Oversight Follow-up – weaknesses that require corrective action or areas that will continue to be monitored by Independent Oversight Program staff and/or re-evaluated during a subsequent appraisal.

Guidance for preparing an executive summary is provided in Section F.1. An example format for an Operational Awareness Record is provided in Section F.2.

F.1 Guidance for Preparing Executive Summaries

The purpose of the executive summary is to convey the results of the appraisal to the Department's most senior managers. It should focus on the overall outcome of the appraisal, identify any need for action based on the appraisal results, and characterize the potential impact of not addressing the identified issues (findings and deficiencies).

INTRODUCTORY and BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Within the executive summary, introductory and background information typically includes:

- The type of appraisal activity that was conducted, where and when it was conducted, and by whom
- The scope of the activity
- The reason for the activity (e.g., past problems, response to a request or Secretarial direction, special event, routine periodic activity, part of a broader series of assessments) and, if appropriate, limited background information concerning past performance and the status of corrective actions
- Any other information necessary to prepare the reader for the information that follows.

This information should be provided as succinctly as possible, and may range in length from a single paragraph to several paragraphs.

RESULTS

The results section of an executive summary is organized logically based on the scope of the appraisal. It is usually divided into subsections with section titles that reflect how the information is organized. For example, if the appraisal evaluated multiple, distinct organizational entities, such as the Headquarters program office, site office, and site contractor, or multiple site contractors implementing a common program, the results may be best suited to presentation by organization. For an appraisal covering a single organization but multiple topical areas, or a single contractor and multiple facilities, it may be best to present the results according to topical area or facility. In any case, the results should be organized in the manner that best facilitates a clear understanding of any issues identified.

The results section of an executive summary is intended to highlight the most significant outcomes of the evaluation, both positive and negative. Positive aspects may include initiatives or continuing good performance in a program area, appropriate management attention devoted to a particular issue or area, and successful actions taken to correct past deficiencies. Provide enough information to enable the reader to understand what has been accomplished, and why the things that are being done are positive or the benefits that have been realized. Discussions of weaknesses should focus on those that warrant management attention or corrective action. Provide enough detail for the reader to understand the nature and gravity of the deficiency and why it is important that it be corrected. The summary should also refer to any mitigating circumstances, compensatory measures, or immediate corrective actions that have been implemented. Provide sufficient descriptive information without duplicating the detail contained in the body of the report.

The information in each subsection may require as little as a single paragraph, or up to several paragraphs. Be brief, but include enough context to get the necessary points across. Use of bullets here is acceptable, and the “bolded bullet” approach (i.e., a bold topic sentence that provides the essence of the positive attribute or weakness/issue, followed by supporting detail and examples) is often effective.

CONCLUSIONS

This section of an executive summary should briefly state the overall conclusions drawn from the appraisal activity. It should discuss overall program status, if such a characterization is relevant to the scope of the appraisal activity. It may indicate whether the program is showing an improving or declining trend, and should identify areas that may require significant management attention. The bottom line regarding program adequacy should be stated here. The discussion of conclusions can often be limited to a single paragraph. It may be followed by a table or list of the report’s findings and/or recommendations. If the activity is rated, the rating and the rationale for the rating should be described here.

F.2 Operational Awareness Record Template

An Operational Awareness Record may be used to document or communicate information gained from observing a meeting, visiting a site, or monitoring how a particular issue is addressed. The report briefly describes the activity observed and/or facility visited, and the impact of any observations. In some cases, the report may be used to provide feedback to those managing the observed activity or to communicate items that the Independent Oversight Program intends to observe or evaluate during a follow-up activity. Operational Awareness Records are validated with the appropriate points of contact before being filed or posted to an EA website.

EA Operational Awareness Record		Report Number:	
Site:		Subject:	
Dates of Activity:		Report Preparer:	
Activity Description/Purpose:			
Result:			
EA Participants		References (Key Documents, Interviews, and Observations)	
Were there any items for EA follow up? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
EA Follow Up Items			