

Advance Policy Questions for Thomas P. D'Agostino
Nominee for the Position of Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs
National Nuclear Security Administration

Duties

What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs? There are a number of duties and responsibilities for the Deputy Administrator position. These duties and responsibilities all come together and are focused on the nuclear weapons stockpile and the nuclear weapons complex. This principal duty will be to lead the Defense Programs staff and the senior managers across the nuclear weapons complex to maintain a safe, secure and reliable nuclear weapons stockpile, to ensure the safe and efficient operations of the nuclear weapons complex, and ensure that capabilities required for future national security needs are maintained.

What background and experience do you possess that you believe qualifies you to perform these duties? My background and experience is well suited for these duties. As an officer in the U.S. Navy, I was selected by Admiral Rickover and trained as a nuclear submarine officer. In this capacity I managed technically complex, high-hazard operations on nuclear submarines. This training instilled a commitment to quality, discipline, and integrity that are so important when dealing with nuclear operations. After over eight years on active duty in the submarine force I continued to serve in the national security arena as a Naval Reserve Officer and as a propulsion systems program manager for the SEAWOLF (SSN21) submarine. I then moved to the Department of Energy and worked in a wide variety of both technical and management positions, in the areas of tritium reactor restart, as Deputy Director in the Office of Stockpile Computing, as the Deputy Director for Nuclear Weapons Research, Development and Simulation, and most recently, as the Assistant Deputy Administrator for Program Integration. In that capacity, I reported directly to the Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs to integrate the stockpile stewardship program and budget across four production sites, three national laboratories, and a test site. I have earned a Masters in Business-Finance from John Hopkins University and a Masters in National Security Studies from the Naval War College. I have over 29 years of service as an active duty Naval Officer, a career civil servant, and as an Officer in the Naval Reserve where I have attained the rank of Captain. All of my professional experience has been focused on service (military and civilian) in support of our national security. I am privileged to have been able to serve my country and am confident that this combination of service and education qualifies me very well to perform the duties of the Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs.

Do you believe that there are actions you need to take to enhance your ability to perform the duties of the Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs? I would focus my action on communications. Clear and effective communications are paramount to success in any organization, and even more important with an organization that is large, geographically dispersed and with high-hazard and technical operations. I would look to increase the amount of time I spend talking to the all levels of management, technical and support staff, in headquarters and the field. My approach has always been to treat everyone with dignity and respect and I

never fail to learn something when I take the time to interact directly with the people in the program.

Assuming you are confirmed, what duties and functions do you expect that the Administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) would prescribe for you? If confirmed, I expect the Administrator would have me focus on the primary duties of the Deputy Administrator as I have described above with a focus on leading the transformation of the nuclear weapons complex (people, places, processes and capabilities) to ensure that a responsive infrastructure - as described in the Administration's 2001 Nuclear Posture Review - is fully implemented. Additionally I expect that the Administrator will ask me to help him make the NNSA an organization that is known for excellence, encourages innovation, and fosters dedication by its employees.

If confirmed, how would you work with the following program officials?

Other deputies in the NNSA. If confirmed, I will work closely with the other Deputy Administrators and the supporting Associate Administrators. In NNSA, the Administrator has provided expectations for the management team, but we rely on each other and constant communication to achieve the mission. We meet at least weekly as a group in staff meetings, Management Council, or Leadership Council meetings. I will also carry forward a technique that I used as Assistant Deputy Administrator for Program Integration. In that position I established a periodic set of informal one-on-one meetings with some Associate Administrators within the NNSA. I found that one-on-one meetings were very useful in quickly getting to central issues that need attention and resolution.

The Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management. The Secretary has made it clear that he is interested in a Department that works together and not as a group of disparate organizations. If confirmed, I will focus my work with in the area of nuclear materials disposition and consolidation.

Other Assistant Secretaries of the Department of Energy (DOE). Within the context of the NNSA Act I believe it is important to have a proactive working relationship with DOE Assistant Secretaries. If confirmed, other DOE Assistant Secretaries I would expect to work with most are in the areas of Management and Administration; Environment, Safety and Health; and Nuclear Energy. I already have an established working relationship with all of these individuals as a result of my current position as Assistant Deputy Administrator for Program Integration. My approach has been to maintain the principles of honesty and integrity in all matters. As a result of this approach, I have earned a high level of trust and support from others within the Department. It is this level of trust that I feel will assist me if I am confirmed as Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs.

Major Challenges and Problems

In your view, what are the major challenges that will confront the Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs? There are a number of challenges that will need to be addressed in the upcoming years. In effect they all roll together into the most significant challenge of transforming the nuclear weapons stockpile and infrastructure while continuing to support near-term deliverables to the Department of Defense (DoD). Within this challenge is the need to establish the viability of the Reliable Replacement Warhead concept as a means of providing a sustainable nuclear deterrent, driving integration within the nuclear weapons complex, implementing an appropriate level of interdependence across our contractors to maximize efficiency of operations, and continuing on the path of developing a responsive infrastructure. This involves also keeping a focus on meeting near-term DoD requirements such as the B61 and W76 Life Extension Program schedules. The Responsive Infrastructure initiative and work authorized for the Reliable Replacement Warhead are in their early stages but hold promise to set the nuclear weapons program on the right course to confidently maintain the Nation's nuclear deterrent well into the future.

Assuming you are confirmed, what plans do you have for addressing these challenges? If confirmed, I will focus on working closely with the Department of Defense to ensure that changes considered for the stockpile consider the effects on the nuclear complex infrastructure that supports the stockpile. Where possible we would move away from hard to manufacture items, exotic materials and manufacturing processes, to a stockpile that is easier to manufacture, uses materials that are safer for the environment and our workers, and considers full life-cycle costs in the design, manufacture, maintenance, and disassembly. Focus will be maintained on near-term DoD requirements by providing clear contractor expectations in program plans and in performance evaluation plans. This can be best accomplished by looking at the nuclear weapons program as an integrated whole vice activities being performed across eight different sites. My Navy and program management experience has taught me to approach work in a systematic way. This involves identifying the problem, writing down and agreeing to plans with clear milestones, assigning qualified people, and tracking performance.

What do you consider to be the most serious problems in the performance of the functions of the Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs? A problem that I am concerned with deals with the risks inherent in the position of being the Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs. The work in the nuclear weapons complex involves dealing with nuclear weapons, hazardous materials, and complex operations on a daily basis. Dealing with nuclear weapons operations is serious business that involves accepting and managing risk. The Deputy Administrator, similar to the Commanding Officer of a Navy ship, is ultimately responsible for the actions of the program and how those actions affect worker and public health, safety, and security, including managing risk.

If confirmed, what management actions and time lines would you establish to address these problems? If confirmed, I will commit my personal involvement and that of Defense Programs management to aggressively work with the national laboratories, production sites, and other interested parties such as Congress and the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board to deal with the issue of managing risk in the nuclear weapons complex. I expect to see a plan in this year to

focus attention across the entire nuclear weapons complex that will enable Defense Programs to authorize and continue the work necessary to meet our mission requirements on time, in a safe and secure manner. Additionally, I will work hard to communicate the message that line management must take responsibility for safety and mission performance and not pass this responsibility to the variety of boards, panels, teams and assessment groups that are charged with assessing performance and safety.

The previous Deputy Administrator, in his confirmation hearing on October 11, 2001, testified that a major challenge confronting the NNSA was “a general view that NNSA presently has too many overlapping functions and assigned personnel at Headquarters and Field levels, leading to reduced efficiency in the labs and plants. . . . The program planning and management tasks are critically tied to knowing what to do, when to do it, and to making clear assignments for the work. That planning function will be centered at Headquarters, with execution in the Field. There appears to be a major challenge in clarifying roles and responsibilities for both the planning function and the execution function, with far too much overlap in responsibilities (either assigned or assumed) at the present.”

In your view, what progress has been made in addressing this challenge and what progress, if any, remains to be made? Significant progress has been made since Dr. Everet Beckner made these remarks. In the past four years Defense Programs has established and implemented a new program architecture, an improved planning and programming process, and a revised budget structure for the Stockpile Stewardship Program. Previously, this program was organized around 32 program elements, each independently managed. Program plans that existed for these program elements were inconsistent and did not include milestones that could be tracked over time. Consequently there was little linkage between resources and program output, and it was difficult to measure performance. This was a systematic problem that could only be fixed through significant changes. Planning and program management principles were applied that developed a planning structure, defined a program milestone structure, and identified a change control processes. The end result is program and implementation plans that are consistent, as well as a set of level 1 and level 2 milestones that describe the program over a five year period. One of the key attributes of changing the programmatic structure was to more closely align the budget to the work being performed in the program.

However, despite these improvements much more can be done. More time and attention should be given towards identifying expectations for the contractor and clearly articulating these expectations into clear, coherent, and challenging contractor performance evaluation plans. I will focus on the theme of “being a demanding customer” in my direction and discussion with Defense Programs managers. The selection of a new management and operating contractor at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) gives us an immediate opportunity to work on being a demanding customer in the operations of the laboratory and the completion of program deliverables.

Priorities

If confirmed, what broad priorities would you establish in terms of issues, which must be addressed by the Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs? My highest priority revolves around the people in the nuclear weapons program. It does not matter whether these are federal, contractor, headquarters or field personnel, the program is successful because we have dedicated and qualified people addressing the needs of our Nation's security. It is important to take care of these people and make sure that decisions that are made are balanced with the impact on the workforce. If confirmed, broad priorities I plan to establish include transforming the nuclear weapons stockpile and the nuclear weapons complex while supporting near-term deliverables to the Department of Defense (DoD). The DoD observes our ability to deliver on commitments through the lens of the production complex. We must focus on continually improving our delivery on commitments to the DoD.

In your view, should cost containment and cost control be a high priority for the Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs? Yes, cost containment and control is a high priority for Defense Programs. As the Assistant Deputy Administrator for Program Integration I have been working on this very complex issue for NNSA. For example, I have been concerned with the different methods that are being used by our contractors on managing the costs in the Operations of Facilities program. These different methods make it very difficult for the federal program manager to be able to compare costs and develop meaningful trends and analysis. To address this, I had directed the review of the Operations of Facilities program to drive cost efficiencies and consistency across the nuclear weapons sites. As a result of that review, Defense Programs will be implementing activity based costing principles for selected key mission critical facilities and standardized accounting using a common work breakdown structure.

Relationships

Please describe your understanding of the relationship of the Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs with the following officials:

The Administrator of the NNSA

The Secretary of Energy

The Deputy Secretary of Energy

The Under Secretary of Energy for Energy and Environment

The Under Secretary of Energy for Science

The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology

The Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Matters

The Commander, U. S. Strategic Command

The Deputy Under Secretary of Energy for Counter-Terrorism

The Deputy Administrator for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation

My understanding of the relationship of the Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs with other officials is as follows:

1. NNSA Administrator: The Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs reports directly to the NNSA Administrator. The Administrator entrusts the Deputy Administrator with the responsibility of managing the nuclear weapons program.
2. Secretary of Energy: The Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs may also report to the Secretary of Energy, through the NNSA Administrator. The Administrator will likely trust the Deputy Administrator to deal directly with the Secretary on issues in his area of responsibility, with knowledge of the Administrator.
3. Deputy Secretary of Energy: The Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs may also report to the Deputy Secretary of Energy, through the NNSA Administrator. The Administrator will likely trust the Deputy Administrator to deal directly with the Deputy Secretary on issues in his area of responsibility, with knowledge of the Administrator.
4. The Under Secretary of Energy for Energy and the Environment: The Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs would deal with the Under Secretary of Energy and the Environment through the NNSA Administrator. As with the Deputy Secretary and Secretary, the Administrator will likely trust the Deputy Administrator to deal with the Under Secretary for Energy and Environment with knowledge of the Administrator. I do not expect the Deputy Administrator would have much direct dealing with the Under Secretary, but would deal with a number of the Under Secretary's direct reports (Environment, Safety and Health and Nuclear Energy, for example).
5. The Under Secretary of Energy for Science: When the position of Under Secretary of Energy for Science is formalized and filled, I expect that Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs will deal with the Under Secretary on a variety of issues. With the Department's emphasis on science, NNSA will seek to leverage work in the area in the areas of supercomputing, high energy density physics and materials sciences. As with the Deputy Secretary and Secretary, the Administrator will likely trust the Deputy Administrator to deal with the Under Secretary for Science with knowledge of the Administrator.
6. The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology: The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology is also the Chairman of the Nuclear Weapons Council (NWC), which is the focal point for Department of Energy (DOE) and Department of Defense relations. While the NNSA Administrator is DOE's NWC member and would most likely deal directly with the Under Secretary of Defense, the

Deputy Administrator generally attends NWC meetings and is heavily involved in NWC matters.

7. The Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Matters: The Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs deals with the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear and Chemical and Biological Defense Programs on a regular basis. The Assistant to the Secretary is the Chairman of the Nuclear Weapons Council (NWC) Standing and Safety Committee, the flag officer or Senior Executive Service “working level” group in the Nuclear Weapons Council system. In this capacity, even though the formal communications path to the Assistant to the Secretary position is through the Principal Deputy Administrator for Military Application in Defense Programs, I expect the Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs will spend a significant amount of time working with the Assistant to the Secretary, particularly during this period of stockpile transformation.
8. The Commander, U.S. Strategic Command: The NNSA Administrator generally deals directly with the Commander of U.S. Strategic Command; however, the Deputy Administrator has significant interaction as well. One of the Commander’s most important duties related to NNSA is providing the annual assessment of the safety, reliability and performance of the nuclear weapons stockpile, based on input from advisors and the national laboratories. As the Commander is responsible for deploying the nuclear weapons stockpile, Defense Programs and Strategic Command have a close relationship at many levels. I expect the Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs will spend a significant amount of time working with the Commander, particularly during this period of stockpile transformation.
9. The Deputy Under Secretary of Energy for Counterterrorism: The Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs works closely with the Deputy Under Secretary, especially since the counterterrorism assets - people and equipment and expertise - are supported by Defense Programs.
10. The Deputy Administrator for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation: The Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs works closely on both programmatic and management issues with the Deputy Administrator for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation. A common example of cooperation involves arms control and nonproliferation considerations, where Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation may coordinate the NNSA’s policy position but Defense Programs is heavily involved due to potential facility or nuclear material implications.

Management Issues

The Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs is responsible for activities occurring at NNSA laboratories and production sites across the country.

What are your views on the roles and responsibilities of field managers relative to those of Defense Programs Headquarters managers? Headquarters managers, to include the Deputy Administrator, Assistant Deputy Administrators, and Program Managers work with the management and operating contractor managers and site office staff to plan the programs and set expectations (via Program Plans, Implementation Plans, and contractor performance evaluation plans). This is both necessary and appropriate since this brings a “corporate” perspective to prioritization, and the necessary balancing among programs and sites. Program Managers at Headquarters are typically designated by the field contracting officers as Contracting Officers Representatives. These representatives provide direction to the contractor for the performance of programmatic work through the authority of the Contracting Officers through the Work Authorization Process. If confirmed, I will use the Site Office Managers to help me understand what is happening in the field since they are the closest to the work being performed and should have a better understanding of the local site conditions.

What is your view of Defense Programs’ organizational structure? Is there a well-delineated and consistent chain of command and reporting structure from the field staff to headquarters staff and from the contractors to federal officials? The Defense Programs organizational structure works yet I believe that it can be improved. One area for improvement is in the area of management of the Readiness in Technical Base and Facilities program. These responsibilities are now managed in two different Defense Programs organizations. To help meet the goal of having a more responsive and efficient nuclear weapons complex, these two offices should be consolidated. This combined office will be the driving force for transforming the three weapons laboratories, the Nevada Test Site and the four production plants into more agile and cost effective entities in terms of their physical plant and operations. This office will provide integrated program guidance, resources and execution oversight to the site offices and management and operating contractors. This office will develop a more common work breakdown structure for all of the eight contractors, reduce unnecessary and costly variations in tasking, and enable the common monitoring of program and financial performance among the eight sites.

There is a well-delineated and consistent chain of command and reporting structure in place but the implementation of this chain of command needs more attention and discipline. Interaction with the site offices is critical to the organizational structure of Defense Programs. Discipline in using the chain of command is paramount in achieving an organization that is efficient and effective. I will emphasize that communication across the program is important. However, direction to the contractor can only be exercised using the chain of command. During my tenure at DOE and NNSA I have worked within the chain of command as well as serving as one of its leaders. Thus, I have developed a great understanding and appreciation for this responsibility if confirmed.

In your opinion, do the federal managers in the field at NNSA facilities have enough autonomy and flexibility to work with the contractors at those sites to get work accomplished in a safe and efficient manner? Yes, Federal managers in the field at NNSA facilities do have the authority accomplish work in a safe and efficient manner and to stop unsafe operations. These managers can also help identify and resolve issues affecting program work and competing priorities within the site. However, it does require a close working relationship

with Headquarters Program Managers. The interdependent nature of our programs, between sites and among the technical programs, drives the need for communication between site office and Headquarters managers.

If you are confirmed, what improvements, if any, would you undertake to strengthen the project management skills of your federal workforce? Defense Programs is working to implement a strong program and project management culture. This resulted in the development and implementation of a Defense Programs Management Manual to guide expectations and actions of Program Managers. The goal is to create a program management organizational culture that values program and project management as a discipline based on qualification, technical competence and consistent operating policies and procedures. Each program element in the Defense Programs portfolio has a designated Program Manager. These program managers are now recognized across the nuclear weapons complex as the single Federal individual responsible for that particular program area. Defense Programs is completing the definition of Program Manager qualification requirements. This qualification activity is aimed at both existing program managers and staff. All Defense Programs line item projects have qualified Federal Project Directors. If confirmed, I would continue the changes underway.

Does the Office of Defense Programs require its project managers to be credentialed through an accredited project management training program? If not, do you believe such a credentialing requirement should be established? I support the existing rigorous credentialing program. Federal Project Directors (project managers) for capital acquisition projects do require credentialing under the DOE Project Manager Career Development Program. This program identifies levels of qualification based on successful completion of a variety of project management related courses and acquisition of experience managing different sizes of projects.

Stockpile Stewardship

Congress established the Stockpile Stewardship Program with the aim of creating the suite of computational capabilities and experimental tools which - when coupled with the necessary human capital - would allow for the continued certification of the nuclear weapons stockpile as safe, secure and reliable without the need for full scale, underground nuclear weapons testing. The United States has observed a nuclear weapons testing moratorium since 1992.

As the stockpile continues to age, what do you view as the greatest challenges with respect to assuring the safety, reliability and security of the stockpile? One challenge will be keeping the right set of skilled workers at the laboratories, production sites, and in the Federal workforce. Keeping the workforce engaged and exercised will be essential in developing a sustaining nuclear deterrent without underground testing. Another challenge is gathering enough of the right data to maintain confidence in our assessments of the safety, reliability, and security of the stockpile. While I am personally satisfied with the rigor of the surveillance program, continued vigilance is required especially as the average age of warheads in the stockpile grows. The Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW) program may address both of these areas of concern.

If, with the agreement of Congress, we proceed beyond the current feasibility study, we intend to more easily assure the safety, reliability, and security of the stockpile without the need for underground nuclear testing.

Most of the experimental and computational facilities and tools originally identified in 1994 as required for the science-based Stockpile Stewardship program are, or will soon be, in place and fully operational.

In the decade spanning the years 2010 to 2020, what additional tools or facilities will be needed to continue to support the Stockpile Stewardship program and the goal of assuring a safe, secure, and reliable stockpile without a resumption of underground nuclear weapons testing? Additional advances in the areas of computation, simulation, materials science, and radiography will be needed to support the Stockpile Stewardship Program. In the upcoming decade the focus will be to fully utilize the tools that we have been developing during this decade. An example would be getting the National Ignition Facility operational and ready to conduct Stockpile Stewardship experiments. Experiments on the National Ignition Facility will allow us to probe the extreme conditions of temperature and density found in exploding nuclear weapons. It is also important in the upcoming decade to pursue a robust experimental program on the Dual Axis Radiographic Hydrodynamic Test facility to observe the geometries of imploding materials. Additionally, I expect that as material models become more refined and as code applications become more complex, that modeling and simulation will continue to be a dominant tool as we continue forward with Stockpile Stewardship. Also, NNSA plans to increase the Los Alamos National Laboratory pit manufacturing capacity to at least 30 – 40 pits per year by the end of FY 2012.

Have there been any instances in which these new tools have successfully resolved a technical issue or uncertainty that in the past would have required testing to resolve? Yes, there have been some inherently three-dimensional issues in the primary that we could not have resolved without the new computational tools that could have required a test for resolution.

Reliable Replacement Warhead

The NNSA is working on a feasibility study for a reliable replacement warhead program (RRW), which, if successful could alter or replace the need for life extension programs in the future.

In your view, what benefits could the RRW bring to the Stockpile Stewardship program? RRW could bring significant benefit to the Stockpile Stewardship Program. The basic principle of the RRW program is to take advantage of relaxing legacy stockpile design constraints that were based on maximizing the yield of the warhead to the weight of the warhead. This should lead us to be able to design replacement components that are easier to produce, are safer, more secure and environmentally friendly. These replacement components will also be designed to increase the design margins of the components that will both increase the system reliability and reduce the likelihood that the U.S. will need to conduct a nuclear test.

In your view, would changes be needed to the NNSA complex to implement the RRW program? It is too early to tell what types of changes will need to be made, if any, to the NNSA complex to implement the RRW program because we are in the midst of the RRW study competition. However, design parameter priorities for the RRW emphasizes reduced hazardous material, ease of manufacture, enhanced safety, increased security, and life cycle costs among others. Specific changes to the complex may, if necessary, become more apparent later this year following completion of the RRW study.

Progress Towards a Responsive Nuclear Infrastructure

The Nuclear Posture Review issued in the year 2001 called for the establishment of a “responsive” nuclear weapons infrastructure.

In your view, how should progress towards the establishment of the responsive infrastructure be measured? Defense Programs has been jointly developing responsive infrastructure mission objectives (e.g., being able to identify, understand, and fix a stockpile problem within a specified period of time) with the DoD. Our progress towards establishment of a responsive nuclear weapons complex infrastructure should be measured on how well we are achieving these objectives as judged by DoD. We are also evaluating the inclusion of leading indicators of complex responsiveness in contracts for our labs and plants. Similar to leading economic indicators as forward-looking predictors of future economic activity, these responsive indicators, or responsiveness metrics, would provide a view on whether we are becoming more or less responsive.

As the Assistant Deputy Administrator for Program Integration, I have been working on leading Defense Programs’ current effort to developing a responsive infrastructure. I will continue to lead this important effort, if confirmed, as the Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs.

Is sufficiently timely progress being made towards the goal of a responsive infrastructure?

The concept of responsive infrastructure as part of the New Triad was first announced in December 2001 with the release of the Nuclear Posture Review. Initially, progress was slow as we worked with the DoD and others to agree on what a responsive infrastructure really is. The pace of progress picked up as the details of a much smaller future stockpile and the concept of a Reliable Replacement Warhead was developed. The 2012 stockpile plan provided details of a smaller stockpile to Congress in June 2004. In the early spring of 2005, we established a Responsive Infrastructure Steering Committee and a position within Defense Programs to drive actions needed to achieve responsive infrastructure goals. Actions have been accelerating since that time. I made moving towards a more responsive nuclear weapons complex infrastructure one of my key personal goals.

If confirmed, what would you do to either maintain or accelerate this progress?

I am committed to accelerating the transformation of the nuclear weapons complex into a more responsive infrastructure. Infrastructure is defined as the people, business practices, technical processes, science and technology base, equipment, and facilities required to complete our mission. There are a number of things that we can do now (e.g., (1) improve risk management

and technical business practices and (2) eliminate redundant capabilities) at an affordable cost, before any newer, more modern facility would need to be brought on-line.

The Nuclear Weapons Complex Infrastructure Task Force of the Secretary of Energy Advisory Board recently issued a report entitled, “Recommendations for the Nuclear Weapons Complex of the Future.”

What is your general view of the report and its recommendations? The SEAB Task Force report was well done by a group of professionals who are sincerely interested in improving the nuclear weapons complex. I thank them for their work and acknowledge their contribution in helping frame the debate on the future of the complex. They did not, nor could not, fully address all details for a complicated system, such as the nuclear weapons complex. The Task Force acknowledges this up front in their report. For example, their recommendation on timing for a consolidated nuclear production center (CNPC) does not recognize the challenge of meeting near-term requirements of the current stockpile and transforming the nuclear weapons complex infrastructure at the same time. It may be decades before all existing legacy weapons, and the constraints they impose (e.g., conventional high explosives), are fully removed from the stockpile and dismantled.

Are efforts underway within Defense Programs to analyze, respond to or implement the recommendations of the task force? In my current capacity, I am taking recommendations of the SEAB Task Force, as well as other recent reviews (e.g., Defense Science Board, Foster Panel, etc.) very seriously. Over the past six months, the NNSA has been analyzing these recommendations. In addition, I have held two strategic retreats (November and January) of senior nuclear weapons complex leadership and a concentrated three-week session (the “January Process”) with about 50 key middle management personnel throughout the weapons complex, to establish our preferred long-term planning scenario for the future. I have personally met with Secretary on our plan and will meet again with him to determine how we will implement our vision of the future. I anticipate that our selected path forward will be reflected in discussions with Congress later this spring.

If you are confirmed, what actions would you take, if any, to respond to the task force recommendations? If confirmed, I will keep on the current path. We will communicate our preferred long-term, infrastructure-planning scenario to stakeholders soon and begin implementation. Some actions may be consistent with the Task Force recommendations and some may be different. I intend to take some actions within the next 18 months to demonstrate that I am serious about transforming the complex into a more responsive and cost-effective infrastructure.

Addressing Legacy and Surplus Facilities

The NNSA continues to maintain programmatic responsibility for many legacy nuclear weapons facilities that are surplus to current mission needs or have exceeded their design lives to such an extent that it is not economic to raise them to current standards for continued occupancy and use. Many of these facilities are mothballed in a safe shutdown

mode while awaiting the funds for dismantlement. In some cases, NNSA is using scarce infrastructure recapitalization funds for the purpose of dismantling these facilities instead of transferring this work to the Office of Environmental Management, which is the office within the DOE responsible for cleaning up the environmental legacy of the nuclear weapons program.

If confirmed, would you propose any changes or improvements to the process by which these legacy facilities are currently being addressed? I support the work within the Office of Environmental Management to ensure that the dismantlement and disposal of excess legacy facilities are adequately addressed. The question of legacy facility disposition is an issue of concern that cannot be solved by any one organization within the Department but will require a DOE corporate approach to address since this concern exists across a number of both NNSA and DOE organizations.

In your view, should the dismantlement and disposal of these excess legacy facilities be budgeted for and executed by the Office of Environmental Management, rather than Defense Programs? At this point in time it is not clear to me that assigning all Defense Programs dismantlement and disposal to the Office of Environmental Management is the right thing to do. Since these excess legacy facilities exist across many Departmental elements, a corporate DOE approach that looks at the complete picture of the Department's legacy sites is more appropriate.

Maintenance of the Stockpile

How confident are you of the ability of the nuclear weapons complex as currently constituted to identify and fix potential problems in all weapons expected to be included in the enduring nuclear weapons stockpile? I am very confident of the ability of the nuclear weapons complex to identify and fix potential problems in the enduring nuclear weapons stockpile. This is fundamental to our core mission—nothing else matters if we cannot adequately support the enduring stockpile.

What do you believe to be the biggest challenges in maintaining the nuclear weapons expected to be in the enduring stockpile? One of the biggest challenges in maintaining the nuclear weapons expected to be in the enduring stockpile will be maintaining and exercising the highly skilled workforce across the nuclear weapons complex to ensure that appropriate skills and capabilities are developed and improved. Additionally, maintaining an appropriate level of focus and management attention on the variety of surveillance activities for the enduring stockpile will be very important.

In your view, how would the reliable replacement warhead program, if successful, change the approach to stockpile stewardship? I do not expect success in the Reliable Replacement Warhead program to fundamentally change the approach to Stockpile Stewardship. A successful Reliable Replacement Warhead program is a validation of the success of Stockpile Stewardship. The program should result in replacement of components and will reduce further the likelihood that we would ever need to carry out another underground nuclear test. This program should

drive performance margins higher and reduce uncertainties in design. In order to be able to ascertain progress in increasing design margins and reducing uncertainties, stewardship of the stockpile will continue to play an important role in being able to measure and evaluate these parameters.

With respect to the nuclear weapons production complex as currently constituted, are you confident in the continued ability to manufacture or otherwise acquire limited life components for the enduring stockpile? Yes. Defense Programs has an excellent record in producing and delivering limited life components.

Warhead Pit Manufacturing

A significant challenge facing the nuclear weapons complex is reconstituting the ability to manufacture and certify nuclear weapons pits, and then ramping this capability up to an appropriate production rate, which will permit the timely replenishment, or replacement of pits in the stockpile.

What is your view of the current level of progress in reconstituting pit production capability? Reconstituting pit production at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) has been quite successful as evidenced by the recent manufacture of “Qual 14,” the last qualification pit. The next pits being manufactured in FY 2006 will be of war reserve quality. Six war reserve pits will be manufactured in fiscal year 2006 and ten pits are planned for fiscal year 2007. The NNSA considers an appropriate pit production capacity to be essential to its long-term evolution to a more responsive nuclear weapons infrastructure. Congress declined to fund planning for a Modern Pit Facility in FY 2006 citing concerns that pit aging experiments and a thorough analysis of the Nuclear Weapons Complex Infrastructure report are not yet complete. As a result, NNSA did not seek funding for the Modern Pit Facility in FY 2007. As these concerns will be addressed in the coming months, NNSA will work with Congress to identify an approach to a long-term pit production capacity. In the meantime, NNSA plans to increase the LANL pit manufacturing capacity to at least 30 – 40 pits per year by the end of FY 2012. I will be working closely with LANL to ensure that we have a good understanding of the real capability and capacity of the TA-55 facilities.

What are the most significant near-term and long-term challenges? The most significant near-term challenge is the final certification of a newly manufactured W88 pit by the end of FY 2007. The most significant long-term challenge will be to develop a plutonium manufacturing capability that is appropriately sized for the future stockpile, reflects our best understanding of weapons specific pit aging, and is integrated with our needs to support current Department of Defense requirements.

In your view, is this effort on track to meet program requirements? Defense Programs is on track to meet the near-term program requirements of final certification of a newly manufactured W88 pit by the end of 2007 and to manufacture planned pits in 2006 and 2007. Pit production is a key element of a responsive nuclear weapons infrastructure. Within the next year I expect to have weapons specific pit lifetime estimates, a better understanding of the long-term

requirements for the Stockpile, and a better understanding of the outcomes from the Reliable Replacement Warhead study. These elements will help inform a decision to address the appropriate plutonium capability for the nuclear weapons complex. I will continue to work with the Department of Defense to define the size and composition of the stockpile. If confirmed as Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs, getting this right will be a high priority for me.

Test Readiness Posture

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004 requires DOE to achieve and maintain thereafter a test readiness posture of not more than 18 months. In other words, DOE would be able to resume underground nuclear testing within 18 months of a Presidential decision to conduct a test. DOE is to achieve this readiness no later than October 1, 2006.

Has sufficient funding been appropriated by Congress to allow DOE to meet this requirement? If so, how confident are you that this statutory requirement will be met by the end of the current fiscal year? Sufficient funding has not been appropriated by Congress to allow DOE to meet the requirement to achieve and maintain an 18 month test readiness posture.

In your view, is this posture appropriate to support the stockpile? The NNSA has made considerable progress in improving its test readiness posture to 24 months by a number of actions including production of a set of field-test neutron generators, training nuclear test diagnosticians, and completing some of the safety basis authorization work. Given that proceeding to 18 months would likely result in just more progress in the safety authorization basis work, the 24 month test readiness posture is appropriate to support the stockpile, especially considering more pressing needs within the Stockpile Stewardship Program.

Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board

The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) has a statutorily-directed independent oversight role over nuclear safety issues arising within NNSA nuclear weapons facilities.

What is your view of the current relationship between NNSA and the DNFSB? The current relationship between the DNFSB and the NNSA is good. In my current position as Assistant Deputy Administrator for Program Integration, I brief the Board on a regular basis to discuss items of mutual concern and interest. This forum provides an opportunity to discuss areas of agreement and disagreement in a manner to keep communication lines open.

Does the current relationship allow for effective execution by the DNFSB of its oversight role? Yes, this relationship allows the DNFSB to execute its oversight role.

If confirmed, what actions, if any, would you take to improve communication and transparency between the DNFSB and the NNSA facilities under the purview of Defense

Programs? If confirmed, I would continue to brief the Board on a regular basis on areas of mutual concern and interest. This forum has worked well.

Life Extension Programs

If confirmed, you will be responsible for managing the life extension programs for existing nuclear warheads.

What is your general assessment of the effectiveness of the life extension programs? I believe the Life Extension Programs are highly effective for extending the life of warheads in the nuclear weapons stockpile. The W87 (Intercontinental Ballistic Missile warhead) program was recently completed, and efforts are well underway on the B61-7/11 (strategic bombs), W76 (Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile warhead) and W80 (cruise missile warhead).

How well, in your view, does the nuclear weapons complex -- encompassing the laboratories and the production sites -- function as an integrated complex and, externally, with the Department of Defense in executing the life extension programs? The success of highly integrated activities such as the Life Extension Programs testifies that the nuclear weapons complex is working relatively well together and with the Department of Defense. Every one of the nuclear weapons complex sites is involved with the Life Extension Programs in some way, and they have served as specific focal points with tangible milestones and deliverables. Activities such as Defense Programs Quarterly Program Reviews bring the entire complex together on a regular basis, to bring high-level NNSA, laboratory, plant, and test site attention to issues that are continually addressed at the working level. Regular meetings such as the Nuclear Weapons Council serve a similar purpose with the Department of Defense. This level of integration has been effective in large part because of active involvement of the Federal Program Managers to bring the laboratory and plant contractor organizations together.

Do you believe the efficiency with which NNSA manages the execution of the life extension programs be improved, and if so, how? Yes, I always believe we can find efficiencies in any process. For an effort as comprehensive and far-reaching as the LEPs, communication and execution of a common vision are often difficult. When dealing with multiple contractors on a single area of emphasis, the LEPs for example, a concerted effort has to be made to ensure that contractors do not optimize their performance and sub-optimize the overall effort. To address this problem, Defense Programs should implement a common multi-site incentive that will bind all contractors involved in an activity to a common performance measure. This will help ensure that contractors work together for the success of the overall objective.

Design Basis Threat

Secretary Bodman testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee in February of 2005 that DOE and NNSA sites will not achieve compliance with the current design basis threat until the year 2008.

Given the seriousness of the need to secure nuclear materials, both abroad and at home, do you believe that this is a sufficiently rapid response to the threats currently outlined by the intelligence community, and against which DOE and NNSA must defend at its nuclear sites? I believe that DOE and NNSA are working diligently to address security threats appropriately, considering program execution needs and fiscal constraints. As the Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs, if confirmed, I would work very closely with the Associate Deputy Administrator for Defense Nuclear Security to ensure that NNSA's sites are safe and secure.

If confirmed, would you seek ways to accelerate the hardening and compliance of facilities under your purview against the current design basis threat? If confirmed, I would continue to seek ways to accelerate the hardening and compliance of facilities under my purview against the current design basis threat. I work closely with the Associate Administrator for Defense Nuclear Security on a wide range of issues, including facility design and compliance. The design of the Highly Enriched Uranium Materials Facility at the Y-12 National Security Complex is a good example of a recent facility with modern security features. Any future facilities and strengthening of existing facilities will consider the current and any future design basis threats.

If confirmed, would you pledge to work expeditiously to identify any special nuclear material which is excess to mission need, and to develop a plan to consolidate and secure this material against current threats? Yes, if confirmed, I will work to identify any special nuclear material that is excess to mission need, and to consolidate and more heavily secure this material against current threats. Defense Programs has a number of related successes (e.g., removal of security category I/II special nuclear material from TA-18 at Los Alamos National Laboratory) and we are an active participant in the DOE's Nuclear Materials Disposition and Consolidation Coordination Committee, which is looking at a comprehensive path forward for the entire Department.

NNSA Act

The NNSA has now been in existence for over five years, since it was established by Congress in the NNSA Act of 2000.

In your view, is the relationship between the NNSA and the Department of Energy functioning in an effective and efficient manner? The relationship between the Department and the NNSA functions is effective. However, there can always be more improvement in driving efficiency in how we work together. Attention and improvement in this area can be reflected in existing Department of Energy Orders.

If confirmed, would you propose any statutory changes to the NNSA Act? No, I would not propose any statutory changes to the NNSA Act.

Do you believe any organizational changes are needed to implement the NNSA Act? No, I do not believe any organizational changes are needed. However, work should continue on clarifying relationships between NNSA and Department of Energy offices.

Congressional Oversight

In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of information.

Do you agree, if confirmed for this high position, to appear before this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress? If confirmed, I agree to appear before the Senate Armed Services Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee, or designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary security protection, with respect to your responsibilities as the Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs? If confirmed, I agree to appear before the Senate Armed Services Committee, or designated members of the Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary security protection, with respect to my responsibilities as the Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs.

Do you agree to ensure that testimony, briefings, and other communications of information are provided to this Committee and its staff and other appropriate committees in a timely manner? If confirmed I agree to ensure that testimony, briefings, and other communications of information are provided to the Senate Armed Service Committee and its staff and other appropriate committees in a timely manner.