



Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Board
Idaho National Engineering Laboratory

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT FISCAL YEAR 1998 INTEGRATED BUDGET PRIORITIZATION

INTRODUCTION

The Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Board - Idaho National Engineering Laboratory (EM SSAB-INEL) met on November 14-15, 1995 in Idaho Falls, Idaho. Following presentations and discussions with Department of Energy-Idaho Operations Office (DOE-ID) and Lockheed Martin Idaho Technologies (LMIT) personnel regarding the strategy for prioritizing activities for the Environmental Management (EM) Fiscal Year 1998 (FY98) budget and as described in the draft INEL EM Prioritization IPT Report of November 8, 1995, the Board participated in a facilitated, consensus-building process through which the following recommendation was developed and unanimously adopted.

The Board suggests that DOE-ID and LMIT incorporate the principles articulated below into the INEL's development of criteria for prioritizing activities. The Board's principles have been prioritized in descending order, with the most important principle listed first.

RECOMMENDATION

The Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Board to the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory has made eleven recommendations to the Department of Energy Idaho Operations Office (DOE-ID) describing its perspectives on DOE activities. Within those recommendations exist overarching principles on which the Board feels policy, programmatic, and budget decisions should be made. A recommendation on the EM FY98 Prioritization List should articulate and integrate those Board principles which are essential to making prioritized decisions. In order to give DOE a more substantive opinion on the prioritization of specific projects, the most effective way would be to go through the prioritized list project by project.

1. Risk-Based Prioritization. The EM SSAB-INEL advocates the use of risk as a basis for setting priorities at the INEL. The Board also recommends that the DOE focus dollars and effort on the highest environmental, public, and worker risk first. Measures should be in place to ensure that environmental remediation and waste management activities underway are addressing the most pressing risk issues first. Ensure that environmental, cultural, public, and worker safety measures are in place as the work is pursued and that cultural resources are preserved. Relatively inconsequential wastes and waste streams ought to receive attention only after significant and high risk wastes are treated.

2. Integration. The Board encourages the DOE to make decisions factoring in risk, cost, budget realities, regulatory requirements, viability of innovative technologies, and ultimately, the ability to complete the highest priority tasks as expeditiously as possible.
3. Environmental Protection. The EM SSAB-INEL considers protection of the Snake River Plain Aquifer a paramount concern. Continued federal management of the site is anticipated, with no residential development. Agricultural development should be limited to grazing. Cultural resources on site must be preserved. These standards should be factored into all decisions related to environmental remediation and waste management.
4. (tie) Core Competencies. The EM SSAB-INEL advocates that the U.S. maintain INEL technical core competencies required to conduct the research in science/engineering and applications to develop new technologies and facilities, and to preserve capabilities and be able to respond to national emergencies. To do so, the DOE must assure there is an appropriate mix of personnel with expertise and knowledge of the existing facility operating characteristics and to preserve the institutional memory of the aging INEL facilities. The EM SSAB-INEL is concerned about the long term viability of the INEL in meeting its waste management and environmental remediation mission, including research and development to meet the needs of the EM program. Specifically, as described in the following: maintain INEL technical core competencies required to conduct the research and development in science/engineering and applications to develop new technologies and facilities; and assure there is an appropriate mix of personnel with expertise and knowledge of the existing facility operating characteristics and to preserve the institutional memory of the aging INEL facilities. DOE should also support new research and development initiatives to develop a future industrial base when cleanup is completed.
4. (tie) Fiscal Management. The EM SSAB-INEL recognizes that the INEL is among the cleanest DOE sites in the complex. The Board However, the Board does not want the INEL and the State of Idaho to be penalized for its better management and technical practices by receiving fewer dollars to implement the activities required at the INEL. The EM SSAB-INEL encourages the DOE to invest in INEL capabilities, whether through technology development, continued integration efforts or privatization, for the benefit of the rest of the complex and the country in solving environmental restoration, waste management, and technology development issues. The Board believes that a DOE goal should be to keep costs at a level comparable to that incurred by the private sector for similar activities.
5. National Waste Disposal Solution. The DOE must aggressively pursue a solution to locating and activating a national repository, both for current and future needs. A solution to this national problem must be spearheaded by DOE Headquarters as the appropriate federal agency in this matter.
6. Public Involvement. The EM SSAB-INEL encourages continued public involvement early and throughout the decision- making activities at the INEL. The Board encourages the DOE to remain responsive to public concerns and implement genuine public involvement activities, as well as advise the public as cleanup and remediation are accomplished.

1. Integrate funding priorities and cleanup activities -- look at the big picture in making decisions as to how to prioritize funding

Apply and leverage systems integration at INEL

Concern re budget allocation to INEL because it is a clean site.

Maintain early EM SSAB-INEL involvement

Remain responsive to public concerns and genuine public involvement activities

Advise public as cleanup and remediation is accomplished

Prioritization requires a clear delineation of risk

Efforts should be risk drive -- closely related to potential impact

Prioritized treatment of highest risk waste in the most cost effective manner

Goals for cost of all activities should be comparable to the private sector

Savings may be possible by a range of alternatives including privatization, innovative contracting mechanisms and optimizing design, construction, and monitoring

Seek the most efficient and cost effective path forward

Institute efficiencies, don't merely cut dollars

Apply risk evaluations routinely to assure funds remain directed to the highest risk

Highest risk to workers, citizens, aquifer and air are first

Near term expenditures should go to actual treatment of highest risk rather than characterization of lower risk

Relatively inconsequential wastes and waste streams receive attention only after significant and high risk wastes are treated

Progress toward actual cleanup and management of INEL wastes in a cost effective manner that meets all applicable regulations and agreements as opposed to generating further studies

meet regulatory requirements

Not excessive requirements

Utilize existing treatment technologies to put in a stable and retrievable form -- not driven by anticipated acceptance criteria or timing of national repository

have wastes road ready

Investigate alternative treatment technologies to reduce costs and increase effectiveness

Keep quality skill mix and capabilities for technology development

Preserve capabilities and be able to respond to national emergencies

Use most cost effective treatment meeting regulatory standards

Focus on permanent repository

Concern that politics prevents finding solutions -- prolongs activities and escalates costs

Budget recommendation of 3/22/95

1. Protect the health and safety of workers, public, and environment (specifically the aquifer).
2. Store and handle nuclear materials, including spent nuclear fuel, as safely as possible.
3. Continue efforts to develop solutions to nuclear waste and spent nuclear fuel management to prevent Idaho from becoming a permanent repository.
4. There is broad support for the DOE meeting its commitments.
5. We are concerned about the long term viability of the INEL in meeting its waste management and environmental remediation mission, including research and development to meet the needs of the EM program. Specifically, as described in the following:

Maintain INEL technical core competencies required to conduct the research and development in science/engineering and applications to develop new technologies and facilities.

Assure there is an appropriate mix of personnel with expertise and knowledge of the existing facility operating characteristics and to preserve the institutional memory of the aging INEL facilities

SEE WORK FORCE RESTRUCTURING CONCERNS

The INEL will remain under government management for at least the next 100 years. Mission concerns -- obsolescence of some facilities but others built in core areas Research and development facilities will be expanded, and er and wm activities will continue. New mission s could result in reuse of INEL facilities by private-sector interests, supplemented with technology support by INEL personnel.

INEL may be called upon to support defense related operations

No residential development will occur within INEL boundaries

Unlikely another such facilities will ever be sited