



Office of the Director

June 28, 2002

Dr. Everett Beckner  
Deputy Administrator  
Defense Programs, NNSA, NA-1  
U. S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20585-1901

Dear Everett:

This letter is to confirm our phone conversation of June 26, 2002.

Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) agrees with NNSA that the best overall decision to meet the post September 11th challenges for the long-term security of nuclear activities associated with TA-18 is to move the CAT-III materials and their associated equipment to the Nevada Test Site Device Assembly Facility. CAT-IV materials and associated experimental equipment will remain at LANL.

LANL will work with NNSA to ensure that appropriate plans are developed to effect this move in a manner that maintains this important national capability with safe and secure operations until that move occurs.

In order for Los Alamos to proceed on this path in a manner that ensures continuity of mission and capability, including the retention and recruitment of technical staff, there are several decisions that must be supported by NNSA, LANL, and other organizations. I have listed the areas below that I discussed on the phone and that you tentatively agreed will be implemented to ensure success.

- A refurbishment of the criticality machines, required to meet modern safety standards, will be carried out at LANL prior to the move to NTS. LANL will use this requirement as a way to help retention, training, and recruitment of the workforce needed to sustain operations when moved to DAF. A preliminary cost estimate will be provided to NNSA.

A single LANL project director reporting to a single NNSA federal project manager will manage the transition from TA-18 to NTS DAF. Federal staff at NVOO and support expertise from Bechtel Nevada will be included on the team.

NNSA will establish the programmatic governance plan associated with the facility. Plans and budgets for capital construction and operations will be incorporated in the NNSA FYNSP now and in the outyears. All customers will be informed that their support must be incorporated into their planning and budgets.

P. O. Box 1625, MS A100, Los Alamos, NM 87545  
202-887-3101 FAX 202-867-2977  
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- A detailed engineering estimate will be developed for the move of TA-18 to DAF. A LANL/NNSA team will be charged to come up with this estimate. LANL will have the technical lead.
- NNSA will continue to support security improvements at TA-18 during the interim period so that LANL can meet the security requirements of the post September 11 threat assessments.
- LANL and LLNL will discuss the overall management of the NTS experimental facilities that will serve several different types of nuclear work after the TA-18 move. We propose that LANL provide the management and oversight of the DAF facility, as we will be the major programmatic user for the facility. Bechtel Nevada will continue to serve in an operational support role at DAF.

I would like to thank your staff for the professional approach they took on this difficult issue.

Sincerely,



John C. Browne  
Director

ICB:co

Cy: R. Erickson, Director, OLASO  
D. Martinez, Deputy Director, OLASO  
J. Salgado, DIR, A100  
D. Cobb, AD-TR, A195  
H. T. Hawkins, NIS, P630  
DIR-02-176 File  
IM-5, A150

Beckner wants security cat 1 and 2 material out of TA-18 ASAP  
9 months is unacceptable; Beckner wants months  
LANL is proposing multiple studies with long time periods

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