The Secretary of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

March 4, 1999

MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF DEPARTMENTAL ELEMENTS

FROM: BILL RICHARDSON

SUBJECT: EFFECTIVELY MANAGING TRAINING RESOURCES

Building a talented, diverse, and versatile workforce that is prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st Century will require the Department of Energy (DOE) to more effectively utilize its scarce training and development resources. Proper use of these resources will result in Federal and contractor employees who are highly skilled and capable of carrying out our critical missions in a safe and reliable manner consistent with recognized standards of excellence.

DOE invests its training resources to maintain and improve Federal and contractor workforce competencies. In response to criticism from the General Accounting Office and the Congress regarding spending levels, the Department reduced expenditures for training and development in its Federal and contractor workforces by nearly one-third from Fiscal Year 1995 to Fiscal Year 1997. These reduced spending levels are reflected in DOE's current budget.

Our challenge now is to make the best use of our limited resources. We must make significant improvements in how we plan and conduct training programs to ensure that these programs are closely aligned with mission priorities and administered efficiently. Improved development of current employees, coupled with selected hiring of highly skilled individuals, will enhance workforce readiness and achieve safety, environmental, national security, and scientific goals for the years ahead.

To ensure these results, I direct you to take the following actions:

- Prepare training plans, as required by DOE Order 360.1 TRAINING, that align with your mission priorities and are based on a rigorous assessment of workforce needs. These plans should establish priorities for the funding of training programs and be included in your organization's budget planning and execution activities.

- Prepare individual development plans (IDPs) for your employees to promote professional growth and development consistent with organizational training needs and priorities.

- Eliminate funding of unnecessary training that is not required by law or DOE directives, does not address a mission-related objective, or does not contribute to maintaining a highly skilled, versatile and diverse workforce.

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- Amend DOE contracts to include challenging, performance-based requirements and evaluation criteria for contractor training.

In carrying out these requirements, I expect you to work closely with your managers, employees, and unions to assess training needs and set priorities that are aligned with your organization's strategic mission objectives and employee development goals.

I am directing the Office of Management and Administration to review and clarify Departmental training management policies, including the requirement for DOE Elements to prepare annual training plans and employee IDPs based on systematic needs assessments. In regard to DOE contractors, this review shall include policies to establish specific management and results-based performance objectives for contractor training programs.

Further, I am chartering a DOE-wide Training and Development Management Council composed of senior DOE program and field office officials. The Director of the Office of Management and Administration will convene, name members to and act as chair of the Council. The Chief Information Officer and Chief Financial Officer will be members of the Council and support its activities respectively through increased emphasis on technology supported learning and analysis of budget impacts and potential cost-savings arising from new training initiatives. Contractor training initiatives will also come under the purview of the Council and arrangements will be made to interface with appropriate representatives of the contractor community.

Working with the entire DOE community, the Council will complete the development of the DOE-wide Education, Training and Development Business Plan. The Plan will guide the effective use of resources, establish more uniform and cost-effective ways of developing and conducting training programs, foster training "Centers of Excellence" to eliminate duplicative training courses and improve instructional quality, and help galvanize our efforts in support of the President's Executive Order on using technology to improve the training of Federal employees. The Council will provide me with periodic progress reports on and recommendations for improvements in the management and administration of DOE training programs.

I am asking for your full support of the Training and Development Management Council and in making training and employee development a major focus in preparing our Departmental workforce for the 21st century.