



The Secretary of Energy
Washington, D.C. 20585

August 22, 2008

Dr. John H. Marburger, III
Director
Office of Science and Technology Policy
Washington, DC 20502

Dear Dr. Marburger:

Thank you for your May 28, 2008, memorandum requesting an update on the progress of agency policies regarding the release of scientific research results. I am pleased to report on the Department of Energy's policies and practices, as well as recent activities in this area. The Department is fully committed to the robust and open communication of scientific information and to do all we can consistent with our agency mission to advance science knowledge.

The Department and its predecessor agencies, the Atomic Energy Commission and the Energy Research and Development Administration, have long-held principles designed to "ensure the communication and open exchange of data and results," consistent with Federal laws, regulations, Presidential directives, and orders such as section 1009 of the America COMPETES Act (Pub. L. 110-69). The following addresses the sharing of data and research results at the scientific and technical level and the release of news and public relations information.

At the scientific and technical level, the Department's Scientific and Technical Information Program (STIP) is managed by the Office of Scientific and Technical Information (OSTI) within the Office of Science. As called for in section 982 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, "*The Secretary, through the Office of Scientific and Technical Information, shall maintain within the Department publicly available collections of scientific and technical information resulting from research, development, demonstration, and commercial applications activities supported by the Department.*" A DOE directive, DOE O 241.1A, states the principles of broad availability to promote scientific advancement and defines responsibilities and requirements for departmental elements, as well as contractor requirements. This directive is undergoing review for updating now, and we will ensure that the principles noted in your memorandum are referenced.

The majority of DOE's scientific and technical information is developed by researchers at the National Laboratories under research and development contracts or at universities or other organizations under financial assistance awards (i.e., research grants). The Department's STIP practices ensure that scientific and technical information is reviewed and released by the originating organizations,



without DOE intervention or edit. Annually, DOE-supported entities submit over 10,000 articles directly to journal publishers.

In addition, DOE maintains systems whereby sites submit scientific and technical information to the Department's central STIP organization. The Department publishes that which is publicly releasable as broadly as possible. Scientific and technical information takes many forms, such as journal literature, technical report literature, conference proceedings, patents, descriptions of research projects, and numeric and other non-text data. Broad access is accomplished via Web tools that are easily accessible and searchable by the scientific community and the public. For example, 160,000 technical reports resulting from departmental research and development projects since 1991 are posted on the web in a full-text searchable database called the DOE Information Bridge (www.osti.gov/bridge).

In addition, the Department of Energy developed and operates two science portals, which directly advance the principles of openness and transparency addressed in your memorandum. To broaden access to the Department's scientific and technical information, as well as that of other U.S. science agencies, DOE's information is accessible through Science.gov, the interagency science portal that posts or links to over 50 million pages of U.S. scientific and technical information from 13 Federal agencies, and WorldWideScience.org, a global science gateway offering over 200 million pages of scientific content. Both portals are designed to be user-friendly by being fully searchable via a single query.

Regarding the release of news and public relations information, the Department of Energy Acquisition Regulation (DEAR) addresses policies for National Laboratories and their contractors. Specifically, clause 952.204-75, "Public Affairs," has been in effect since January 2001. In subsequent guidance issued to DOE's Office of Science Site Office Managers, the instructions for implementing the DEAR provision stated, "Nothing in these guidelines is intended to interfere with the normal interchange of scientific information among and between scientists through professional meetings, scholarly publications and the like. ..." The National Laboratories have developed a variety of policies for implementing these principles.

Please be assured that departmental policies and practices encourage robust and open communication of publicly releasable scientific information. If I may be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Samuel W. Bodman