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M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Distribution

FROM: Susan Zimmerman *SWZ*  
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DATE: April 6, 1990

SUBJECT: State Observations on the DOE QA Audit of Los Alamos  
National Laboratory

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On March 26-30, 1990, I attended the DOE QA audit of Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) as the State of Nevada observer. No State technical observers attended this audit.

The Audit Process

The performance of this audit was far superior to the performance of the audit in November, 1989. The technical and programmatic sides of the audit were well integrated. Both the technical and programmatic auditors performed an in-depth audit of the LANL program. There was a minor problem with the material used to prepare for the audit and to develop the checklists - two study plans sent to the State and the NRC were not used to prepare for the audit or to prepare the checklists and the material that was used was not made available prior to or during the audit. An agreement was reached that for future audits, the material used for preparation will be documented and then the State and the NRC can select from that list the material that they wish to have prior to the audit.

The Los Alamos QA Program

Los Alamos had made a major effort since the last audit to correct the problems found in November. Unfortunately, the new procedures had only just been issued or finalized and it was not possible to determine the effectiveness of implementation of the new

procedures. The procedures themselves appeared adequate to control the activities. Work does need to be done in the procurement area and on an accurate organizational chart. There were also repeated statements made to the effect that some of the procedural violations discovered during the audit were the result of "doing what we (LANL) thought the Project Office wanted us to do" instead of what their own procedures called for. Verbal communications between the Project Office and the participants that cause the participants to violate their own QA programs has been a problem for years. Any communications between these groups needs to be documented and the procedural noncompliance, if any, justified in this documentation.

With the new procedures and organization at Los Alamos, the QA program should function adequately. This will also give Los Alamos the opportunity to make the QA program its own, tailoring it, as applicable, to its own needs.

Distribution

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