UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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BRIEFING ON STATUS OF OIS PROGRAMS,

PERFORMANCE, AND PLANS,

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ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2005

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The Commission met in open session at 9:30 a.m., at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, One White Flint North, Rockville, Maryland, the Honorable Nils Diaz, Chairman of the Commission, presiding.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

NILS DIAZ   Chairman of the Commission.

EDWARD MCGAFFIGAN Member of the Commission

JEFFREY MERRIFIELD   Member of the Commission

GREGORY JACZKO   Member of the Commission

PETER LYONS   Member of the Commission

(This transcript was produced from electronic caption media and audio and video media provided by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.)

STAFF AND PRESENTERS:

LUIS REYES, EDO.

JACKIE SILBER, DEDIA

ED BAKER, DIR, OIS

P R O C E E D I N G S

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: Good morning, and welcome to the Commission meeting, and we are going to hear all kinds of good stuff about the CIO and not so good stuff either, no?

MR. REYES: Challenges, challenges.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: Challenges. I see.

Well, the purpose of this meeting is to ensure that my Commission colleagues and I and all of you are updated on the staff efforts to provide information technology and information management services to internal and external stakeholders. This function supports all of our strategic goals. We shall, of course, center on our public health and safety goals.

As the demand for information technology and information management services continues to increase, a key challenge for the CIO and for the Office of Information Services is to meet this demand effectively and at a reasonable cost. And, of course, at the same time you have responsibility of keeping all of us trained, which in my case I think you should know you have failed. I am now becoming incapable of dealing with all the ADAMS variations.

The Commission is interested in hearing an update on the progress we have made over the past year and the future direction that the program is taking.

Before we begin, I want to acknowledge that this is Jackie Silber's first formal appearance before The Commission as both CIO and Deputy EDO, and Ed Baker's first meeting as Director of the Office of Information Services.

If my fellow Commissioners have any statements? If not, Mr. Reyes?

MR. REYES: Good morning, Chairman and Commissioners. We are today to brief you on the information technology and information management activities. We past briefed the Commission in January of '04. So this is about a year since we last briefed the Commission on that.

You mentioned, with me at the table is Jackie Silber, she is the CIO, and Ed Baker as the Director of the new Office of Information Services. They will be making the presentation.

We do have staff that's going to help us as we get into a lot of the details.

Jackie?

MS. SILBER: Thank you, Luis.

Good morning, Chairman, Commissioners.

As Luis indicated, we are here today to brief you on the programs of the Office of Information Services. I will be providing you a brief CIO overview and then will turn the briefing over to Ed Baker, Director of OIS, the Office of Information Services, to discuss accomplishments, a view to the future and challenges that face us.

May I have the next slide?

In a number of ways, particularly in the results of the culture survey that was conducted by the Office of the Inspector General in 2002 -- we are on slide 4 -- the OIS staff told us that they wanted us, the leadership of the organization, to provide a clear vision. That vision sets direction and focus for OIS.

We want to continually improve. We want our customers to

seek and value our advice. And we are always working to provide an environment where people want to work.

Next slide, please.

We are a different organization than we were in 2002. We have progressed in each of the key components of our vision that you see here on the slide, and we continue that progress each day.

Next slide.

Work environment is something that's very important to us. The OIS staff also told us through the IG survey and other means that communication was a significant area for concern. I take that challenge very seriously. The leadership of OIS is clear. The staff and our stakeholders are entitled to open and full communication.

Our role in the office to improving communication has emphasized the basics. More frequent staff meetings, regular communication from the CIO and the Office Director to the staff through quarterly all-employees meetings, monthly management meetings and meetings focused on team building.

We also have an employee suggestion box so that employees can communicate with us. And we listen to what the staff has to tell us.

We have also worked closely with our entire management team to help all of us ensure that we are consistent with the agency's values and that we are providing appropriate leadership, management and supervision to OIS staff.

This is not a one-time effort. We have made significant progress and we continue to work so that throughout OIS we communicate effectively to ensure that we all know and understand the business of the

NRC and the work and processes in OIS that supports the agency business.

Next slide, slide 6.

The Chief Information Officer and the office of OIS have a dual role. And the office as well focuses first on policy and oversight. Working with our NRC stakeholders and cognizant of government-wide policy, we develop agency-wide policy which when implemented ensures that information resources are used to their greatest advantage.

This requires that priorities for these resources are consistent with the NRC's business priorities, that the most cost-effective approaches are deployed and that information resources are, in fact, contributing to the efficiency and effectiveness of the agency's business and mission.

It is also our role to provide services, information services and information technology to the agency. We provide those that are very apparent to each of us, like the computers on each of our desks, E-mail, the web which through we communicate both internally and externally.

OIS also provides many services that are less visible each day, but equally critical to support the NRC mission, such as records management, publishing and telecommunications.

Let me now turn the presentation to Ed Baker who will present more detail on the programs of OIS.

Ed?

MR. BAKER: Thank you, Jackie.

Good morning, Chairman, Commissioners. Thank you for the opportunity to brief you on the status of our programs.

Seated directly behind me is my senior management team,

Jim Schaeffer, Deputy Office Director; Division Directors Charlotte Turner, Fran Goldberg, Arnold "Moe" Levin; Acting Division Director, Tom Rich; and our agency Senior Technology Security Officer, Kathy Lyons-Burke.

The organization chart provides a good visual depiction of the scope and diversity of the services we provide. Those services include a complex interconnected information service to the agency that allows the staff to more efficiently perform the agency's mission.

Last year, our staff added 89,000 documents to our electronic records repository, ADAMS, produced 23 million copy pages, responded to 7,000 requests for documents made to the Public Document Room, and responded to 11,000 requests from the staff for library services.

With respect to the library services, we are often challenged during the budget process on this particular service. A recent office weekly activity report included a very good example of those services I would like to share. Based on a request from the staff, the library researched and provided 76 publications, journal articles, conference papers and books on circadian rhythms, shift work, job performance and sleep deprivation as the staff consider revision of the fitness for duty role.

This service by the library staff is something that they are expert at and as a result, the staff gets an effective product, and at the same time more efficiently using their own time for the work that they are doing.

During the last year our public web site grew by 3,000 pages. It averaged 345,000 visits per month, and was accessed by people in 180 different countries. Our 4,000 interconnected computers exchange about 100,000 E-mails with each other and receive about another 40,000 E-mails

via the Internet each day. On a daily basis, we intercept 2,500 spam

messages, we see about 500 attempts at recognizance of our systems,

strip out 300 suspicious E-mail attachments, see about 100 attempts at

denial of service attacks and isolates about 10 viruses.

Even given all the challenges, the availability and operability

of our systems has not been impacted by external attacks. On

Wednesday, February 16th, the Congressional Subcommittee on

Technology, Information Policy and Intergovernmental Relations

announced computer security ratings for federal agencies for 2004. The

NRC received a B plus, third highest for federal agencies rated. While this

is a slight drop from the A we received the previous year, it is still a

remarkable grade compared to the D plus the federal government received

as a whole.

Next slide, please.

As indicated in the resources graph, 85% of the contract cost

and 65% of the direct FTE directly support day-to-day services necessary

for the operation of the agency. This includes information management,

reliable IT and communications infrastructure and support for high-level

waste. The remaining portions of the office's budget for contract support

and FTE support planning for the office and development of new

applications or upgrades to existing applications.

While the budget for the office has risen slightly in the last two

years, those increases have largely been the result of cost escalation

clauses in service contracts and continuing work on the high level waste

meta-system.

Next slide, please.

In addressing our human capital needs, we have focused on training, recruitment and developing leaders. Using the strategic work force planning database, the office identified skill gaps in the areas of project management and enterprise architecture. We are filling those gaps by providing a number of courses in project management and by hiring staff with experience in project management and enterprise architecture.

To enhance the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the office, we are also providing training on effective meeting management and change management.

In the last year, the office filled 45 positions. While the agency has a goal of hiring 25% at the entry level, this has been a significant challenge for us given the skills we are trying to hire. The commercial sector has been a significant competitor for us in this area as well other government agencies. Even at the Grade 14 level, we have had private companies and other government agencies make higher counteroffers once we have made offers to highly-qualified candidates.

In an attempt to address the goal of hiring at the entry level, we are heavily investing in promoting a co-op program in the office. Jackie has personally visited several colleges with co-op programs in an attempt to build a relationship that will eventually support this hiring goal. To date we have four co-op students working in the office.

As Jackie mentioned in her opening remarks, we have done a lot to change the work environment in the office. One part of this is providing leadership training and rotational opportunities for staff and managers. This in addition to the meetings that she mentioned.

We have two people in the SES candidate development

program and are providing rotational assignments for three candidates from other offices.

Additionally, the office is supporting OPM's government-wide SES candidate development program in which we are just about to start the interview phase.

We are also providing senior staff in the office with the opportunity to rotate into a position as an assistant to myself and the Deputy Director to provide an overview for those folks of the whole office.

Next slide, please.

We will now move on to a discussion of what we do, the external drivers for our work, some of our accomplishments and the challenges we see ahead.

Next slide, please.

While we listed five external drivers on the slide, in keeping with the goal of staying in the green, I'm only going to discuss the E-Government Act and the Federal Information Security Management Act.

E-Government is intended to improve the availability of government services and information for citizens, improve information sharing among government agencies and avoid redundant systems. The NRC has taken the position that we will participate in E-Government initiatives that make sense from a business perspective. To date we have identified 15 initiatives we believe may benefit the NRC. A list of those initiatives was previously provided to you.

As we move forward with implementation, I believe we should plan the implementation of E-Government initiatives consistent with our business needs and budget limitations. By that I mean we should not treat

E-Government initiatives as high priority emerging work, unless our business needs drive us there.

This may mean that the staff will propose implementation schedules longer than those requested by OMB to allow for planning and funding. In cases where we propose longer schedules, we will inform the Commission of our plans.

In providing better access to information and services, you have the potential for increasing the risk of compromising your IT infrastructure and your information assets. The requirements in the Federal Information Security Management Act require you to have programs in place to ensure you understand the risks and take appropriate actions to protect your IT infrastructure and information assets.

We have a challenge before us this year, in that the NRC has 17 systems that must be re-accredited and re-certified, and some have special challenges. As with the E-Gov initiative discussed above, our goal is to use our resources effectively and efficiently to protect our information and infrastructure assets. And we intend to make decisions about systems security consistent with that goal.

Next slide, please.

The Electronic Hearing Docket was developed as part of the meta-system for use in the high level waste proceedings to provide parties readily available access to hearing documents. This has been a significant success for the agency. It is providing that access, and its use has been expanded beyond the high level proceedings. It is currently being used in 16 general proceedings.

The meta-system, which will electronically manage the

documents involved in the hearing, including those introduced in the courtroom, is on schedule to be delivered at the end of this fiscal year. And all indications are it will meet the agreed upon service criteria, service levels or performance criteria.

A significant accomplishment this year was the enhancement of the Electronic Information Exchange, EIE software, to allow the electronic submission and service of filings. Additionally this year, the reliability of the meta-system will be enhanced by including spare servers that can be quickly put in service if a server fails, by storing data in a number of servers or clustering and by connecting a redundant Internet path between the courtroom in Los Vegas and the White Flint complex.

All of this is intended to deliver the level of service we need to support the hearings.

We are also prepared to provide document processing and technical support for the meta-system 24 hours a day, 7 days a week once the evidentiary hearing starts. To be ready to provide that level of service, we will start hiring and training contractor staff three to six months in advance of the start of the hearing.

Once we have hired and trained the staff, we will need to maintain that work force through the completion of the hearing to avoid delay.

In addition to the support our office provided with respect to the technology necessary for the high-level waste proceeding, our document and records support staff played a significant role in identifying relevant documents that existed in hard copy, microfiche and electronic form that predated the existence of ADAMS. The relevant material was

then added to ADAMS and made available to the Licensing Support

Network. This contributed to the ASLBP's acceptance of the agency's

certification of its document collection for the proceeding.

Next slide, please.

As Jackie mentioned in her presentation, one of our roles is

providing oversight of the agency's IT investment in planning of future IT

projects.

While OMB requires the programs listed in the slide for

performing this function, the planning and monitoring that are inherent in

these programs make good business sense.

Our governance structure include the IT focus group, which

evaluates new technologies; the IT business council, which provides input

on whether new investments are aligned with the business need and

current applications and practices; the IT senior advisory council, which

provides strategic direction; and the program review committee, EDO and

Commission, who ensure the funding investment is consistent with the

agency's priorities.

This year we did quite well with respect to being able to

demonstrate that our IT investments are aligned with our business needs

as rated by OMB. We received scores of four or five out of a possible of

five for 14 systems we submitted.

The quality of the submittals resulted in OMB approving the

funding for all of the systems we submitted.

An enterprise architecture program collects information that is

used to identify data and applications sharing opportunities, reduce and

prevent duplicate systems, identifying opportunities to automate business

processes, verify technology compatibilities and plan and position the infrastructure for the use of new technologies.

Based on work already done in enterprise architecture, the office has very recently started an initiative to develop a three-to-five year plan for the direction of the agency's technology and service. In the near term we will be contacting our customers and soliciting their views and participation.

The genesis for this initiative came out of discussions in the IT focus group where they requested a vision for NRC's technology in the future and a recent request for information from an office to update a stand alone database that has significant number of data elements common to other databases.

Responding to multiple requests to update duplicate data elements is a significant source of irritation to the staff in addition to being an inefficient use of resources. Our plan is intended to address this issue and move us forward so that we more efficiently collect, use and share our data.

The goals of the plan are to capture all the systems and applications within the agency, identify the duplicate data elements and applications, identify the systems, technology and applications that support the business needs of our customers now and in the future, and plan the move to consolidate those needs, including newer technology where appropriate.

Developing the plan is a multiyear effort. However, there are efficiencies to be gained in data entry and maintenance as well as improving the quality and availability of the data. The results will have an

additional benefit of relieving that significant source of irritation to the staff.

Technology planning consists of evaluating new technology and planning your infrastructure such that it is easier to incorporate new technology. As I already noted, the IT focus group evaluates this new technology.

Currently wireless devices, wireless local area networks and the necessary security features are a current focus of that group.

The staff is also developing a new project management methodology that streamlines and integrates our processes for planning, implementing and managing new IT investments. The staff is evaluating a very powerful set of user friendly integrated software tools that capture the system requirements and integrate the source of that requirement, the test plan, the security plan and the configuration management package.

The tools also allow you to monitor progress in completing IT investments and compare that progress against your cost. There are currently three new IT investments highlighting the use of these tools, and the customers have given us very positive feedback on their use.

Additionally, Jackie and I had a demonstration of a software package last week, and agree it's a very significant improvement in the agency's ability to plan and manage IT investments, which is what capital planning and investment control is all about.

Next slide, please.

This year we have taken steps forward in improving the public's access to information, and in the same year, we have restricted access to some information. Our web page continues to be the portal of choice the public uses to access our information. This year we

implemented a new public meeting notice system using the web, where that enables the public to search upcoming and past meetings by locations, dates, facilities, participants and other criteria.

We have had very positive feedback from the public on the information available and the ease of use of the system.

Another improvement we have made in cooperation with the Offices of Public Affairs and Nuclear Security and Incident Response is a new web site for emergency preparedness information which is integrated with existing material on emergency response. We are continuing to work with those offices in developing a special preformatted web page that would be posted if there were a general emergency or another event with high public interest and visibility.

The site will be designed to support an extremely high volume of visits during an emergency and will be a readily available source of information for the news media and the public.

The overall satisfaction with our web page remains at a level of 3 on a scale of 1 to 4. We are currently using an internally developed survey that is posted on the web site and accessible from the "Contact Us" page or the public involvement page.

In 2005, we will implement a satisfaction survey that uses the methodology of the American consumer satisfaction index. This survey will allow us to compare our web site with the websites of other government and private organizations in a scientific process that yields statistically valid results.

We have also increased the quality of the graphics and printing on a number of high visibility agency publications. These include

the Information Digest, the Performance and Accountability Report, the publication on the post investigation ADR program, and the report "Protecting Our Nation."

While producing these higher quality reports is more expensive, these costs have been offset with the move of some documents to the web and an accompanying smaller number of printed copies. Examples of documents that have moved to the web are the Office of Investigation's Annual Report, the NRC's internal newsletter, the NR&C, and the Office of Enforcement's NUREG-1600.

With respect to restricting access to information, the blocking of access to the public's section of ADAMS to screen documents for information that may aid a terrorist has impacted the public's ability to access information and be involved in our processes. Consistent with our goals of openness and protecting public health and safety, we are restoring access as soon as we can.

Of the approximately 380,000 documents that were available prior to the review, access via the web has been restored to about 120,000 reactor related documents. The screening resulted in about 500 of the previously available reactor related documents being withheld from public access.

The staff is now focusing on completing the screening of about 90,000 documents that are not related to a specific document -- docket, excuse me. Once that review is completed, public access to the documents not considered sensitive will be restored. When that happens the links between the documents and ADAMS and the web pages can be reactivated.

Having to search ADAMS for documents rather than being able to access them through the web link has been a source of frustration for both the staff and the public. Our current schedule for reactivating or making those 90,000 documents or whatever is left available is currently the end of March.

Our staff in the Public Document Room has borne the brunt of the public's frustration at not being able to have electronic access to our documents. In addition to maintaining the professional and service oriented demeanor throughout this situation, they have also successfully dealt with an increased workload as the public contacted them in their attempt to get documents no longer available on line.

When we assessed the impact of our actions, we often forget the individual staff members that are personally impacted. Therefore, I want to publicly thank them for their continued professionalism in this stressful situation.

With respect to assisting the staff in getting what they need, we added electronic access to the 2004 edition of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers report on pressure vessel code and four key American Nuclear Society journals. The electronic newsletters hosted on the library page make it one of the most used pages on our site. To improve the ease with which the staff can find information, we have updated our web-based phone directory by adding a resident site directory and a fax directory and updated our approach to issuing agency announcements in one daily E-mail versus for each announcement.

For FY-2005, we plan to add an organizational directory to the phone book, convert all of the images in ADAMS to PDF format to improve

performance, add a new viewer to ADAMS to maintain compatibility with the latest Adobe PDF software and complete the upgraded search engine for the ADAMS main library.

Next slide, please.

Enhancements to network and desktop operating systems also contributed to the staff's ability to more quickly access information. Upgrades to the network infrastructure have resulted in networks speeds that are 10 times faster and access to the Internet has been measured at 700% better. Mo Levin assures me he actually made that measurement.

Additionally we have upgraded our E-mail servers and software resulting in increased reliability and fewer operational issues. We have just about completed the migration to the XP operating system on approximately 4,000 machines. With very few exceptions, the migration went very well, and we received many compliments on the quality of service provided by our contractors and our staff.

From my own personal experience I can say that the XP operating system has been much more stable than its predecessor, the NT operating system. We did have a few unhappy customers, and we have talked to them to determine why the conversion did not go well and we think we understand the reasons.

Generally there were some unique application that they were running that caused the problem. We are capturing that information, and in the future we will make a special effort to evaluate the impact on their computers before proceeding with future upgrades.

We are following the Chairman's mantra of being both a learning and a learned organization.

In addition to completing the migration to XP, we have also completed the first round of desktop computer refresh program. Currently there are no desktop computers more than three years old. We will be starting the next refresh soon. Prior to doing so, we are evaluating the standard configuration to take advantage of new products and are considering flat panel displays, CD/DVD burners and other enhancements.

In the area of telecommunications, we have a major transition looming on the horizon with the upcoming replacement of FTS 2001 with a new service which GSA has named NetworkX, with an "X". The system will be designed to support government-wide enterprise architecture for telecommunications service. NRC has a large number of voice and data circuits that will have to be transitioned to NetworkX.

We also have a challenge ahead with our video conference capability. Demand for video conferencing services is very high and feedback from the regions in the program offices indicate it is an effective tool for conducting business between headquarters, the regions and the stakeholders. However, our video conference equipment is almost nine years old, is no longer supported by the manufacturer and needs to be replaced.

When I talked to my staff about the problems with the equipment, I get the sense they feel like the mechanic trying to keep the car together with duct tape and coat hangers. We really do need the upgraded equipment to meet the level and quality of service expected by the staff.

As we become more -- excuse me, next slide, please.

As we become more dependent on information systems for conducting our business, keeping those systems secure becomes more

paramount. Additionally, our enemies also realize how critical these systems are to our business and are searching for vulnerabilities.

The systems certification and accreditation program is how we identify the risks and vulnerabilities and develop protective measures for our system. This year, as I mentioned before, we have 17 systems that are due for certification and accreditation. Finishing all of these this year is going to be a challenge. It is a challenge because the risks and the standards are higher than they were three years ago, the last time the systems were accredited. And we are finding legacy issues that have to be corrected before they can be certified and accredited this time around.

To help with this process, we have partnered our security staff with our business process staff, provided additional contractor support and we developed an IT security web page that includes information to guide NRC system owners and other staff in assuring adequate IT security.

The goal is to ensure that the documentation for the systems reflects how the system is actually operating and secure. Because our security resources are limited, the most efficient process is to ensure the work is done up front in developing system certification documentation so that the security staff can review it once and accredit the system.

We are also planning to strengthen land security this year by implementing new software that automatically scans network systems for potential vulnerabilities and then automatically patches the security hole. This will allow us to mitigate risks faster and more efficiently.

Additionally, we will implement new technology that will increase the ways to detect and guard against computer viruses and detect and block spam.

We will also expand the use of digital certificates to allow staff to encrypt sensitive information on their work stations and transmit it across the network.

Another significant challenge is the electronic handling of safeguards and classified information. We are working with the Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response on a pilot design to demonstrate the capability to establish an electronic repository for safeguards information and evaluate the technology for transmitting safeguards information among authorized NRC staff at different locations including the regions and resident inspectors.

The electronic repository part of the project is going well. We have assisted NSIR in developing a records management program for handling the information and with setting up the process to scan documents into the repository. Because this is NRC's first venture in evaluating transmitting safeguards information electronically on a large scale, we are going slow and taking small steps.

Last slide, please.

I would like to close with our top five challenges.

Our staff demographics and skill mix are a challenge. By FY-2008, 49% of the staff in the office will be eligible to retire. As I already mentioned, we have difficulty hiring at the entry level and in some cases hiring at the senior grades. This makes it difficult to bring in staff with skills in the newer technologies.

With respect to IT security, the challenges are more short-term, certifying and accrediting the 17 systems in FY-2005.

The challenge in supporting the high-level waste program is

primarily the uncertainty relative to the volume of documents that will have to be processed on a daily basis to support the proceedings. This is an area where we continue to look for ways to streamline the process and get better intelligence on what may be submitted.

The external mandates of concern are E-government initiatives and the schedules for completion requested by OMB. With our budget being planned two years in advance and OMB issuing schedules that are sometimes only 10 months long from the announcement of the request to the requested completion of the project, it is very hard to efficiently use our resources if we have to comply with the requested schedule.

There are several challenges with new technology having confidence that you understand what will be becoming, positioning your infrastructure to easily integrate new technology and managing the expectations of your customers with respect to how soon they can have the latest technology. Our goal is that our technology plan will help us accomplish all three of these.

Chairman, that concludes the staff's presentation.

MR. REYES: We are complete in the green. We would like to give the Commission the extra time for questions. And we are ready for that.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: The Commission graciously accepts your generosity.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: Perhaps shorten the time so that they don't always achieve the goal.

[Laughter.]

MR. REYES: If we get it to a point where we don't have to show up, it will be great.

[Laughter].

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: Duly noted.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: No comment.

Commissioner Jaczko, would you please start the questioning?

COMMISSIONER JACZKO: The first question I want to ask you: If you could go through a little bit more of the status of the ADAMS review. I think, as you said, they were originally 380,000 documents. 120 have been restored. So that leaves over 260 that still need to be reviewed or what's the status of that? Are you're going to get that done by the end of March?

MR. BAKER: Well, the 90,000 is the next group we are looking at, which is those documents that are not related to a specific docket. And those are things like NUREGS, Commission papers, correspondence that is more general in nature. That is what we are intending to do by the end of March.

The next large grouping of documents are those that are related to materials dockets. And we still owe the Commission an approach on those -- reviewing those documents. That's basically the remainder, which is a very large volume.

And if the staff attempts to actually do the kind of review on those documents that we have done with reactors and we are doing with the non-docketed, that is going to have a significant impact on the Office of Nuclear Materials Safety and Safeguard resources.

COMMISSIONER JACZKO: That's about 100 -- I mean, I'm doing the math. That's about 150,000 documents?

MR. BAKER: In that neighborhood, yes.

So we owe the Commission an approach on that. We are looking at a couple of different options.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: Can I clarify?

My understanding is some of the materials dockets are the things that are related to a hearing, that's the first of.

MR. BAKER: Yes.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: That has been taken care of?

MR. BAKER: That's been taken care of.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: So it's things that don't come up in a hearing?

MR. BAKER: Well, there aren't that many licenses that are in hearing. And so it's the remainder of all those dockets that are not in hearing that we are still working on an approach.

COMMISSIONER JACZKO: So that 120,000 that have been restored, that includes reactor and material?

MR. BAKER: Yeah. It does include those that are in hearing.

COMMISSIONER JACZKO: So it's just the non -- what's left are the things that are not -- are the dockets that are not in hearing right now, basically?

MR. BAKER: Right. Materials dockets that are not in hearing.

COMMISSIONER JACZKO: So right now getting to the end

of March, that's going to be -- you will have reviewed all of the reactor

materials basically that's --

MR. BAKER: Those have been done for a while.

COMMISSIONER JACZKO: And about -- you said about 500

documents were withheld previously?

MR. BAKER: That's correct.

COMMISSIONER JACZKO: Do you expect kind of level to

continue or do you have any real sense of when you go through the next

90,000?

MR. BAKER: Well, the next 90,000 would not be reactor

related to a -- not related to a reactor docket. So it's going to be more

general. And I really don't have a sense at this point in time. I have not

had preliminary results back from the staff doing that review. So I don't

have a sense of the level of withholding.

COMMISSIONER JACZKO: Okay.

This issue that you talked about a little bit, moving to

electronic handling of safeguards and classified material. Is there -- I'm just

-- this is just a question I'm trying to get a handle for what the motivation for

that is right now. I mean, is there a need or is there a problem that's

expressed among the staff of getting documents in a timely manner that

would be improved with electronic?

MR. BAKER: Well, there are two issues. One is the storage.

They are currently stored in safes around the building and there are quite a

few safes around the building or locked file cabinets. And so that's taking

up a considerable amount of space. Trying to search for a particular

document is now a manual process. So it's very difficult if we get a

question to go find the documents that are relative to the question.

So the electronic repository will basically let us move documents into an electronic environment, and then let us search that electronic environment whenever we get questions or are looking for a document. So there are some significant benefits that we will be able to address shortly.

The transmission would then help with sharing documents with the staff and making sure we are sharing the same document.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: Excuse me Greg, this is piling on.

These stations that have this capability, they will be clearly designated, separated, some physical separation?

I know you're going to separate them electronically. But in other words, there has to be some clear features of audits so that nobody makes mistakes of confusing --

MR. BAKER: Right now the pilot is set up in a room that has security controls for safeguards information. And so the repository and the testing that they are doing in transmitting information is all taking place within that room.

As we move forward and start evaluating the ability to transmit that information here in headquarters and later outside of headquarters, we will definitely have to address that issue. It's not one that -- it's not one we have to worry about at the moment because of the way we partitioned and set up the pilot.

COMMISSIONER JACZKO: Just to follow up, basically there's two aspects of that. One is an electronic storage and retrieval system. The second is the transmission system. Is the idea to prioritize

that so that you basically go through all safeguards documents and do the storage and retrieval aspect first and then delve into the transmission or is that --

MR. BAKER: We are actually going -- well, the repository is ahead of the review of the transmission. As I said, the room is set up, the equipment is set up, the contract is in place to actually get the documents into the repository.

At the same time, the staff is planning how to evaluate the transmission part of it. So you are correct, the repository is leading.

MR. REYES: The transmission is a more complicated project because just exactly as the Chairman comments, we need to make sure when we go on line with different geographical locations, the regions, et cetera, that you are really secure with the information. So that's going to take a little bit longer.

COMMISSIONER JACZKO: And that I guess was my original question was really to get at that specifically with our current methods of transmitting that material are causing problems that we need to go electronic -- or this is more a convenience?

I mean, I can see a motivation for doing the storage and retrieval. I think that's a very useful technique. I'm not sure, given the current situation, whether electronic transmission is a worthwhile investment right now.

MR. REYES: Well, the transmission right now of safeguards information is done either manually in the mail or by secure fax. So you have to have equipment and manual labor in anything you do. It's the same issue with cost and --

COMMISSIONER JACZKO: I mean, are you seeing that there's roughly comparable in terms of the cost when you're looking at the transmission?

MR. BAKER: We haven't gotten that far in the evaluation yet?

COMMISSIONER JACZKO: Is that your expectation?

MR. BAKER: I can't speculate at the moment.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: I think it's a matter that the volume has increased significantly. And we have an issue not only internally but eventually we have to face the fact that we are sending and receiving information from licensees. And it's how we address the large volume of information.

MR. REYES: And whenever you do it manually, the labor costs -- my guess is when we do the business case that we will see a benefit.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: I think the Commission in the past has been supportive of this. And we have been urging the staff to get on with it because I see an enormous benefit. I think it -- I have always wanted one of these terminals in each Commissioner's office because at the moment you will find over time that a lot of the safeguards and secret information that accumulates in your office goes directly from the receptionist to the safe, and then we forget that it's there and it's very hard to work with.

You know, but it's also a case where we have to be very careful because, you know, look at the FBI and its effort to try to deal with law enforcement information and years later -- I mean, there are obviously

not where they want to be.

So you have to be careful. But existence proofs exist in a lot of agencies. DHS has to be going through this at the current time and trying to sort this out.

MS. SILBER: And we continue to work closely, both NSIR and the Office of Information Services, with DHS so that as we move ahead on these pilots where they have some guidance or standards, we want to ensure that we are consistent with those.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: Thank you.

Commissioner Lyons?

COMMISSIONER LYONS: I also had wanted to question the same area that Commissioner Jaczko jumped into. And he asked several of the questions that I was going to ask.

I was interested in -- maybe, Jackie, you just answered this question. On the extent to which you were trying to benefit from lessons learned from other agencies, and at least one I would suggest more from the standpoint of lessons to avoid, the Department of Energy in Los Alamos certainly had some unfortunate problems along these lines and it gets very, very tricky if you get into the area of so-called CREM, classified removal electronic media, or even just printers as to how you control documents and how you control flow of information. I hope you will take advantage of the experience both good and bad at other agencies.

MS. SILBER: We definitely -- as I said, we are already doing that. You are right. Particularly in this area right now, there are more lessons to learn from some of the missteps than there are systems that are working smoothly just because of how quickly this whole area has

progressed.

But we are definitely looking at that. And as Ed can tell you, in most of the things we do in information technology and information management, the first question we ask the staff is, have we talked to other agencies, do we know what their experience is? Because there are a lot both lessons learned and best practices out there. So we are working closely and keeping informed on that.

MR. REYES: If I could add, Commissioner. After those events occurred and some of them were in the media, we did audits, specifically the IG did an audit to make sure that what we were handling it. So we are cautious and we don't want to learn lessons that some of our colleagues at federal agencies have learned.

COMMISSIONER LYONS: Good.

I have another question. In some of the background material, you list a number of so-called major agency systems. You also discussed about the overall enterprise architecture. I wonder to what extent those major agency systems are integrated into the enterprise architecture and to what extent they communicate with each other? I have heard some concerns that some of those major systems do not communicate effectively with each other.

MS. SILBER: I think what we are finding out is enterprise architecture has been something that, I would say, really has moved to the fore in the last three or four years and we have been looking very closely. Ed referred, when he was talking about security about the many legacy systems we have, and most of those major systems are legacy systems, systems that came into full deployment and operation before we were

looking at things from the enterprise perspective.

So there are a number of systems that do communicate with each other. But that is really not an area where we have had great success. And the reason for that is not that we had put it into our approach and did not succeed. But as I said, when the legacy systems were developed, that just wasn't anticipated.

So that's something we are looking at now. And as Ed indicated, the primary way to deal with some of that is to look for the common fields, the common information that's collected and ensure from an agency perspective that where that information is common, we use one enterprise architecture and one collection source.

So that's definitely something we are looking at, but we are not there now.

MR. BAKER: There are a number of systems, for example, that include the RPS system, the reactor program system, including the OI system for tracking investigations, the allegation management system. Those were all developed at about the same point in time as client server applications. And when that happened, all those offices got together and worked out sharing data elements and making those systems so that they talked to one another.

So as we went along, we took the opportunities that we had to make that happen. But Jackie is right, it has not happened consistently across the agency, and that's something we are looking to make happen as we move forward.

COMMISSIONER LYONS: It is certainly an area where I would add my encouragement, because that has to be a significant time

saving for the staff.

MR. BAKER: Right.

COMMISSIONER LYONS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: Thank you, Commissioner Lyons.

First let me start out by saying that I do realize that the office of the CIO has been trying to reach some level of stability during the last few years. We appreciate your efforts, appreciate your efforts of the staff to trying to get us there. I think in doing that, you are now being able to manage your systems better.

I think that as you, become more predictable in all of the things you do, I will be looking forward to receiving that information that will make you cheer when you do things rather than cringe like when ADAMS happens. And that's a goal, and that's certainly a good goal.

You know, sometimes because of the emphasis that we put on protection of public health and safety, the office of the CIO and also the office of the CFO gets set on the sidelines. But the reality is that after 9/11, you also have acquired the direct mission regarding the protection of public health and safety and how you release information that is needed to be out there and how you protect information that needs to be protected from public release.

And it is the balancing of these two issues that the responsibilities are high, and we appreciate the work you are doing. I know it's not easy. We appreciate the work the staff is doing. And we do look forward to a time when we have finished some of these things. So we continue to encourage as the conversation was going on a while ago, that it's a time that we need to put these things to rest.

So I would encourage the good look of the staff to the materials issue and then to bring this thing to fruition. We need to finish with this and I think -- and I know it's time intensive, but it needs to be done.

I think I will kind of go quickly to some of your things and your top challenges. I'm going to make some comments and ask you some questions. You bring human capital as an issue. And, of course, we have all been looking at the fact that retirement is near and I keep putting up for retirement. I keep being negated. One of these days I will make it.

But the reality is that we are all going into this phase. And you have some specific needs of some highly technical nature. However, at one time we were concerned that the CIO didn't have a full view of what the users were. And I wonder whether when you were recruiting and increasing your human capital base that you are considering the fact that it has to be an awareness of what the user's needs are and is that embedded in your organization or is that just really the way you really interact with the other offices?

MS. SILBER: The short answer to that is that today it is definitely embedded into the organization. I talked earlier about our vision. And one of the things we have worked on over the last few years is the fact that it's our job to understand the business. We are not -- our job is not to come in and to automate something that exists. Our job is to really understand the business we are supporting, to work with the business, to look at business processes.

The first question we need to ask is, is this the right business process to be the most efficient and effective that we can? And then how can information management and technology foster that?

Our staff has done a lot of work in that area so that we are much better aware of the business that we conduct at the NRC. We work much more closely as partners, you know, Ed talked about the SISP review which has had the Office of Nuclear Safety and Incident Response, NMSS, NRR and the Office of Information Services working very closely, starting with what is the problem before us? What do we have to solve and how do we get there?

In terms of the users, we have been doing a lot more in training. Ed can give you a little more of the specifics. But, for example, in the area of ADAMS, we really changed the way we did our training so that we didn't offer a lot of general courses but created our courses to the specific type of user. We made the course more efficient so people spent less time in training but came out of it much more capable of doing their jobs with ADAMS.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: So is the human capital issue, is it a challenge or a problem?

MS. SILBER: I think it's a challenge. I think we know what the issues are. We have a plan to address them. But it is a challenge.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: Same thing on it security, you have to certify 17 systems this year?

MR. BAKER: Yes.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: And I'm sure that you have teams devoted to making this thing happen. Are there any particular problems that we should be aware of or are these things on track and being managed to your expectations?

MR. BAKER: It's going to be a challenge to get through those

systems. There are some legacy issues that have come up as we have done the review and prepared the certification documentation this time that I won't discuss here. It's really not appropriate in a public forum. And we are addressing those. But it is slowing down the process of getting those done.

We may, in fact, end up with some interim approvals to operate as we address those issues. And we are just going to have to wait and see how quickly we develop those solutions and document that.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: All right. Okay. I understand that you have the same kind of challenges with external mandates. Now, you mention the OMB schedules and the fact that you are getting them on very short notice.

Is there anything that the other federal agencies are telling OMB that 10 months might not be enough lead time to get these things on?

MR. BAKER: I will just use the shortest one I'm aware of as an example, and that's the one on the new identification cards with the information encoded in it for accessing buildings and accessing IT infrastructure.

MR. REYES: I think it's by August.

MR. BAKER: It was either August or October. It was very short. The standard still isn't out for the I.D. card. And even though DOD and other agencies are pushing back, the latest thing that I saw was they were still looking for that date. And it's an issue where it would be a very inefficient use of our resources to try to meet that kind of a date.

MR. REYES: The short answer to your question is the reason we got the third highest grade on the security thing is the rest of the people

cannot comply, period. That's why they get the D's and the F's and all that.

There's no way that you can do such a big job in 10 months when you

didn't even project that in your budget.

So we are trying to do the best we can. But it's a reality we

are going to have to deal with, and it's a reality we are going to have to deal

with in terms of the schedules and the grades. Because when we don't

meet the schedules, we will get the negative grade.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: I'm curious for negative

grades in the spirit of good management.

MS. SILBER: I think, to go back to the Chairman's question,

many of the offices take opportunities -- I sit on the CIO council and that's

one of the venues we use to work with OMB to try to bring some more

realistic approaches to schedules. That does not always prevail.

And in many cases, you are right, one of the things we need

to do and the term we use is appropriate levels of compliance. In some of

these cases, we need to make the right decision for the NRC about what is

the right timing, what are the priority for the resources. And that may or

may not meet the schedules that OMB puts before us.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: Reality has a tendency to

prevail however much people wish for, you know, Alice in Wonderland.

MR. REYES: Well, if you look at the CIO budget, the staff

has attempted to keep it as flat as we can. And that's still a goal. And a lot

of efficiencies have taken place. It's just some of the initiatives, it's not

obvious of all of the efficiencies.

But if we were to follow closely those schedules, the premise

that we are trying to keep the budget flat, it's going to be very difficult. Very

difficult.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: And I did notice that you have managed to keep the schedule relatively flat, practically flat. And that means that some of the economies that we were expecting to receive are creeping and we would continue to encourage -- I would like to see that curve go down.

MR. REYES: Efficiencies are helping. But when you add more to your efficiency, it's a real problem.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: One last comment because I'm running out of time in here, and if I make it a question, it will take a long time.

You know, planning for new technology, planning to improve your infrastructure, planning to improve communications, I think you need to get more information. I think some of the surveys may help you. I think when you get into the planning process of the budget, I personally, I'm sure my fellow Commissioners will appreciate to have a little more information in detail in some of these problems that you are facing.

MS. SILBER: Absolutely.

MR. REYES: In the next go-around with the budget, once you get the planning assumptions, you will get very detailed dollars and FTE.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: But if we can get something that precedes that so we can be aware of it. You know, my interest has been raised this morning on the CIO.

With that, Commissioner McGaffigan?

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: I'm going to follow up on the budget stuff since we are just on it.

One of the things the strikes me, you had mentioned the video conferencing, you guys are trying to keep an old car going. I envision

a 1970 Dodge Charger or something.

MR. BAKER: Excellent car.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: Excellent car, right.

[Laughter.]

MS. SILBER: I think it's more like a Plymouth Valiant.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: My frustration is that the Commission in recent budget cycles has told you guys let's expand video teleconferencing in order to save money on travel. And it's an infrastructure issue. And yet the money for video conferencing doesn't get in the budget until we sort of have a crisis and they come to you and tell you the Plymouth Valiant needs more repairs than it's worth doing.

This isn't the first time that this has happened. I'm not sure if it's your budget or Springer's budget, but the back-up power supplies in the two buildings at one point had been neglected for -- at least one of the buildings had been neglected for a very long period of time, and apparently they are now okay. But we had a crisis that forced us to spend money to get the back-up power supplies up to date.

Now, one of you talked about looking forward. And you have all these groups that are helping you look forward and plan on enterprise architecture in the future, but that's good going forward and I'm not -- you know, I agree with the Chairman and everyone else. I praised you guys at last year's all-hands meeting. I think there has been a remarkable change at the CIO's office.

But I do think you tend to be forced by the day-to-day scheme of things to not anticipate stuff. I mean we get pressure on you on ADAMS, and pressure on licensing support, and the meta-system and general

license tracking system. We have got all these systems, but I'm not sure we are keeping -- caring for the infrastructure.

The 17 systems you are trying to recertify this year, and I fully expect, based on today's low-key announcement that we will not get recertified on all of them without -- but maybe we should have been thinking even the last three years about them and about how to consolidate -- I mean, you also talked about duplicate systems and the staff's frustration about having to feed numerous different duplicative databases.

There is a lot of work to be done. And I expect Luis to jump in because it's his usual -- if you don't invest in infrastructure, then you end up spending more money a couple of years down the road trying to fix things. And that seems to be what we are in. And, you know, so I ask for reaction.

MS. SILBER: Well, I think if we look historically, there has been a tendency -- and as you know, I'm in a learning curve in the area of the Office of Administration, but I'm seeing some of the same patterns where when something needed to be done, we did an assessment of, you know, can we run the system one more year. Can we wait another six months?

Sometimes that puts you into a situation where you are running into failure rather than doing the kind of ongoing maintenance you need to do.

I will tell you that in the Office of Information Services we have really taken that on as a serious issue, and in the last year or two have started to address some of those things. Issues like anticipating the change in software versions. Wherein in the past, we would wait until we had no more choice and we were definitely spending more than we needed

to rather than anticipating these things.

In maintenance we are also trying to be smarter in making the investments. But you are right, sometimes when there is a high priority that comes along and we are dealing with scarce resources, we will challenge the people who have the infrastructure. Can you run something another six months? Can you make this last.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: But if you do that year in and year out -- and that's what I fear we do, because you clearly have had crisis during my tenure here --

MS. SILBER: You are right.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: And so, if we give you fiscal guidance that's hard and fast, you will perform with the current resources, then we set you up for more of the same, you know, perhaps. Because sometimes you just need more resources on some of these areas. I mean, I don't think we expect you to do the safeguards classified system, which is going to clearly take years, out of your own resources. I hope. I hope that's coming out of security's resources.

MS. SILBER: Yes.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: Because that's where the efficiencies will be realized. But video conferencing, I don't know how many times the SRM's at the end of the budget process the last couple of years have said enhanced use of video conferencing. It's the wave of the future. We have got to try to control our travel budget. And then today we hear, you know, it's nine years old and a Plymouth Valiant.

MR. REYES: It's used a lot, by the way. It's saving a lot of travel money. But you are right, we shouldn't expect it to go until it

collapses before -- so we are telling you we are going to be coming forward, taking proposals --

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: But there is a theme there. There is definitely a theme that I want you to be aware of, I want your business councils to think about. And if necessary, I want you to at least argue for the resources and tell us if when we make these decisions, if you don't give the CIO more resources, this is not a Washington Monument job, this is history. You know, X, Y and Z is likely to happen.

Now, we still may not give you the resources. But I urge you to at least make sure we are aware of what the impacts are if we don't.

MS. SILBER: It's definitely our intent to do that in the budget request that you see.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: That was a long question. Let me just ask one quick question one again about resources.

You hired 45 people last year. You have 178 FTE's. That's a 25% turnover rate in one year, I mean in some sense if the 45 stayed. I mean, three-fourths of your people -- one-fourth of your people are less than a year there. You have 49%, I think was the figure, eligible to retire by 2008.

MR. REYES: It's a challenge.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: I mean, is there any other office that faces these turnover rates?

MR. BAKER: That was all not due to turnover rate.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: I know. Some of it was growth.

MR. BAKER: Some of it was growth. But a lot of it was

succession planning where we know people are going to be leaving in the short term and, therefore, we have planned and hired in the areas for skills. So it's not entirely turnover.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: But it does sound very high. I mean, in terms of -- I mean, we don't have that in NRR, Research or whatever. When NSIR was growing, we had it. But I doubt NSIR is -- I mean, I worry about the ability to manage with those sorts of turnover.

Is your contractor work force more stable or is that also being turned over as contracts turn over?

MS. SILBER: I think the contractor work force is relatively stable. We do have changes in contractors. And that often means new people, as you well know. Sometimes contractors are able to keep some of the key people.

As far as the rate of hiring this year, it was a very conscious decision, and as Ed said, part of it was we anticipate people will be retiring.

The other was analogous to the discussion we had about maintenance where we really had not done the kind of hiring we needed to for the number of years.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: One year phenomenon to some degree --

MS. SILBER: To deal with the skill gap that we saw, yes.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: Okay. Commissioner Merrifield?

COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I was following the discussion on E-government initiatives.

And I think sometimes we take somewhat of a Duggy Howser approach to some of these things. I mean, excuse the reference. But I think what I really mean to say by that is we want to be always on time and always the first one to get the high grade.

And I think we do -- I think our staff does need to have some reflection on these matters.

If there is an example of an E-government initiative that is going to take us in a direction that's going to impede on our overall mission, I think the Commission needs to know about that. And maybe we don't need to be the first one there.

An awful lot of other federal government agencies and departments seem to be able to survive notwithstanding the fact that they sometimes -- in some cases, more than once, get grades that aren't necessarily the highest. So I think I just sort of leave that as an overall message that we don't necessarily always have to be the first and we don't always necessarily have to get the A if it's not necessarily in the best interest of the agency as a whole.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: The Eddie Haskell approach.

[Laughter].

COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: Well, you know, sometimes you have to go with it.

On a different issue, and I know it's early, the Chairman has frequently used the word "synergy" and "synergism." The recent decision which I supported to merge the Office of the Chief Information Officer and the Office of Administration provides significant opportunities to meet that

very same word. And I'm wondering, although preliminary, if you have
some observations about areas where those types of synergies may
emerge?

MS. SILBER: We absolutely do have some examples. I will
share some.

What I found as I moved into the new position that was very
encouraging, I met with both the OIS staff and the ADM staffs. And in both
of those all-hands discussions, it was members of the staff who brought
ideas up about where those synergies exist, as have the staff in OIS and
the managers and Tim Hagen in my discussions with him.

Some of the examples of just what I would call the very
apparent ones that are already being looked at, is some simple things
about how we get ready for meetings, where up until this point when
somebody is having a meeting, particularly a public meeting, they have to
work individually with OIS and then with ADM. Who handles this
equipment, who handles that equipment.

Both offices are already working on a plan where there will be
a single point of contact. Somebody gets in touch with them, the two
offices work together and ensure that everything is ready for the meeting.

There have been a number of other suggestions. As you
said, it's preliminary. So there are things we are looking at and I'm not
quite sure how they will go. But we are seeing a number of opportunities.
And as I said, for me most encouraging was that it was a staff in each of
the offices who are presenting some of the best suggestions.

COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: Well, I look forward to next
year you coming up and giving us a full slate on the areas where you have

had increased effectiveness and efficiency in terms of doing business.

There was some small discussion on the issue of mobile resources. And I know -- this is in the materials and slides about wireless networks. And I'm wondering -- and part of this, I guess, is directed at the EDO. Region II was famous for having tried to put as many tools in the hands of inspectors and folks to make them more effective as they are on the road. And I'm wondering how we are doing agency-wide?

This has been an area where we sort of come and go of it. And I'm wondering do we still have the focus on identifying mobile resources that will make the job of our inspectors and other staff more effective.

MR. REYES: Yes. I think CIO would change the profile they had. And that's the big difference in my mind. In terms of the traveling individuals, the profiles were changed. And now a portable computer, it's part of the recipe for that individual. That was not the case in the past.

So the answer to your question is by changing the profile on the service or the equipment that individuals who are mobile are available to get, that's where you get the leverage.

MR. BAKER: Let me add that the IT focus group is a collection of people from the regions and headquarters. And they share practices when they meet, what's been successful and what's not been successful. And the feedback that I have is for things like roller pens or tablets, PDA's, it really depends, after they have been introduced, whether the individuals find them convenient to use or not. And those that do continue to use them. And those that don't stop.

And so we are making mobile technologies available. And,

you know, it turns out whether they feel they add to productivity or not as to whether they continue to use them.

MR. REYES: We have some examples where an office has moved in one direction and now we need to spread it out and get the culture to accept it.

And if I can go back to your example, in Region II all of the exams that are given to operators, it used to be that you carry a three-inch ring binder where you had all the questions and you marked them. And they transferred that now to an electronic tablet that Ed was talking about. And not only do you reduce all the administrative burden of having all these books ready and all that for the exams, but when you come back from the field, your record on the exam is always available. Because as you go along with the exam, you mark up the questions and you just print that, and that's it.

So now the question is we need to make sure that everybody is doing it that way.

COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: Well, it struck me that one of the things we were looking at was having mobile resources where an inspector in the field could pick up the regs, could pick up the instructions given to licenses, and would have that all immediately available. To me that seemed a model for increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of our folks in the field and then being able to report those findings back electronically in a quick way.

I'm somewhat, you know, hesitant when I hear people, well, I didn't really like it, so I'm not using it approach. If it's a tool which is useful for our staff to use and can make them more effective and more efficient,

you know, the hesitancy to use those is not as winning an argument.

MR. REYES: We have an effort ongoing. It's a fleet approach to have the regions work. And we are picking best practices from each region in different areas. And then coming up with a common approach that they all are going to use.

And I think that's going to be the tool to not only in the electronic way, but how different things are run. So we are taking the fleet approach to the regions specifically because that's where most of the traveling work force is and where more of the benefits can be gained.

COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: Well, all of my time is running short, so I will just make a couple of comments.

The first one on the web site. As you know this is one that I have followed for a long time. Fran Goldberg was a frequent visitor in my office on the last iteration we had on remaking our web site. I'm encouraged, I think, using the American Consumer Satisfaction Index and some additional surveying is important for us to continually reassess whether we can make enhancement to our web site, because it is, after all, the front door to our agency for many Americans and with one that we should constantly reassess.

Last comment I would make, Mr. Chairman, our staff in our new Office of Information Services does a lot of work that's behind the scenes. And we don't necessarily see these folks up in front of us every day. But I think it's hard work. It's work that without it, the rest of us in the agency would have a difficult time achieving our jobs. So I certainly want to thank, whether it's the folks in the copy room downstairs or others, in either White Flint One or White Flint Two, but they do a terrific job for us. I

certainly want to appreciate that.

I would also say, sometimes it's checkered, but generally we have got some very good contractors, too. And I know as a Commissioner we frequently call upon them to come to our assistance, and through the guidance of this office they have done a good job in terms of meeting our needs. And I certainly want to reflect on that as well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: Thank you, Commissioner Merrifield.

I think we have time for either one short question or a comment. Commissioner Jaczko?

COMMISSIONER JACZKO: No, I don't have anything additional.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: Commissioner Lyons?

COMMISSIONER LYONS: No.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: Never say no.

[Laughter]

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: Just very quickly, and this is more directed to Luis than to the CIO. The issue of updating our web page and I have had conversations with Jackie about this.

But we have some old stuff on the web page. We are very good about adding new things but we are not necessarily good about updating things, and we are not good about just taking things off if they are no longer -- if you don't have the resources to update it. And I suggested to Jackie at one point she have a little computer program that assigned a name to every page and then, you know, if you do not certify that the page is up to date by date X, it's going to be gone.

And every time I receive a complaint from a Commissioner, EDO, Deputy EDO about a web page after this date that is out of date, you know, you send your efficiency report back in the program office is going to take a hit.

That's, you know -- but there's something -- there's got to be a way to sort of force people to do it because there really are some archaic pages on there. And I understand it may not be a priority. But if it's not a priority, let's admit it. But don't keep an archaic out of date page there.

MR. REYES: Good feedback.

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: Is there a system?

MS. SILBER: Yeah. There are a number of things that we are doing. And you are right, Commissioner, we had that discussion. And I think you remember the memo we sent out was a little kinder and gentler than we'll take your page down.

Right now, Fran and her staff do a lot of that with manual intervention. There is somebody responsible for every page. We know who it is. Fran's group goes out periodically, requires that they update the page and certify.

But it is very resource intensive. We are in the process of acquiring software that will automatically send out these notices, give us a report as to when something has been updated. So, again, what we have found is an automated solution --

COMMISSIONER MC GAFFIGAN: That's good.

MS. SILBER: -- that is going to enable some of us to do that.

Whether or not a page is removed is still going to be a human decision, not the software's decision. And I will turn to Fran to see if I

missed any of that.

MS. GOLDBERG: I think you did an excellent job on that.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: And I understand that there's also been some effort with Bill Outlaw, the Director of Communications, to look at a new way of putting the web pages. And I hope that work will soon be fruitful.

MR. REYES: It's in place today. If you go to the external web page -- and I checked over the weekend myself -- the fact sheets are there. They jump at you. And you can go in and take a look at them. But there's more work to be done.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: Commissioner Merrifield?

COMMISSIONER MERRIFIELD: Well, I guess I'm no different than Commissioner McGaffigan, I will take the last one.

I do want to make one other compliment that Ed mentioned in his presentation, and that is some of the high quality report documents that we put out recently, using the Information Digest as an example of that. That's one I sort of personally, as Jesse Funches can tell you, I personally take a lot of interest in.

I think the new Strategic Plan is a good looking document as well. And I think that certainly is the model we need to follow. We ought to have some key documents we really make sure are real high quality because those are the kind of things we can take to Capitol Hill, we can take to our stakeholders and others and can really let them tell the story as to who we are, what we do and why it's important.

So, I certainly want to recognize the staff work on those. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: Thank you very much.

And I also want to express my appreciation for the staff briefing. I know that we have a multiple task that you need to discharge at the same time. We are confident you can do that. We appreciate the opportunity to deal with you and I think that it is important that very soon in budget space we do go back and take a look at the things that you are doing so we could provide you with appropriate resources or occasionally withdraw some resources, whatever the case may be. We are good at that.

And with that, unless my fellow Commissioners have any further comments, we are adjourned. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the hearing was adjourned at 10:55 a.m.)