

MERCATUS CENTER
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

September 18, 2007

Mr. Peter Rabideau
Acting Chief Financial Officer
Nuclear Regulatory Administration
11555 Rockville Pike
Two White Flint North Building, Room T9F1
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Mr. Rabideau,

The Mercatus Center at George Mason University will once again evaluate and rank the annual performance reports of Cabinet departments and agencies covered under the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990 that are submitted in accordance with the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA). The results of our evaluation of the fiscal year 2007 reports will be published next spring in our 9th *Annual Performance Report Scorecard: Which Federal Agencies Best Inform the Public?*

Encouraging continual improvement in the quality of information provided to Congress, the President, and the public regarding the effectiveness of agency activities continues to be the goal of our Annual Performance Report Scorecard. We would like to emphasize that the Mercatus Center is not attempting to judge agency performance; our focus is on promoting transparency and full disclosure of the year's performance.

We understand that, this fiscal year, the Office of Management and Budget is allowing a pilot program for alternative performance reporting and that a number of agencies have opted to participate in this pilot. We see no reason to change our criteria or basic perspective in light of this, as we have applied them consistently since fiscal 1999, regardless of the different formats used over the years. Our Scorecard for fiscal 2007 will be a single ranking of all twenty-four agencies under the same criteria—*transparency, benefits to the community, and forward-looking leadership*—whether or not they participate in the pilot. However, the pilot will require some minor adjustments to our evaluation process.

The first difference will be in the deadlines for inclusion in our Scorecard. Agencies producing a **traditional performance and accountability report** must make that report available to us **no later than November 30, 2007**. To earn credit on the transparency portion of our criteria, traditional performance and accountability reports must be posted on the web by **December 14, 2007**. In order to be included in our fiscal 2007 evaluation, **agencies participating in the pilot** must make their **highlights document** available to us and have it posted on the web by **February 1, 2008**.

In the case of the agencies participating in the pilot, our evaluation will focus primarily on the agency highlights document. However, we recognize that this document may not contain fully all the information necessary under our criteria for our reviews. Therefore, we will consider relevant sources of information outside the highlights document if these are clearly linked to in the highlights document, readily accessible, and user friendly. Agencies preparing highlights documents may wish to refer to the "Suggestions for Performance Report 'Highlights' Documents" that we released in May 2007. It can be found on our website at: http://www.mercatus.org/publications/pubid.3999/pub_detail.asp.

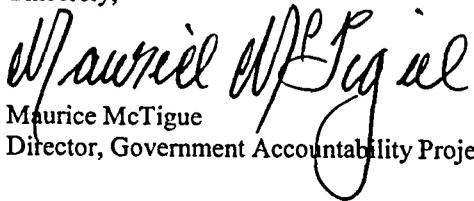
We believe that the highlights document, if done well, has the potential to be a best practice for communicating to the general public. Therefore, we encourage agencies producing traditional performance and accountability reports to submit a highlights document to us as well, if they produce one. A transparent, succinct, and user-friendly highlights document accompanying a full performance report could receive extra credit in the transparency portion of our evaluation.

Information about our Scorecard, including a description of our criteria, can be found on our website at: <http://www.mercatus.org/programs/pageID.350,programID.4/default.asp>. Questions and comments are

always welcome; please contact me at mmctigue@gmu.edu or my colleague, Heather Hambleton, at 703-635-2660 or hwier@gmu.edu.

Thank you for your continued participation in our study.

Sincerely,


Maurice McTigue
Director, Government Accountability Project