

September 29, 2009

The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman
Chairman, Senate Committee on Homeland
Security and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am pleased to provide a written statement of actions taken regarding the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) report, "Information Technology: Federal Agencies Need to Strengthen Investment Board Oversight of Poorly Planned and Performing Projects" (GAO-09-566). The NRC is in general agreement with GAO's recommendations and believes that the report will assist the NRC in improving management of its information technology (IT) investments.

The GAO examined the management of IT investments at 24 Federal agencies to determine whether the agencies have guidance on the role of their department-level investment review boards in selecting and overseeing IT projects and whether these boards are reviewing poorly planned and performing projects. GAO-09-566 recommended that 12 of the agencies examined, including the NRC, improve their department-level board representation and selection and oversight processes.

The NRC currently has in place an Information Technology Business Council (ITBC) made up of executives from the NRC's major offices. The ITBC functions as a department-level investment review board. It recommends the IT capital investment portfolio and submits it to the Information Technology Senior Advisory Committee (ITSAC), which is comprised of senior executives from major NRC offices. The ITSAC sets IT investment strategy for the agency, ensuring a balance of programmatic and infrastructure IT support; reviews, concurs, and prioritizes the IT investment portfolio provided by the ITBC and submits it to the Chief Information Officer (CIO); and, when requested by the CIO, serves as the executive review function for significant issues in the management control and evaluation phases of the Capital Planning and Investment Control process.

In response to the GAO report, the NRC reviewed and enhanced its existing guidance for project selection and oversight. The NRC refined its process and requires all major investments to receive an annual ITBC review. This control phase review process, in combination with the monthly review of the NRC's input to the Office of Management and Budget IT Dashboard, will ensure that the ITBC is continuously aware of significant changes in investments. In addition, the NRC reviewed the ITBC charter and updated it to strengthen the language addressing its role in project oversight reviews. The update included clarifying the process for referring investments falling outside of predefined parameters to the ITSAC for further action. Also in response to this GAO report, the ITSAC plans to conduct an oversight review of the National Source Tracking System, previously reviewed by the ITBC, in December 2009.

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The NRC appreciates the opportunity to share its approach to fulfilling the recommendations identified in the GAO report. If you have any questions, please contact me or Ms. Rebecca L. Schmidt, Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs, at (301) 415-1776.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Gregory B. Jaczko

cc: Senator Susan M. Collins

Identical letter sent to:

The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman
Chairman, Senate Committee on Homeland
Security and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
cc: Senator Susan M. Collins

The Honorable Edolphus Towns
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and
Government Reform
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
cc: Representative Darrell Issa

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
cc: Senator Thad Cochran

The Honorable David R. Obey
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
cc: Representative Jerry Lewis

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cc: David A. Powner, GAO