

FTS NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

**Moderator: Karen Meyer
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12:45 pm CT**

Michael Weber: So I think at this point we will take a brief break about five minutes. And then we will continue with Management Review Board on the IMPEP self-assessment. So we'll be back with you in about five minutes. Thanks.

Karen Meyer: This is Karen. Did anyone else join the line?

George Pangburn: Yes George Pangburn.

Karen Meyer: I thought it was you.

George Pangburn: It's me.

Karen Meyer: Okay. Is Michael Snee still on?

Man: They'll call back.

Woman: Okay.

Karen Meyer: George we'll be right back.

George Pangburn: That's fine.

((Crosstalk))

Karen Meyer: If the operator can start the second transcript, that would be great. Mike is that you?

Michael Snee: Yes, I'm online.

Michael Weber: Okay at this point we're going to continue with the Management Board Review board meeting on the MPEP self-assessment that we began on September 13. The members of this MRB include myself, Michael Weber, Brad Jones, Assistant General Counsel in NRC's Office of the General Counsel, Cynthia Carpenter who is the Deputy Director of the Office of Federal, State and Materials and Environmental Management Programs.

We have representatives from three of our regional offices, Dave Lew is on from Region I. Steve Reynolds I believe is on from Region III. And Steve is the Director of the Division of Nuclear Material Safety there. And Elmo, I understand that you are representing Region IV for this part of the MRB. Is that correct?

Elmo Collins: Yes. And Art Howell has joined me.

Michael Weber: Okay.

Elmo Collins: Who was part of that previously. He's actually not on the camera but here with me.

Michael Weber: He's gone into his answer mode, right.

Elmo Collins: That's right.

Michael Weber: And Mike Snee, has joined us. Mike thanks for your participation here on the MRB. You're joining as the Organization of Agreement States liaison. And you are, of course, with the State of Ohio.

So now for the self-assessment team which was lead by George Pangburn, George do you want to introduce your team members.

George Pangburn: Sure, the team members as I mentioned when we met in September, and by the way, am I coming through loud and clear? I'm operating from a cell phone this morning.

Michael Weber: Loud and clear.

George Pangburn: Okay. And the team members were Earl Fordham of Washington, Cindy Cardwell from Texas, George Deegan from Region I, excuse me, from headquarters, and Bryan Parker from Region I.

Michael Weber: George, do you want to tell us something about Region I? I'm only kidding, I'm only kidding. And as I recall, George, we had completed review and consideration the first ten recommendations of the MPEP self-assessment report.

George Pangburn: Yes. That's correct.

Michael Weber: Okay. So I presume therefore you'll start with Recommendation 11?

George Pangburn: One thing I did want to mention though, those first ten recommendations took us up through Page 12 of the report. And covered the whole first half which was really looking at the program's performance to determine if there were changes or enhancements, you know, to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

The next task we had which did not contain a recommendation was the effectiveness between MPEP interactions. I just wanted to point that out to you. The team did not come up with any recommendations for that.

We did discuss, you know, some of the things that, for example, you were just going over, you know, the periodic meetings, the concept of monitoring and heightened oversight. And that we don't really touch on the way we've dealt in Recommendation 8 to address heightened oversight to perhaps make it more effective. And that was through the concept of probation.

But I simply wanted to throw out there before we move into the next task which does in fact have a recommendation. If there were any questions on that particular discussion on Pages 12 and 13, I'm open for them now.

Michael Weber: Cindy any questions or comments?

Cynthia Carpenter: None.

Michael Weber: Brad?

Bradley Jones: None.

Michael Weber: Elmo?

Elmo Collins: None for Region IV, thank you.

Michael Weber: Okay, Mike?

Michael Snee: On Page 12 of the report there was the second to last paragraph it goes into the possibility of a meeting at the annual OAS meeting and the team concluded that the suggestion had merit.

George Pangburn: Yes sir.

Michael Snee: Whether that would be explored more or perhaps put into effect.

George Pangburn: It was simply, you know, we looked at that simply as a suggestion that would be useful to do. That has happened in the past at, you know, at Agreement State meetings. And we think it might be useful for, you know, respective RSAOs to sit down informally, you know, at that time. And just basically kick out, you know, are there any issues that you're aware of, concerned about and perhaps aren't being picked up by some of the routine processes.

Michael Snee: Yes. Well I agree it's a good idea. I'm just wondering what needs to happen to make sure that that recommendation is, you know, put into effect.

George Pangburn: Well our thought was to leave it to the discretion of FSME as to how they wanted to proceed if indeed that they agree with the team that it has merit. If the MRB think it has merit. And so I think it can be a fairly simple mechanism whereby the RSAOs might contact their folks and agree upon a time and a place within the construction, the constraints of the OAS meeting.

Where they could in fact get together whether it's, you know, during the meeting itself or, you know, after hours if you will.

Michael Weber: Rob did you want to address that?

Robert Lewis: Thank you Mike. Mike Snee, I think, you know, when we go to the Spring OAS Board meeting to plan the agenda for the next annual meeting...

George Pangburn: Right.

Robert Lewis: I think the action here might really -- and you're on the Board and so we'll both remember maybe -- the action here might be really for the Board. If the Board

wants to have that as part of the agenda, I think I speak for the RSAOs at risk here, but I think we can probably support it at the NRC.

George Pangburn: Okay, yes. I think you're probably right.

Robert Lewis: Okay.

George Pangburn: We'll discuss at the spring meeting wherever that's going to be then.

Michael Weber: Okay, any other comments or questions on this task, Task 2? All right, George do you want to proceed with Task 3?

George Pangburn: Sure. Task 3 is really looking at the effectiveness of MPEP training. This does address some issues that came out of the IG reports specifically. And we focused both in looking at, as you know, we sent someone down to the 2011 training in Orlando, Florida, (Jim Drier) of Region I was kind enough to cover that for us. Because we had an internal conflict and none of the team members could make that one.

And Jim provided us a thorough a write-up on exactly what happened. I think what we focused on in the recommendations two things. One is we recognize that, you know, we have a fairly limited number of team leaders. None of us are getting any younger. And that in the interest of program effectiveness and succession planning, that we might want to expand the pool of team leaders and that specific team leader training be added to the agenda.

I mean I think for those of you that have been out on MPEPs have been MPEP, you've seen how important it is to have a strong team leader there to basically marshal the process throughout the week.

And we couldn't feel much more strongly about anything in this report than the importance of having well-trained, experienced team leaders to make these reviews go as smoothly as possible. Both to make sure they're effective and to minimize the burden on the interviews being assessed.

And the second recommendation was one, you know, we talked about the fact that sure it's important for team members to be technically astute, the inspector's license reviewers or what have you. But equally important if not more so is the fact that individuals should be selected who possess the appropriate skills, interpersonal skills, political savvy to serve as effective team members.

For lack of a better phrase, be able to play well in the sandbox to contribute to the effectiveness of the team, to recognize the fact that we're dealing with co-regulators here and not licensees. These are important traits and not everyone who has been selected in the past to serve in MPEP training necessarily have those kinds of skill.

So we think it's important that we continue to emphasize both to headquarters, regional and agreement state managers that the people that are selected for the training when they signoff to send them down there to think about those non-technical skills that really are essential to the MPEP's team success.

So with that, Mike, I'm open for any questions.

Michael Weber: Okay thanks. Cindy?

George Pangburn: Sure.

Cynthia Carpenter: No questions. I agree with the recommendations.

Michael Weber: Okay, Brad, questions or comments?

Bradley Jones: No questions and I agree with the recommendations.

Michael Weber: Okay, Elmo?

Elmo Collins: I agree with the recommendation especially the team leader training for those leading the teams.

Michael Weber: All right. And Mike?

Michael Snee: I agree with it also. And I was wondering I know for at least for Agreement States personnel who get put on MPEP teams that there's a form that is filled out and signed usually by the program director recommending them.

And perhaps that could be edited to put a statement like that in there both about what George just discussed. So that the program director's aware that, you know, it's more than just, you know, technical expertise. That he should be looking at other things before he recommends somebody?

George Pangburn: I think that could be done. I mean you need to find the right words and not necessarily using the words that we've used in the report. But I think that could be done.

Michael Weber: Playing well in the sandbox?

George Pangburn: Not quite.

Michael Weber: Okay, sounds like we're on clear on those.

George Pangburn: Okay.

Michael Weber: Let's proceed with Task 4.

George Pangburn: Sure. Here we were looking at, you know, basically the procedural basis for the program, the program documentation, the administrative controls. And what we did was to look at the selected procedures, management directives, MPEP reports, MRB minutes over the last several years. And I mean several, going back more than five years.

Our conclusion was that the procedures are comprehensive. They're well organized. They're reviewed and updated approximately every three years and they all appear to be, you know, either they had just been reviewed or were in the process of being reviewed. I think they're in good shape in that regard.

And they really provide the details to the team members and team leaders on who the program is to be implemented. The single biggest thing we saw is 5.6, the Management Directive that is the fundamental basis for MPEP is in need of updating to.

You know, accomplish not only what we describe here in the report but a number of other organizational changes in titles, roll, not the least of which is the fact that FSME exists which it didn't in 2004.

So our recommendation from this is to take into account the fact that the SA procedures appear to be in fine shape is that Management Directive 5.6 be revised.

Michael Weber: Okay thank you. Cindy, questions or comments?

Cynthia Carpenter: Well just one question and this is for you Rob, I thought that there was an initiative by the Office of Administrative that all major directives were going to updated (unintelligible).

I guess there was like a five-year plan and we're now half way through that. So this is already on the...What is the date for this?

Kathleen Schneider: The date on this one is September 6 and 7.

Cynthia Carpenter: Okay.

Kathleen Schneider: And an accompanying one (unintelligible).

Michael Weber: Can everybody hear Kathleen?

Kathleen Schneider: Oh I'm sorry.

George Pangburn: I cannot.

Kathleen Schneider: I'm the overseer of the internal procedures and I keep an eye at least at where we are in the Management Directive.

George Pangburn: And this is Kathy Schneider.

Kathleen Schneider: Management Directive 5.6 is due in September of 2011. And there's an accompanying Management Directive that deals with the training to for MPEP team members and team leaders and that's like December 2011.

So those are both in the queue and we were actually talking about them yesterday about who are at the end of that five-year period.

Cynthia Carpenter: Okay, great.

Duncan White: And we wanted to update the Management Directives for some time now. And I think the book is already over...

Kathleen Schneider: No.

Duncan White: It's not overdue.

Kathleen Schneider: No it's not overdue. But we had talked to them and they pushed it back toward the later end of the five-year period because of the (Sussenberg) project that was coming up.

Cynthia Carpenter: It just takes about a year to update these Management Directives. This is something you all have formed in the agenda? Okay, thank you. No further questions.

Michael Weber: Okay Brad?

Bradley Jones: No further questions.

Michael Weber: Rob did you want to add something?

Robert Lewis: I was just going to point out that the team didn't find nor have I witnessed any instance where it's affected our operations.

Michael Weber: Okay.

Robert Lewis: And administrative.

Michael Weber: Elmo?

Elmo Collins: No comments here Mike.

Michael Weber: How about let's see Dave Lew in Region I?

David Lew: No comments Mike.

Michael Weber: Okay and Steven Reynolds in Region III?

Steven Reynolds: Yes, Mike. I guess for the record, I don't have any comments and I agree with all the recommendations that have been discussed so far.

Michael Weber: Okay thank you. Sorry, I cut you guys out last time. I was thinking I was only dealing with one region and I had two more to deal with.

Steven Reynolds: No problem.

Michael Weber: But I knew you would speak up and insert yourself. So that was good.

Steven Reynolds: Absolutely.

Michael Weber: And Mike Snee?

Michael Snee: I have no questions or comments.

Michael Weber: Okay, Cindy do you agree with the recommendation?

Cynthia Carpenter: I agree with the recommendation.

Michael Weber: Brad?

Bradley Jones: Yes.

Michael Weber: Dave?

David Lew: Yes I do.

Michael Weber: Steve?

Steven Reynolds: Yes I do.

Michael Weber: Elmo?

Elmo Collins: I agree Mike.

Michael Weber: Mike?

Michael Snee: I agree.

Michael Weber: Okay, going to Task 5, additional areas for specific review during MPEP reviews.

George Pangburn: Okay in this one we were looking at things that may need to be considered through specific examination. And we point out the fact there are two questions - I should say there are two mechanisms that exist for capturing these kinds of things.

One is again, the periodic meeting just as the one you went through a few moments ago as well as Question 19 on the questionnaire which asks programs to identify any major, unusual or complex licenses.

And we think that those mechanisms, you know, the ongoing communication between the RASO and the state and the MPEP product manager through the periodic meetings as well as the MPEP questionnaire for the formal reviews provide a sufficient mechanism to find unusual or problematic issues.

We note in here for example, one where a state was doing some clearance work. And as result of that it was identified early. We had a team member go down for an additional week prior to the normal onsite review and dig into that.

But there could be other examples that come up during the periodic meeting whether it's unique and the commissioning cases, or financial assurance or new technologies that might come up in a particular state, in those instances we think that it's essential for, you know, this RASO to continue to communicate.

And we have no recommendations for this process. We think it appears to be working reasonably well.

Michael Weber: Okay thank you. Cindy?

Cynthia Carpenter: No questions.

Michael Weber: Brad?

Bradley Jones: No questions.

Michael Weber: Dave?

David Lew: No questions.

Michael Weber: Steve?

Steven Reynolds: No questions.

Michael Weber: Elmo?

Elmo Collins: Nothing from Region IV thank you.

Michael Weber: Mike?

Michael Snee: No questions.

Michael Weber: Okay, let's move onto Task 6.

George Pangburn: And this one was looking at roles and responsibility of those who are involved MPEP everything from the MRB down to team members. And we think that, you know, one of the things is the thing I mentioned a few minutes ago which is it's a continuing a challenge to make sure the team members and team leaders recognize this is not an inspection.

And that, you know, it's a fundamental different approach. But we believe that's being adequately addressed through the training program and being reinforced by team leaders in their preparation and coordination members both in regions and agreement states. And for that reason, Task 6, we did not identify any recommendations to enhance roles and responsibilities of those in the program.

Michael Weber: All right thanks George. Cindy?

George Pangburn: Yes sir.

Cynthia Carpenter: No comments or questions.

Michael Weber: Brad?

Bradley Jones: No comments or questions.

Michael Weber: Dave?

David Lew: No comments or questions.

Michael Weber: Steve?

Steven Reynolds: No questions.

Michael Weber: Elmo?

Elmo Collins: No questions from Region IV.

Michael Weber: And Mike?

Michael Snee: I have no questions.

Michael Weber: Okay thank you. Let's go onto Task 7, Evaluation of Additional NRC Headquarters' functions.

George Pangburn: And now it gets interesting. We looked at and talked with stakeholders and looked at the headquarter functions that are within the purview of MPEP. And at the present time the only one that is looked at under MPEP is field source and device certification program.

But a number of stakeholders felt that programs such as Uranium Recovery Licensing, Complex Decommissioning, so on and so forth, E-distribution licensing, general licensing would benefit from MPEP review.

We also note that this was a recommendation of the 2002 Working Group report. And I, you know, later on I'll tell you we did things and we didn't see any of those recommendations that weren't addressed. This was considered. But for a variety of reasons I won't go into at this time, you know, it was limited to SSMDs.

We think at this time it's time to look at these particular areas and consider them once again in particular, uranium recovery licensing. You know, the universe has changed since 2002 in that regard.

And there could be potential equity issues that would result from reviewing this program and agreements states under MPEP but not doing it within NCR other than the current uranium recovery inspections covered out of Region IV.

So our recommendation is that the scope of MPEP be expanded to include E-Distribution licensing, GLs, uranium recovery licensing and complex decommissioning cases.

Michael Weber: Okay, thank you, Cindy?

Cynthia Carpenter: No questions.

Michael Weber: Okay, Brad?

Bradley Jones: No questions.

Michael Weber: Dave?

David Lew: No questions.

Michael Weber: Steve?

Steven Reynolds: No questions just a comment. I think this is a good look and expanding the focus of the MPEPs to include these is the right thing to do in going in the right direction. So I support this.

Michael Weber: Okay thanks.

Steven Reynolds: Okay.

Michael Weber: Elmo?

Elmo Collins: Yes Mike thanks. I was hoping to hear a little bit from (Sydney). I don't know if we need any discussion on this one or not. I think, this list of items, they're not all the way equal to me.

And so I would understand, you know, it's clearly to be looked at in some program. It's my observation that it's not evident that MPEP's the right place. I think uranium recovery licensing clearly is a good candidate for this recommendation.

Distribution and others, you know, I think we can include with MPEP but the applicability to the overall program, I mean it just seems like a different thrust of their program in the end. And so (Sydney) would have to take this on and agree and have the resources.

So I mean it's a good recommendation to look at ourselves. A couple of these just aren't evident to me in my comment that it's MPEP type activity so. But it's a good recommendation.

Michael Weber: Rob do you want to address that?

Robert Lewis: I can agree with your comment Elmo. I can see linkage on exempt distribution licensing. I think how we would do an MPEP review on the general license we have to flush out.

But my general principle and feel very strongly is any licensing that we do here at headquarters should be MPEP. I know (Larry Camper) couldn't be here today but I have talked to him about this recommendation and he's very supportive of as well as MPEP uranium recovery program and the complex decommissioning program.

Exempt distribution licensing I think we can include within the scope of the existing field source and device review. General licensing I think we'd have to work on but as a general principle I don't see why we wouldn't to have it audited.

And uranium recovery and complex decommissioning probably would require us to add an MPEP every four years. So we have a budget of about ten per year. So we'd go from 40 to 41 programs unless we can accommodate that as well in the materials programs MPEP that already exist.

Michael Weber: Elmo, did you have additional comments or questions on what Rob shared.

Elmo Collins: No that helps me. Yes, I appreciate that, that insight Rob. And yes, like I said, now each of these items are not equal and the intent and rationale is different. So I...That gives me good insight, thank you.

Michael Weber: Okay Mike?

Michael Snee: I have no questions on this.

Michael Weber: I've got some questions. First of all, just for my clarification, we cite here uranium recovery licensing and I presume by the way we've listed it that we're specific to licensing because event response, allegations, oversight, inspections and enforcement, that's all covered under the MPEP review for Region IV for the NRC. Or the agreement states that have 11E-2 byproduct materials program.

So the only thing in your annual recovery that's not currently addressed is the licensing component, is that right?

George Pangburn: That's my understanding Mike. This is George, yes.

Michael Weber: All right. And on complex decommissioning, it's a similar state right? Because in the MPEP review of agreement states, they do include the complex decommissioning cases, the licensing is correct under licensing.

And the inspection and event response and allegations, that's all covered?

George Pangburn: Yes.

Michael Weber: Okay. And the same is true for NRC regions. We oversee the oversight program as part of the MPEP but not the licensing?

George Pangburn: Yes.

Michael Weber: So that's separate here. Did the team consider broadening it even beyond the Materials program? And I know that that may be outside of your charter. But what

came to my mind were other programs that NRC implements that agreement states don't implement comparable programs.

For example, fuel cycle.

George Pangburn: Yes?

Michael Weber: ...licensing, inspection, allegations, enforcement. In this case you've got entities involved that aren't represented on the MRB or probably were not included as part of your interviews or your review. But here in NRC that would include Region II, NMSS...

George Pangburn: Yes?

Michael Weber: ...and OI, OE. And it may be one of those things where what I'm grappling with is can you do an MPEP-like program for those aspects to provide some oversight for them to ensure that they're towing the high-quality standards that we expect and achieve under the MPEP program.

George Pangburn: This is George, I'll just jump in here. We did talk briefly about fuel cycle in the context of this recommendation recognizing as you did that it wasn't part of our charter. And our understanding and you have probably a better perspective on this than I do, Mike, is that, you know, fuel cycle was pursuing a, you know, a program similar to that employed in the reactor program.

And, you know, we really didn't have enough background and information in that area to say whether or not that was going to include a routine audit of the fuel cycle program which could or could not have a resemblance to MPEP.

But could this be adopted for fuel cycle? Yes. And there was some thought in that regard. In fact, there is a procedure for looking at fuel cycle inspections as part of the documentation background for MPEP. But it did not go so far as to include licensing.

Duncan White: George, I just want to add in the pre-FSME days, we actually did include a look at the fuel cycle inspection program in the Region II MPEP back when that was still under NMSS purview.

George Pangburn: Yes that's correct.

Woman: (Unintelligible).

Man: Yes.

Man: So there's precedent for it under the MPEP program. But again licensing was excluded.

Man: That's correct. That would have been parallel like uranium recovery licensing today. And we didn't get too much discussion on that one recently; that kind of steps into NMSS space itself. But we did do a... We did look at the fuel cycle inspection program back in pre-FSME days.

Man: And then to get even further afield, you have spent fuel storage and transportation, and so.

Man: I mean I think the concepts are, you know, if we wanted to move in that area, these concepts under IMPEP are sufficiently broad. I believe they probably could be adapted to a review of the "fuel cycle program" or the spent fuel or the transportation programs.

But, you know, it would take some time and resources.

Man: Always.

Man: So we do review transportation licensing in terms of when people ship things. But we don't past certification...

Man: Right.

Man: ...regarding transportation?

Man: Right, right.

Man: The other thing I want to add is back when we did do the Region II fuel cycle inspection review that was still on the base when Region II had a materials program.

Man: Yes.

Man: So was only a sub part of the entire IMPEP. Now that Region II doesn't have materials anymore, it would definitely be distinct.

Kathleen Schneider: This is -- I just wanted to bring one more thing up just for perspective. When we did come up with (unintelligible) years back we were being driven to compare what states did under 274B in comparable programs that the regions were doing.

So that's why in 2002 when we did the lessons learned there was that whole equity wasn't too important in uncommon areas versus what's more common from (unintelligible).

George Deegan: Yes.

Kathleen Schneider: And not all states have uranium management (unintelligible). So again, I'm with George. I think the program is there. And they've imported it into places like (unintelligible) and bringing in all that including some of the elements of this program. But it's a good basis to go an audit other programs.

Man: The other thing I'd bring up is that part of the training program or the team makeup is for people that are doing this activity. So under IMPEP, this agreement state participation in these areas where they're not carrying out these activities make it, when you call it IMPEP, it implies a team concept including agreement states.

But the agreement state people aren't doing fuel cycle licensing. They're not doing task certification. So some of these things although the IMPEP process could be used, the MPEP program as a whole can't be applied because of the uniqueness of the programs.

Man: It sounds like whatever extra components you add to this whether it's uranium recovery, fuel cycle, whatever, of course, the challenge is in finding qualified reviewers. You know, that because they're specialized areas.

Man: And the resources to support the work.

Michael Weber: So I guess where I was going with my questions and this will kind of key us to the recommendation, the recommendation is fairly specific in recommending consideration of expansion to address other MPEP areas. The items, the programs that I've mentioned in my comments really would go further afield. But at least I for one would support exploring with those other office, you know, what could be done, what should be done.

So that's...I agree with the recommendation from the team. But I would like to see it broadened to explore those other areas. And then what we'll also have to work on is if the consensus of the office is in support of doing that then does that come back through the MRB? Or does that get approved in some other way because it really falls outside the MPEP program?

And I don't know that we can resolve that here. But I think it's something that we do have to think about.

Man: I think you're talking about the value of the self-assessment process for our activities that it's not really what I think of as IMPEP.

Michael Weber: Right.

Michael Weber: But self-assessment is always good and if you don't have the disciplined way and place to do it, this is a model that can be used to put one in place.

Michael Weber: And a very effective model.

Man: Yes. And, you know, I don't think it's EDO or NMSS itself wants to put a self-assessment program in place. They don't need to come to the MRB to do that.

Michael Weber: Right. Comments?

Cindy Carpenter: I agree with that, the broadening. The only thing I can see is maybe it's just a caution is that if we expand it into the fill facilities, the licensing area I think that it needs to gap with the power reactors. Because you have the power reactors and the research test reactors.

So they have the reactor oversight process. But they're not looking at the licensing aspect of it. That's all. So there's a gap over there. And we'd be filling in all the rest from them. It's just a comment.

Michael Weber: Yes but there is a quality self- assessment process in place for the reactor program.

Cindy Carpenter: For the oversight process.

Michael Weber: The licensing as well. It's not part of the ROP, but it's a stand-alone process.

Cindy Carpenter: Okay.

Michael Weber: Other comments? Dave?

David Lew: I don't have any other comments.

Michael Weber: Okay. Steve?

Steven Reynolds: I guess my only comment is if you're going to broaden beyond the recommendation, I think there needs to be a separate program. Like Brad was saying, you know, good attributes MPEP program. But I think MPEP program should stay focused on similarities in the different states and materials programs focused on the other areas like fuel cycle or others.

Take the attributes of MPEP but call it something else so we have a clear differentiation of what the PEP is and what the other review self-assessment might be.

Michael Weber: It's a good point. Elmo?

Elmo Collins: I second what Steve said. He's stole my comment.

Michael Weber: Mike?

Michael Snee: I have no comments.

Michael Weber: Okay. So it sounds like we agree with the recommendation. And then the consideration of expanding it even further would take place outside of the MPEP. But really FSME and NMSS ought to focus on that. Okay?

Future self-assessment?

George Pangburn: Yes. This is Task 8 and another key part of what we did here was not only to provide you with the self-assessment that's before you but rather to prepare the program office for how to do them in the future.

So we took that on and we thought about, okay if we're going to do this, you know, how should it be done and when should it be done? In terms of the when, we think that, you know, it should be no less than one full MPEP cycle which would be a minimum of four years.

The thinking being there is that it gives us a chance to see all the operational experience across the nation in doing an its PEP. And then stand back and see what we've learned from that. We thought also that without patting ourselves on the back too much that the scope of this self-assessment should be closely followed.

You know, that we would want to do it with a team that ensures a diversity of views. That is the agreement states, the regions and headquarters. About three to

five person teams is about right. And it needs to be coordinated with OAS, CRC, PD and the regions.

And so we... That's our recommendation. And to further assist FSME in this regard, we prepared a draft procedure and appended to the report. So it's straw man. It was put together just simply to provide a basis to say, yes, that looks about right. Or we need to tweak or enhance it in the following areas. But it does move forward.

So that's our thinking on future self-assessments.

Michael Weber: Okay, Cindy?

Cynthia Carpenter: On this, I agree with the recommendation.

Michael Weber: Okay Brad?

Bradley Jones: No questions.

Michael Weber: All right Dave?

David Lew: Yes, just a comment on the recommendation. It does talk about making adjustments within the interval based on resources. And I'm going to take a look at the draft guidance.

I think one of the things that struck me when I was looking at the interval being adjusted I think on Page 26 to (unintelligible). It looks like four statements to me.

And I think one of the things the committee will need to consider as we refine this moving forward, is to focus on alpha in terms of the longer issue that there is an

agreement and a basis for program response to sustain a longer interval as opposed to just light on what in terms of working most things.

It seems like what has to be prerequisite for considering the other. But that was just a point in terms of how to structure this to make it clear are we talking (unintelligible) and what would be considered as part of activity if we're adjusting the interval.

Michael Weber: George did you want to comment on that?

George Pangburn: I'm sorry, Mike, unfortunately it moved my connection here. I didn't get a lot of what Dave was saying. So I have to ask you to filter for me.

Michael Weber: Yes, I think what he was referring to is if you actually looked at your sample procedure...

George Pangburn: Yes?

Michael Weber: ...and you're under the guidance section talking about the frequency of self-assessments...

George Pangburn: Yes?

Michael Weber: ...your first statement is a detailed self-assessment should occur towards the six-year interval. And then the next line is the interval can be adjusted if FSME office management determines the program is strong enough to sustain a longer interval.

And then there's a "B" workload or resource restraints suggest to FSME Office Management that resources involved would be better applied elsewhere. And I think (Dave)'s point was are these "and" statements or "or" statements?

In other words, he would want to determine that under (A), the program is not strong enough to sustain a longer interval and then go to (B) and say but I don't have the resources right now to do it. So I'm going to do it anyway.

I think that's...

David Lew: That's exactly the point, thank you.

Michael Weber: Okay.

George Pangburn: Yes. I think they were intended to be, you know, independent of each other. I mean any one of those could result in an adjustment in the interval.

Michael Weber: So if I just take Dave's point, if you concluded under (A) that you could not sustain a longer interval, then that would dictate that you do the review even if under (B) you may not have the resources right now to do it?

George Pangburn: Well I guess in those instances, it's a good point. Good point.

Michael Weber: I think that FSME can consider as they work on the procedure, if the MRB agrees with the recommendation.

George Pangburn: Yes.

Michael Weber: But I think Dave makes an excellent point.

George Pangburn: Yes.

Man: But that's an adjustment to shorten the time period.

Man: Right.

Man: So it doesn't fit.

Man: Yes.

Man: I think we'll have to issue this procedure using our procedure for procedures.

Man: Yes.

Man: Get comments and...

Man: Yes.

Man: You know.

Michael Weber: But that will come later. That won't happen today.

Man: Yes.

Michael Weber: Anything else Dave?

David Lew: No, nothing else. Thank you.

Michael Weber: Okay Steve?

Steven Reynolds: No comments.

Michael Weber: Elmo?

Elmo Collins: Thank you Mike. If you would, George?

George Pangburn: Yes?

Elmo Collins: Let me understand your proposed frequency for states. What I'm trying to digest is the MPEP program review being on the same frequency as the basically the frequency that the state and region programs get reviewed, ever four years, every four years.

Can you give me your thinking there?

George Pangburn: Well what we were thinking is that if we did a program review every four years we would have the benefit of having reviewed all the agreement states and all the regions in that period of time. And that would bring into the fold of that review all the issues that each of the states did not provide in any one state or region.

And so if we went to less than four years, it might for example, you know, if agreement states ask - if we did it in three years and agreement states x came out the next year with an issue that might not get picked up for another three years or so.

So we were thinking that the four-year interval would capture the whole nation's operational experience under one full cycle of MPEP, you know, give or take.

Does that make sense?

Elmo Collins: Yes. Yes. So it really becomes an ongoing self-assessment process that's then keyed to the frequency of the individual program reviews?

George Pangburn: Yes, it's keyed to the frequency. The normal frequency of MPEP is four years. Now we did talk about the possibility of extending to five. That would be a fairly small number. But if we went with four, under most circumstances, we would be capturing all the operational experience that MPEP teams had seen across the full suite of agreement states and regions.

Elmo Collins: Thank you.

Man: I would just observe that if you're going to give this type of self-assessment and come up with recommendations and it takes a year to at least to go through and change procedures, that you're not going to get your four-year cycle to whether the changes have worked or not unless you go longer than four years.

So the six years seems to me to give you a chance after your last self-assessment to make the changes and go through a cycle after the changes have been made to see if they worked.

George Pangburn: Oh I see what you're saying, yes.

Man: Otherwise you're just assessing the same procedures you just assessed because nothing's had time to change.

George Pangburn: Yes. Yes.

Michael Weber: Mike?

Michael Snee: I agree with the six year.

Michael Weber: Okay my comment was going to be just pick a frequency that makes sense instead of giving a range because you already have the flexibility in the procedure to adjust for good reasons.

And I think that helps your planning cycle. Because then you know with some certainty here's the work we need to do on that cycle so. Do we want to vote on the recommendation with Brad's suggestions and (Mike)'s agreement on six years as a frequency? No.

Cindy you want to discuss that?

Cynthia Carpenter: I think I'd rather leave it to the program office to take a look at what the right. Six just seems too long to me. So I'd rather just say go to take a look at what is the right frequency and just have a good basis for that.

George Deegan: The last review was done 2002.

George Pangburn: Frankly I was thinking of some of our internal stakeholders. And I fully expected the MRB to say, George why didn't you think about it every two or three years? I mean that's, you know, four to six seems pretty long to us.

And I'm a little surprised at the notion that we might we want to go out to six as a norm. You know...

Man: Yes. I've just reacted to the other recommendation, you know, recommend that we train a new cadre of leaders. Well you're not going to be able evaluate that until you put a training in place to train them and get to see them. So I don't want it to be so short and you can't evaluate whether you've succeeded in implementing the previous recommendations.

George Pangburn: Yes.

Cindy Carpenter: I think that's...

Robert Lewis: I don't know what the right number is but I agree we can look at it when we develop it. But it has to be a balance between giving time to giving time to react to the recommendations. Otherwise you're just reviewing the same thing over again.

Cindy Carpenter: I'd be tempted to tell the program office to go ahead with all of this input that if they did it...

Robert Lewis: You're telling yourself though

Cindy Carpenter: Yes, telling ourselves. Basically take a look at that and see what is appropriate. Look at what the IG said that we think that was too long. Four years may be too short. So what's the right answer to it.

Michael Weber: Okay. So you would prefer to leave the recommendation with that interval. And that FSME will...

Cindy Carpenter: Pick one. And...

Michael Weber: Pick one and then it will go out in their procedures. And people will jump on it.

Cindy Carpenter: Right.

Michael Weber: Okay. You're okay with that Brad?

Bradley Jones: I'm okay with that, yes.

Michael Weber: Okay, Dave?

David Lew: I would agree with the recommendation on the range for the six years. I think that can be managed because it is four to six years out. It provides ample time for planning.

Michael Weber: Great, okay, Steve?

Steven Reynolds: Yes, I agree with the recommendation as written.

Michael Weber: Okay, Elmo?

Elmo Collins: I guess I have no other questions or comments so I'm okay with the recommendation as written.

Michael Weber: Okay thanks, (Mike)?

(Michael Sneed): I agree with the recommendation.

Michael Weber: Okay. Let's go onto Task 9.

George Pangburn: Task 9, I alluded to a few moments ago, and that was to say that, you know, we took a look at the 2002 Working Group Report and determined the recommendations had been addressed by management and that there were no outstanding recommendations.

Now that doesn't necessarily mean, as I mentioned, you know, in the case, for example the headquarters functions, that we're considering now, some of those were not adopted. It was considered it was not adopted in its entirety. And you may see that for others.

But we found no evidence that there were outstanding recommendations.

I can move ahead to Task 10 if that's okay?

Michael Weber: That's good.

George Pangburn: The last thing is we were asked to go out and take a look at a number of teams in the field. And Bryan Parker went out into sit in on the Alabama program. I attended Texas and Region I.

And we basically felt that, you know, these we did this from the get-go I mean from the pre-onsite conference calls with the MPEP team leader and the team, all the daily meetings, the entrances, exits. We, you know, we found that the team leaders had planned and communicated effectively that the entrances were well done.

You know, one of the most important things in this whole process is keeping people informed as you go so that there are no surprises at the 11th hour. And we thought they were effective in assuring that was the case. And in fact I think in all cases were lauded by the management, the programs they were looking at for just that.

The team members were qualified. They had done their homework in advance. They came prepared for meetings. And in fact, a couple of the new ones gave the appearance of people were seasoned in this process. They indicated to us that they felt the MPEP training was useful to them.

And it prepared them adequately not only for their specific indicator but also for the overall MPEP process. So having looked at all that, we did not identify any additional recommendations as a result of our onsite observations.

Michael Weber: Any questions or comments Cindy?

Cynthia Carpenter: No

Michael Weber: Brad?

Bradley Jones: No I'd just mention that I think that observation is consistent with what we've been hearing from state representatives in each MPEP. So that's not surprising and consistent.

Michael Weber: Okay. Always good Brad, when it turns out that way. Dave?

David Lew: No comments Mike.

Michael Weber: Steve?

Steven Reynolds: No comments.

Michael Weber: Elmo?

Elmo Collins: No comments, thank you.

Michael Weber: Mike?

Michael Snee: I have no comment.

Michael Weber: All right. Well that concludes the report and recommendation, any additional comments from you or your team George?

George Pangburn: No. Other than to say we appreciated the opportunity to do this. I think, you know, those folks with whom we visited, those people that we interviewed, as well as the regions and agreement states that we visited, I think were very, very helpful to us.

We couldn't have done this without them. And particularly the people who allowed us to interview them gave us insights that really were tremendous fodder for our discussions. So my team was experienced and seasoned in this regard. And they were truly a joy to work with that.

So I'm glad to have had a chance to participate in this myself, thank you Mike.

Michael Weber: Thank you. Cindy, do you have any closing comments?

Cynthia Carpenter: Just a great job by the team, thank you, great recommendations for us to implement.

George Pangburn: Thank you.

George Deegan: A useful report, thank you.

Michael Weber: Dave Lew?

David Lew: No other comments, thank you.

Michael Weber: Thank you, Steve?

Steven Reynolds: Just a couple comments, first I think George and his team did a good job. The recommendations are pretty good. I think what we saw today was a good example of where we need to make sure we focus on knowledge management issues.

We saw George, (unintelligible) and (Kathleen) bring up some issues that a lot of us either weren't aware of or remembers. But, you know, as we go forward in all activities, we've got to remember to try capture those experiences from our senior staff and don't forget them because they're valuable lessons.

I think we saw some of that today.

Michael Weber: Good. Good insight, Steve, thank you. Elmo?

Elmo Collins: Nothing else from Region IV Mike.

Michael Weber: Okay, thanks Mike?

Michael Snee: Well first, as always OES appreciates the opportunity to sit on these MRBs and especially for this one, the special one.

But I was wondering before we wrap up if it'd be possible to very quickly go through the MRB's recommendations or agreements from each of these recommendations since this is kind of a split up into a couple of meeting just so we're all on the same page?

Duncan White: We don't have the record keeper from...

Michael Snee: Because I know some of them were getting pushed back to FSME for some more input on them. And some we agreed on in some part.

Michael Weber: We'll give a follow-up. But I think, Mike, I think that all recommendations on my notes, my quick notes here, have been adopted except the reciprocity one.

Michael Snee: Yes. Wasn't there some like recommendations denied where no action at all?

Michael Weber: That was on the compatibility issue?

Michael Snee: Yes.

Michael Weber: That's correct.

Michael Snee: And Recommendation 2, oh that was the reciprocity one.

Michael Weber: We'll have to document the meeting...

Michael Snee: Yes.

Michael Weber: ...more explicitly than we normally document the MRB.

Michael Snee: Okay. We probably ought to document it and send it out to the agreement states, right? Because Recommendation 10, there was quite a bit of discussion on that also. Right. And I don't believe we, the MRB, actually agreed with the recommendation as it's written.

Duncan White: Mike, this is Duncan. You know we recorded this discussion back in September and there's a transcript prepared for that. That will document the...

Michael Weber: Okay.

Duncan White: ...the outcomes of the first ten likewise, with these five remaining. And we'll certainly combine them so we'll have a complete record of what was actually talked about.

Michael Weber: Okay.

Michael Snee: That's fine. That's fine.

Michael Weber: Okay, anything else Mike?

Michael Snee: No that's all, thank you.

Michael Weber: Well I wanted to add my compliments to the team for providing a very thorough, high quality, and timely assessment both consistent with the team charter and the recommendations and findings were written in both a thoughtful and constructive way. So it made our job as an MRB easy to understand what the issues are and to see constructive solutions to proceed.

I also think George, you and your team provided a constructive example for future self-assessments of MPEP. So you set a high bar but it's a good example where we have a model now to follow and I think that will be helpful for the teams that follow.

I wanted to thank the team members, George, you and your leadership along with Cindy Cardwell from Texas, George Deegan from FSME, Earl Fordham from Washington, and Bryan Parker from NRC Region I and Jim Dwyer who observed the IMPEP team training.

And then I wanted to thank the MRB members, Michael Snee, you as the OAS Liaison, each of the representatives from the region, Elmo and Art, Steve Reynolds, Dave Lew, John Kinneman, and also Brad and Cindy.

These MRBs only work because the members of the Board work. So unless there's additional comments I think we are adjourned. Thank you very much.

George Pangburn: Thanks Mike.

Michael Weber: Okay.

Coordinator: You are currently the only participant in the conference.

END