

INTEGRATION PROJECT EXPERT PANEL

PANEL SCOPE, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES

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FOREWORD

The Integration Project Expert Panel (IPEP) was formed in 1998 under the auspices of the Groundwater/Vadose Zone Integration Project at the Hanford Site of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). This Project is funded by DOE Richland Operations and managed by Bechtel Hanford, Inc.

The purpose of the IPEP is to provide the Integration Project with independent advice and recommendations on key programmatic, technical, and administrative issues affecting the success of the Project.

The IPEP is composed of eight individuals, independent of DOE, having a diverse set of technical backgrounds and experience relevant to the clean up of the Hanford Site.

The contents of this IPEP document represent the consensus viewpoint of the Panel members.

Integration Project Expert Panel

Panel Scope, Policies, and Procedures

I. Name of the Panel

To date, several names have been used in various documents to denote the Expert Panel. Henceforth, the name of the Panel shall be the Integration Project Expert Panel (IPEP).

II. Adopting and revising scope and procedures

At the Panel Caucus held in Chicago in August 1999, the IPEP members adopted by consensus the scope and procedures described herein. The Panel Scope, Policies, and Procedures shall be subject to review and modification by the Panel as the Panel deems necessary to conduct its business.

III. Scope of the Integration Project Expert Panel

All Panel members are committed to the success of the Groundwater/Vadose Zone Integration Project in its intended role of aiding and expediting environmental work related to clean up at Hanford.

The IPEP is primarily a merit review panel. This was the view of DOE Undersecretary Moniz when the Panel was formed, and the Panel members concur that this is the most valuable role for the Panel. While peer reviews are entirely technical, merit reviews may include technical issues but can also consider programmatic and other non-technical aspects of projects.

The Panel shall operate mainly at the programmatic level but will go into more detail as necessary, including performing detailed technical reviews from time to time. The Panel shall endeavor to maintain an integrated viewpoint and, at the discretion of the Panel members, may consider and render advice on any issues affecting the Integration Project, including areas where the Project interacts with other DOE projects and external entities.

No work will be initiated by any Panel member(s) on the Project without authorization.

IV. Procedures for detailed technical peer reviews

The IPEP members do not have the time or resources to perform all the technical peer reviews necessary for Integration Project success. Peer reviews and other technical reviews not performed by the Panel are an important area of concern of the Panel. In general, when the IPEP (or someone else) identifies an important issue as needing to undergo formal peer review, the following steps shall be followed.

1. DOE (or one of its contractors or subcontractors) shall appoint a peer review committee for this specific, focused, technical peer review. This peer review committee shall *not* be considered a Subpanel of the IPEP, shall *not* be under the direct control of the IPEP, and shall be funded separately from the IPEP. The peer review committee shall be comprised of acknowledged experts who are external to and independent of the Integration Project to the extent feasible.

2. In most cases, IPEP members shall not actively participate as members of a peer review committee. Active participation could create a conflict of interest or an appearance of conflict of interest when the Panel later considers the results of the review.
3. The IPEP shall, at its option, monitor but not direct the peer review process. The IPEP shall, at its option, appoint a Panel member to the role of Liaison between the peer review committee and the Panel. The role of the Panel Liaison is to provide information to the Panel and convey any Panel concerns to the peer review committee.
4. The peer review committee shall document their findings in a written report. The Panel Liaison shall not participate in writing the peer review committee's report and shall not be a signatory to the report.
5. The IPEP shall, at its option, review the peer review committee's report, either formally or informally, and may issue a separate opinion on the work being reviewed or on the review itself.

V. *Internal IPEP communications procedures*

The Panel Chairman shall designate an individual ("*Task Coordinator*") who shall have the responsibility to coordinate a specified task or set of tasks. The identity of the individual serving as Task Coordinator may change from task to task, and at any given time there may be more than one Task Coordinator serving.

The responsibilities of the Task Coordinator shall include initiating, maintaining, and bringing to closure internal communications on defined issues on a specified schedule. Other responsibilities may also be included.

Tasks requiring coordination may include, among other things, editing and developing a Panel consensus on IPEP reports and developing meeting topics and agendas.

Panel members shall respond in a timely fashion to requests by the Task Coordinator on a given issue. Matters requiring Panel concurrence shall not go forward until all members have responded. The Task Coordinator shall confirm communication and receipt of responses from all members.

The goal of the IPEP is consensus. If conflicting responses are received the Task Coordinator shall work to develop a consensus. If a consensus cannot be developed, the Panel shall then determine if anything should be said on that topic at that time. Where the decision is reached to state a majority view, a minority view can also be stated at the option of the member(s) holding the minority view(s).

The agenda for full Panel and Subpanel meetings shall be confirmed with all Panel members two-to-three weeks in advance of the meetings.

E-mail communications on Panel and Subpanel business shall be sent to all Panel members.

No response to an e-mail message is required unless specifically requested. Absence of a response shall not be construed as agreement, disagreement, or neutrality on an issue. Because of the large number of email communications, email messages shall make good

use of the subject line and members being sent information-only copies shall be listed on the CC line.

VI. *External communications*

It is incumbent upon all IPEP members to use discretion in external communications regarding unresolved Panel business. Members may state their personal opinions on issues before the Panel if they state that the opinions are theirs alone and do not represent the opinions of other Panel members. Panel members shall not state the opinions of other Panel members without the express permission of those members.

Sections of IPEP or Subpanel reports may be released for verification of factual accuracy after a consensus has been reached, but such releases shall not include any titles or headers identifying authorship until all members agree to the release of a draft or final report.

Information regarding draft Panel conclusions and recommendations shall not be released by any member until all members have agreed to the release of a draft or final document or otherwise have agreed to the release.

VII. *Report preparation and approval*

A detailed schedule with task assignments shall be established and agreed upon early in the process of report preparation. All members are expected to perform their required tasks punctually based on that schedule. No report shall be released until all members have explicitly agreed to that release, including reports with minority opinions.

In reports, important facts and opinions based on published work shall in general include references. Speculation shall be labeled as such.

VIII. *Subpanel procedures*

Subpanels of the IPEP are generally established as needed to gather information on a subject and report to the Panel and are not to be considered stand-alone organizations. Hence, for example, the Groundwater Modeling Panel is not a Subpanel of the IPEP. Subpanels shall be established and dissolved and membership on Subpanels established and altered as determined by the IPEP.

In general, the deliverable from a given Subpanel effort shall be a verbal or written report to the full Panel. The Panel considers such reports to be working documents not intended for general release in this form.

Following consideration by the Panel, Subpanel reports shall, if approved by the Panel with suitable modifications, be released as Panel documents. Thus, production of a final report on Subpanel work is the responsibility of the full Panel and is not under the control of the Subpanel.

The general procedure for developing and releasing reports on Subpanel activities shall be as follows.

1. A task assignment list and schedule for report preparation and review shall be drawn up and distributed to all Panel members.

2. The Subpanel members shall prepare a consensus draft report for submittal to the Panel. In cases where consensus cannot be achieved, majority and minority opinions may be given. Information copies of the report in progress shall in general be distributed to all Panel members, and comments are encouraged.
3. When all Subpanel members reach agreement on the draft report, including majority and minority opinions if necessary, the draft shall be distributed to all Panel members for review in accordance with the agreed-upon schedule. The draft shall not be distributed externally.
4. Panel member comments are expected in a timely fashion, according to the schedule, and shall be distributed to all members to enhance communication and expedite the process.
5. Review comments are incorporated or some other accommodation is reached between the reviewers and the editor. Again, a minority opinion may be expressed if consensus cannot be reached.
6. The revised draft is again distributed to all Panel members unless time is critical.
7. Panel members review the revised draft in a timely fashion, according to the schedule, and any final changes are made.
8. The revised Subpanel report is issued as an independent Panel report. A title page and cover letter shall be used to convey the document as a Panel report.

IX. Report Contents

In general, the following topic areas shall be clearly identified in Subpanel reports. Some variation is permissible when it makes sense, but in all cases the conclusions and recommendations shall be clearly identified and the recommendations enumerated.

1. Summary (for long reports)
2. Objective
3. Approach
4. Conclusions
5. Recommendations (enumerated)