

September 27, 2002 (67 FR 61080) has been rescheduled. The public scoping meetings will now be held from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on October 29, 2002, at the Marathon Government Center, 2798 Overseas Highway, Marathon, FL.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Brad Tarr, Project Biologist, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Planning Division, Environmental Branch, P.O. Box 4970, Jacksonville, FL 32232-0019, by e-mail bradley.a.tarr@usace.army.mil, or by telephone at 904-232-3582.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: None.

Luz D. Ortiz,

Army Federal Register Liaison Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army

Corps of Engineers

Chief of Engineers Environmental Advisory Board; Meeting

AGENCY: Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DoD.

ACTION: Notice of open meeting.

SUMMARY: In accordance with 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463), announcement is made of the forthcoming meeting. The meeting is open to the public.

Name of Committee: Chief of Engineers Environmental Advisory Board (EAB).

Date: October 25, 2002.

Location: Hilton Palm Beach Airport Hotel, Salon B, 150 Australian Avenue, West Palm Beach, FL 33406, phone (561) 684-9400.

Time: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Norman Edwards, Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Washington, DC 20314-1000; Ph: 202-761-4559.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Board advises the Chief of Engineers on environmental policy, identification and resolution of environmental issues and missions, and addressing challenges, problems and opportunities in an environmentally sustainable manner. The theme of this meeting is the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan. While it is emphasized that this is not a public meeting on the implementation of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, the meeting will focus on selected environmental aspects of the CERP and other restoration issues that may have national implications and/or

application. The intent of this meeting is to present an opportunity for the Chief of Engineers to receive the views of his EAB. Time will be provided, however, for public comment. Each speaker will be limited to no more than three minutes in order to accommodate as many people as possible within the limited time available. If you wish to receive electronic notice of future meetings you may subscribe to a list server at: http://www.usace.army.mil/inet/functions/cw/hot_topics/eab.htm.

Luz D. Ortiz,

Army Federal Register Liaison Officer.

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DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

[Recommendation 2002-2]

Weapons Laboratory Support of the Defense Nuclear Complex

AGENCY: Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board.

ACTION: Notice, recommendation.

SUMMARY: The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board has made a recommendation to the Secretary of Energy pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 2286a(a)(5) concerning weapons laboratory support of the defense nuclear complex.

DATES: Comments, data, views, or arguments concerning the recommendation are due on or before November 12, 2002.

ADDRESSES: Send comments, data, views, or arguments concerning this recommendation to: Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, 625 Indiana Avenue, NW., Suite 700, Washington, DC 20004-2901.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kenneth M. Pusateri or Andrew L. Thibadeau at the address above or telephone (202) 694-7000.

Dated: October 7, 2002.

John T. Conway,

Chairman.

Background

In the past, the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) has issued recommendations addressing the need for weapons laboratories to support the safety of nuclear explosive operations at the Pantex Plant. Specifically, Recommendation 93-6, Maintaining Access to Nuclear Weapons Expertise in the Defense Nuclear Facilities Complex, addressed preserving expertise in the defense nuclear facilities complex. Both the

Board and the Department of Energy (DOE) have devoted significant resources to implementing this recommendation and to maintaining access to the unique knowledge of individuals who were engaged for many years in critical defense nuclear activities, such as weapons design and testing. The continued support by such individuals is necessary to avoid future safety problems in these and related activities, and to maintain the safety of activities with existing weapons.

The Board is encouraged by the initiatives undertaken thus far to ensure access to the capabilities and experience of such individuals while they are still available. Activities such as those at the Theoretical Institute for Thermonuclear and Nuclear Studies at Los Alamos National Laboratory and the Intern Program at Sandia National Laboratories provide excellent opportunities to introduce new personnel to the weapons programs.

However, after visiting each of the weapons laboratories (Los Alamos National Laboratory, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, and Sandia National Laboratories) to discuss laboratory support for the safety of nuclear explosive operations at the Pantex Plant, the Board has become increasingly concerned that an additional problem regarding technical expertise must be addressed. The weapons laboratories have not taken adequate steps to ensure that experienced staff members who can employ their specialized knowledge are readily available to the defense nuclear complex, especially to operations at the Pantex Plant. While some new talent is being developed, it will be years before these new individuals can be shepherded adequately through the nuclear weapons complex, inculcated with the unique knowledge gained through years of dedicated weapons laboratory work, and mentored in those skills required to maintain the stockpile safely. In the meantime, highly experienced specialists responsible for individual weapon programs are leaving the complex and delays in addressing safety issues continue to occur.

Some of these delays were highlighted in a letter dated August 1, 2002, from the Board to the Acting Director of the National Nuclear Security Administration, which addressed a specific safety improvement at the Pantex Plant. In that letter, the Board emphasized the need to designate a single person who would serve as the point of contact for each weapon system at each appropriate weapons laboratory. That individual should be empowered to integrate and coordinate for his or her