

"NNSA Realignment Speech"
March 15, 2001
Presented by John Gordon, Administrator, NNSA

Good morning, thank you

Welcome to all who make up the National Nuclear Security Administration.

We are joined by representatives of the Employee Union and by many in the field.

We all are members of NNSA. A team established by Congress just one year ago. There was no small amount of controversy surrounding the beginning of NNSA. We were born as the result of several perceived failures. Whether we believe they were failures or not we are born out of studies that dubbed our system dysfunctional, and frustration over responsiveness, effectiveness, and efficiency.

With rather constant pillaring in the press, morale was very low between the federal employees and the operating facilities. Our principal partner DOD was not at all pleased with our ability to support their needs, and our budget was too small to do what we were asked to do. So we were born one year ago, with a wide range of missions with respect to national security.

stockpile

non proliferation

safety

science

naval propulsion

We have a strong mandate and a vital mission but Congress expected us to look and act differently. As you know, they considered other options: moving these programs to other agencies, and creating a truly separate agency. But we were given a great opportunity to take charge of our own destiny and shape and mold a new science autonomous organization within DOE.

Over this year we have had some success

budget increase

project clarification

Russian Program/ Chernobyl

morale at labs

off front pages

Five year plan

infrastructure initiatives

Now it is time to address the structure of the organization itself. Time to sharpen our focus on mission and deliverables. Time to sharpen our focus on security and infrastructure. Time to provide more effective program planning and management.

Time to take control of our destiny and to truly manage, control, and own those

elements that list our ability to be flexible, responsive, effective, and truly become the National Nuclear Security Administration.

Today I want to focus on how we will do our business in the future. How to begin on the journey to realign our business structure and to focus even more sharply on mission. To put more emphasis on accomplishments and to make it absolutely clear that performance matters.

To operate in an organizational structure where team work is rewarded, stove pipes are minimized, and management decisions are open and made for the greatest good of the mission and the organization.

The organizational structure we are moving toward is comparable to many corporate models that exist today. In fact, the corporate world would not find what we are about to do as earth shattering but for many of you it may just be that.

Working as independent entities - no matter where you work - whether it is Defense Programs or Nuclear Nonproliferation - the Nevada Test Site or Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory - must stop.

Mission and Products.

Mission and Products.

That is what National Nuclear Security Administration is all about.

The organization we are moving to is one that requires us to work together to meet our goals. We will either succeed as a group or fail as a group.

This realignment allows program offices to focus greater attention on their missions and functions by lifting the burdens of managing administrative matters and facilities. I intend to create two new organizations and appoint Associate Administrators from among the career ranks to oversee facilities and operation and to provide world-class administrative services to the programs.

I know there are skeptics. But, I firmly believe that we can improve our performance by adopting this new organizational structure and adopting a new attitude of cooperation and teamwork.

I have deliberated for four months on this matter. I have listened to all sides. If we do not do this, if we do not make a marked improvement in the NNSA - someone else will do it for us. The alternatives are not attractive. We have an opportunity to do some real long term planning and budgeting that we control.

I know – you all know – this is not going to be easy. Change is not easy and I understand that. But I must say it again. If we do not do this now someone else will do it for us.

It is going to be hard. This organizational change is going to be disruptive. I hope each of you will see this as an opportunity. One in which you can look back and say that you made a difference that you helped shape this new organization, the National Nuclear Security Administration.

You know when all is said and done the bottom line is the same. We are still in the same business as we were three years ago, three days ago, or three months from now: Nuclear Weapons, Non-Proliferation, Security and Safety. We are just doing it a little bit better and from a base that makes a whole lot more sense.

No one will not have a job. No immediate moves are contemplated

This process began about four months ago. Focus groups helped define the organizational design principles and options. Lab Directors and senior NNSA managers were tapped to give their thoughts. After I settled on a general design, twelve functional expert-based teams, I then worked to define functions, roles, and resource requirements. Their work has been hard and not fully appreciated by everyone. They have gotten us to the point we are today. Now it is time to take it the rest of the way.

As we transition into this organizational structure it is going to take you telling me, what tweaks need to be made for this thing to really work well. We – I – do not have all the answers. We have to have you come in and give this an honest chance and in turn give us honest feedback on what we need to do to make it work better.

If you know where there is a problem take the initiative to try and fix it. If you can't then tell the people, who can. Don't just internalize your concerns. It doesn't do you or the organization any good.

I've thought carefully about whether or not to make this next statement. It's a cliché and I don't want to come across sounding flippant but I think it is important to say. The train is moving. You have to get on now. I am not stopping this train nor am I changing the track it is moving down.

You need to accept the fact that we are changing and are going to meet the intent of Congress; Establish within the Department of Energy this semi-autonomous agency called National Nuclear Security Administration.

So where are we? Today is the roll-out.

As far as implementation, there is a schedule. I owe Congress a report on this implementation plan, on all NNSA organizational roles and responsibilities.

May 15th NNSA Headquarters organizational transition will begin. A task team, which is being assembled, will give me a written report outlining Field Office roles and responsibilities.

On July 1st what realignment of NNSA employees there is begins. Field Offices roles and responsibilities will be approved by me and the Secretary of Energy.

On August 30th the realignment of employees and employee appraisals will be completed.

On September 30th the NNSA organization plan is fully implemented and all employee performance plans are in place.

On October 1, 2002 - NNSA is operating with a funds allocation process in place. All organizational elements are functional and revised Field Office, NNSA Headquarters interfaces are effective. And you know what? Where we can get it done sooner we will.

Everyone will have a job. Will you be performing the same function you are now? More than likely yes. But for some of you there will be change. Look for the opportunities to embrace this change and make it work for you and the organization.

And speaking of Organization, by now, a year after the birth of this organization I would certainly expect that you are now referring to your organization as the National Nuclear Security Administration. NNSA's Oakland Operations; NNSA's Y-12; NNSA's Defense Programs and so on. I understand that some of you have been reluctant to do so until you saw it in writing. Until then please start using that nomenclature.

Also, we have a logo that is acceptable for use on everything except letterhead. So please feel free to use it on presentations, business cards and so on.

Questions: There are lots and I don't have all the answers. I do commit to you that we will answer your questions and work this as smooth as possible. But it is going to take you committed and involved in the process to make it work too.

I will take a few questions - and then we are going to celebrate. We have a cake to mark the one year birthday of NNSA and a few other items for you to put us all in step with whom we are – we are the National Nuclear Security Administration.