



NEWS

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NNSA to Investigate Security Management at Livermore

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- National Nuclear Security Administrator Linton Brooks announced today that he is dispatching a team of senior NNSA managers to Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory to assess the management of security operations at the nuclear weapons lab. Brooks' action came in response to a new report about lower-level management's failure to report a potential security incident at Livermore.

Brooks directed the team, which will begin work on site Monday morning, to determine the facts underlying a series of recent reports about security concerns at Livermore and to make recommendations about necessary changes in security operations. In addition, the administrator asked the team to recommend whether NNSA should assume direct management of security at the laboratory.

"Senior management at Lawrence Livermore and the University of California have responded aggressively to revelations about security problems, but I am disturbed by evidence that other managers in the chain of command have been lax in identifying and reporting potentially serious security problems," Brooks said. "That this is occurring in the current atmosphere of heightened security awareness is unacceptable."

In early May 2003, Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham directed Deputy Secretary Kyle McSlarrow and Under Secretaries Linton Brooks and Robert Card to conduct an internal comprehensive assessment of security and make recommendations on actions to improve security at the laboratories.

Secretary Abraham said, "The Department of Energy views security as the critical responsibility of the national laboratories, and we treat any lapse or failure as significant. Therefore, I have directed Ambassador Brooks to take immediate corrective action. In addition, I expect to receive shortly an initial set of recommendations from a broad based security review conducted by the deputy secretary and both under secretaries, and therefore, further action on these recommendations will be taken at that time."

The NNSA team includes Greg Rudy, NNSA's chief of defense nuclear security, William Barker, the NNSA administrator's chief of staff and former director of security for the Department of Energy, and Toby Johnson, acting NNSA director of nuclear safeguards and security.

Brooks has directed them to examine three incidents:

- The loss of a set of security keys – which have never been found – was not reported up the management chain for three weeks;
- A member of the laboratory security force has claimed in news reports that the lab's special response team is not adequately prepared to defend against a terrorist attack; and
- The loss of a security officer's access badge, which occurred the week before the security keys were lost, was not reported to senior management until yesterday.

Brooks took action after he was informed about the badge incident this morning by University of California and Lawrence Livermore senior officials.

The headquarters team will take charge of an NNSA investigation of the security incidents and will work cooperatively with an investigative team sent by the University of California, with the NNSA Livermore Site Office Manager Camille Yuan-Soo Hoo, and with Glenn Podonsky, DOE's director of independent oversight and performance assurance.

NNSA is a semi-autonomous agency of the Department of Energy. It enhances U.S. national security through the military application of nuclear energy, maintains the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile, promotes international nuclear non-proliferation and safety, reduces global danger from weapons of mass destruction, provides the U.S. Navy with safe and effective nuclear propulsion, and oversees national laboratories to maintain U.S. leadership in science and technology.

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