

Government Response to Allegations of a "DOE Cover Up Of Explosion Dangers In U.S. Nuclear Power Plants"

Re: HQ-2021-00078-F Final Response (Expected loss of life)

To: Alice Caponiti

Unfortunately, this decision overlooks the fact that lives are at stake. This NRC and DOE cover up continues with respect to nuclear power plant explosions. What happens when the next explosion occurs and people are killed, knowing that explosions can be prevented? I will continue my research on my own.

Thanks for your time.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

September 18, 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR (b)(6) (b)(7)(C) DOE-OIG, OFFICE OF THE
INSPECTOR GENERAL HOTLINE OPERATIONS AND
WHISTLEBLOWER INVESTIGATIONS

FROM: Alice Caponiti 
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Reactor Fleet and Advanced Reactor Deployment

SUBJECT: Grant Review and Determination Communications (OIG File No. 20-0291-C)

I am writing in response to your July 24, 2020, memorandum of the same subject. As I am the senior Office of Nuclear Energy (NE) manager with day-to-day responsibilities for the vast majority of NE grant management processes, Dr. Baranwal asked me to provide you with responses to your information requests.

The information provided below includes a summary of the communication policies and processes employed by NE and the Idaho Operations Office (ID), which provides NE with significant procurement support services, to respond to solicited proposals that are ultimately selected for negotiation for award or ultimately not selected for negotiation of award. Please note that, although the communications processes for management of unsolicited proposals of interest to NE is administered by the Department's National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL), Pittsburgh Office, their notification processes are similar to those executed by NE and ID and thus, they are also included below.

The process or policy for communicating with grant applicants regarding the results of a review of their initial and final proposal/abstract.

Regarding our interactions with Dr. Leishear, they are illustrative of the NE and ID general communication processes and accordingly, I have attached copies of letters to Dr. Leishear dated April 30, 2020, and May 1, 2020, that were provided to inform him of the Department decision regarding his application and to further explain the bases for the Department decision. Further, to assist him in his future research endeavors, the Department correspondence included a detailed summary of other DOE research opportunities that might be of interest.

Please note that Dr. Leishear previously submitted a similar proposal to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) for evaluation by its Generic Issues (GI) program. NRC's response to Dr. Leishear, dated March 23, 2015, is attached. NRC concluded that the proposal "...did not meet all seven screening criteria, and therefore will not continue to be assessed in the GI program." The NRC has already established requirements in Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR) Section 50.44, "Combustible Gas Control for Nuclear Power Reactors," for licensees to analyze their plants for this phenomena and ensure

that their plants can prevent and mitigate the consequence of hydrogen production. The NRC concluded that "...the NRC already has a program in place that will evaluate whether any additional regulatory requirements are necessary for combustible gas control during a Fukushima type event" and declined to review Dr. Leishear's proposal.

In general, NE and ID follow the DOE Merit Review Guide in managing competitive solicitation proposals, as well as the specific provisions included in the applicable Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA). Specific to Dr. Leishear's proposal, we followed the information published in the NE Industry FOA (DE-FOA-0001817) as well as our internal guidelines for the merit review process. Applicable excerpts from both are cited below for consideration. Note that it is part of standard NE and ID policy and practice that applicants be promptly notified in writing whether or not their applications have been selected for negotiation of an award, to include results of the review of their initial and final proposal/abstract

Initial Application Review Requirements (per DOE Merit Review Guide):

1.5.3 - Initial Compliance Review Prior to conducting the comprehensive merit review, an initial compliance review will be performed according to the Financial Assistance Guide to determine whether: 1) the Applicant is eligible for an award; 2) the information required by the FOA has been submitted; 3) all mandatory requirements of the FOA are satisfied (See the FOA for specific mandatory requirements); and 4) the proposed project is responsive to the program objectives of the FOA (program determination). The initial review may be performed by the Contracting Officer or designated program official. As initially determined by the Contracting Officer and Federal Merit Review (FMR) Chairperson, if an applicant or application clearly fails to meet the requirements and objectives of the FOA or does not provide sufficient information for evaluation, the application will be considered non-responsive and eliminated from further review. Prior to being determined non-responsive and ineligible for consideration for award, the concurrence of the Contracting Officer and Legal Counsel is required. The Contracting Officer will inform the applicant in writing of the reason(s) why the application is ineligible for further consideration.

The process or policy governing the depth of the information provided to grant applicants regarding the results of a review of their initial and final proposal/abstract.

Letter requirements after full review to successful and unsuccessful applicants (per DOE Merit Review Guide):

2.1.1 Notice to Selected Applicants - Applicants should be promptly notified in writing that their applications were selected for negotiation of an award, and they should be provided with the details of what the next steps are in accordance with the FOA and ESP. After consultation with the Contracting Officer, the FMR Chairperson should prepare and sign the notification to the selected applicant(s), to reduce the administrative burden for the Selection Official. Copies of these notifications must be sent to the Contracting Officer or Specialist for the official FOA record.

Section 2.1.2 Notice to Unsuccessful Applicants - Unsuccessful applicants should be promptly notified in writing that their applications were not selected for negotiation of an award, and they should be provided with an explanation of why they were not selected, e.g., written strengths and weaknesses. After consultation with the Contracting Officer, the FMR Chairperson should prepare and sign the notification to the unsuccessful applicants, to reduce the administrative burden for the Selection Official. Copies of these notifications must be sent to the Contracting Officer or Specialist for the official FOA record. Notifications should include the consensus strengths and weaknesses as determined by the FMR Panel. The notification to unsuccessful applicants will not include the scores of the application, Peer Reviewer comments or scores, or the relative standing of the application in comparison to other applications.

Per FOA Number DE-FOA-0001817:

All applications receive an initial review, which is outlined in the NE Industry FOA as follows:

Prior to a comprehensive merit evaluation, DOE will perform an initial review to determine that: (1) the applicant is eligible for an award; (2) the information required by the funding opportunity announcement has been submitted; and (3) the proposed project is responsive to the objectives of the funding opportunity announcement. Applications that fail to pass the initial review will not be forwarded for merit review and will be eliminated from further consideration.

The applications that pass the initial review are then moved forward to the Merit Review process. These applications are reviewed by technical reviewers that provide strengths, weaknesses and deficiencies for each application. This information is then provided to the Merit Review Panel (MRP) for consideration. The MRP meets and identify consensus strengths, weaknesses and deficiencies and develop an overall rating for each application. The consensus of the strengths, weaknesses, and adjectival ratings are recorded and put into a report for the Selection Official (SO).

A briefing of the MRP report is given to the SO. The SO considers the MRP report along with their own independent assessment of the applications. The SO must document their rationale for selecting or not selecting an application, prepare a statement and sign. Notification letters are then prepared for both the successful and unsuccessful applicants. Great lengths are taken to ensure the strengths and weaknesses provided to the unsuccessful applicants provide constructive information on the application.

The NE Industry FOA states the following:

Successful Applicants (Selected Applicants Notifications) - DOE will send applicants a notification letter of its determination to the technical and administrative points of contact designated by the applicant. The notification letter will inform the applicant whether or not its application was selected for award negotiations. Alternatively, DOE may notify one or

more applicants that a final selection determination on particular applications will be made at a later date, subject to the availability of funds or other factors.

Unsuccessful Applicants (Non-selected Applicants Notifications) - DOE shall promptly notify in writing each applicant whose application has not been selected for negotiation or award. This notice will explain why the application was not selected.

The process or policy for responding to subsequent inquiries from grant applicants describing the merits of shortfalls of a proposal.

The DOE Merit Review Guide is silent on any further communication being required after the issuance of a dismissal letter to an unsuccessful applicant. NE and ID consider subsequent inquiries on a case-by-case basis. For example, on multiple occasions, applicants to the NE Industry FOA have been dismissed for failure to meet the same requirement more than once. In these cases, the Contracting Officer calls the applicant to discuss the issue to ensure that the applicant understands the full reason for dismissal. This has been beneficial as the NE Industry FOA is unique in that it is an ongoing process (now in its 10th cycle). In general, NE and ID do not respond further to subsequent inquiries from grant applicants seeking to discuss the shortfalls of their unsuccessful proposals because we are confident that the paragraph-level detailed descriptions of merit review-identified strengths, weaknesses, and policy factors considered in the Department decision stand on their own. For fairness, consistency and transparency, this process is implemented for all such inquiries. NE and ID have discussed this policy at length during question and answer periods at the annual NE Industry FOA workshops conducted in 2018 and 2019, involving 100+ industry representatives.

For unsolicited proposals:

As stated above, the NETL Pittsburgh Office has operational responsibility of the DOE Unsolicited Proposal (USP) Program. All unsolicited proposals should be forwarded by e-mail to John N. Augustine at DOEUSP@NETL.DOE.GOV, who serves as the single point of contact for all unsolicited proposals to DOE. The research community is instructed to direct all unsolicited proposals, abstracts and correspondence to: John N. Augustine, Mail Stop 921-107 Unsolicited Proposal Manager U.S. Department of Energy National Energy Technology Laboratory 626 Cochran Mill Road P.O. Box 10940 Pittsburgh, PA 15236-0940 Email: DOEUSP@NETL.DOE.GOV

The review and evaluation of unsolicited proposals is described in the GUIDE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF UNSOLICITED PROPOSALS, available at <https://netl.doe.gov/sites/default/files/2017-11/USPGuide.pdf>. Relevant parts are included below, describing that the proposer will be notified whether or not their proposal will be supported. For additional description of how the notifications are made, please contact NETL.

PART 2 — REVIEW AND EVALUATION

Initial Review - Before a detailed evaluation of an unsolicited proposal will be undertaken, it will be initially reviewed to determine if the proposal contains sufficient technical and cost information, has been approved by a representative authorized to contractually obligate the proposer, and properly complies with any data disclosure restrictions. If the document contains most of the information required, the proposal will be processed and any missing information may be requested by the program office from the proposer so that it may be reviewed and evaluated as an unsolicited proposal.

Evaluation - The DOE is not required to perform comprehensive evaluations of unsolicited proposals not related to its mission. The principal elements considered in evaluating a proposal are:

1. Unique and innovative methods, approaches, or concepts demonstrated by the proposal;
2. Overall scientific/technical or socioeconomic merit of the proposed activity;
3. Potential contribution of the effort to the DOE's specific mission;
4. The proposer's capabilities, related experience, facilities, techniques, or unique combinations of these which are integral factors for achieving the proposal objectives;
5. The qualifications, capabilities, and experience of the proposed principal investigator, team leader, or key personnel who are critical in achieving the proposal objectives;
6. The realism of the proposed costs; and,
7. The availability of funding to support the proposed project and the relative merit of the project to others which could be supported with the same funds.

Unsolicited proposals may be accepted upon a determination by the responsible official or designee, that support (award of a contract/grant or other arrangement as authorized by law) to the proposer is justified because the proposal was submitted on the proposer's own initiative; and the purpose is to explore a method, approach, or an idea or to carry out an initial development in support of DOE's mission which (a) demonstrates a unique and innovative concept, or, demonstrates a unique capability of the proposer to provide the particular research sciences proposed; (b) offers a concept or services not otherwise available to the government; and (c) does not duplicate or resemble the substance of a pending competitive acquisition [FAR 6.302-1(a)(2)(i)].

A favorable comprehensive evaluation of an unsolicited proposal is not, in itself, sufficient justification for executing a noncompetitive award with the offeror. When a document qualifies as an unsolicited proposal, but the substance (a) is available to the Government without restriction from another source, or (b) closely resembles that of a pending competitive solicitation, or (c) does not demonstrate an innovative and unique method, approach or concept, the unsolicited proposal shall not be accepted [FAR 15.607 (a)].

DOE has no obligation to make an award even if the technical evaluation is favorable, since other program priorities or funding limitations may preclude such action. The proposer will be notified if it is decided that the proposal will not be supported. Copies of unsolicited proposals which have been declined will not normally be returned except on the written request of the principals involved.

If, on the other hand, the decision is made to support the proposal, the proposer will be advised and may be asked to submit additional details, revised budgets, or simply a confirmation of the proposal goals. Plans for getting the project underway may be firmed up at this time, but no real commitment of funds may be made until a formal notification action is completed.

A proposer may propose activities that are also of interest to other agencies. Interagency proposal evaluation may be initiated with the prior written approval of the proposer. If found acceptable, an agency may write a separate contract/grant or jointly fund the program with another agency having a collateral interest.

SUMMARY: NE and ID have made a significant pivot toward competitively-awarded, cost-shared, technical partnerships with U.S. industry as a significant and growing part of our research portfolio over the last several years. This now represents hundreds of millions (soon to be billions) of dollars of commitments of U.S. government funds, and we are absolutely committed to executing these policies, processes and projects with transparency, fairness, and a high degree of communication while meeting procurement requirements. We welcome your questions and will be happy to discuss our methods and practices further as appropriate.



Department of Energy
Idaho Operations Office
1955 Fremont Avenue
Idaho Falls, ID 83415

May 1, 2020

Dr. Robert Leishear
Leishear Engineering, LLC
205 Longleaf Court
Aiken, SC 29803-5767
leishear@aol.com

SUBJECT: Response to Dismissal of Application Letter (CLN201099)

REFERENCE: Dismissal of Application, Funding Opportunity Announcement DE-FOA-0001817, U.S. Industry Opportunities for Advanced Nuclear Technology Development, Application ARD-20.2-21608, The Autoignition of Nuclear Power Plant Explosions (CLN200911)

Dear Dr. Leishear:

As mentioned in our referenced letter, the dismissal of your application was not based on a judgment of its importance or merit; rather, the nature of the work is inconsistent with the goals of the specific funding announcement to which it was submitted. Thank you also for providing us a copy of the correspondence regarding your 2018 unsolicited proposal. Based on the limited information available in that abstract, this work appeared to be potentially consistent with the goals of the U.S. Industry Opportunities for Advanced nuclear Technology Development Financial Opportunity Announcement (FOA), but the Department of Energy, Office of Nuclear Energy (DOE-NE), reached a different conclusion based on the contents of the full proposal. Specifically, section I.B. of the FOA describes its purpose:

The objective of this FOA is to support innovation and competitiveness of the U.S. nuclear industry through cost-shared, cross-cutting basic/fundamental, applied R&D, and demonstration/commercial application R&D activities for all aspects of existing and advanced reactor development. These activities may include development of technologies that improve the capability of the existing fleet, methods to improve the timelines for advanced reactor deployments, the cost and schedule for delivery of nuclear products, services, and capabilities supporting these nuclear technologies, design and engineering processes, and resolution of regulatory/certification issues potentially impeding the introduction of these technologies into the marketplace.

The proposed work focuses on basic research, modeling the dynamics of the Three Mile Island explosion. The application did not propose innovative technology development to improve the

capability of the existing fleet, to improve the deployment timeline or capabilities of advanced reactors, or to resolve regulatory issues potentially impeding the introduction of such technologies.

As stated in the FOA, under which you applied, you may amend your application and resubmit it for consideration. DOE and other agencies may also have other funding opportunities under which you could apply. I have provided information on some other DOE opportunities below, but please be advised that DOE has not reviewed your application for consistency with these solicitations. You are responsible for ensuring that any application you prepare is consistent with the goals of, and appropriately responsive to, the associated solicitation.

Some of the other DOE programs that may be of interest to you are as follows:

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Programs:

The Office of Science supports U.S. small businesses and research organizations who engage in research and development that has the potential for commercialization and public benefit. These programs are one of the largest sources of American early-stage technology financing, and no cost-share is required. More information about these programs can be found at the following links:

<http://www.doesbirlearning.com/>

<https://science.energy.gov/sbir/>

- **Gateway for Accelerated Innovation in Nuclear (GAIN) Vouchers:** In support of nuclear energy innovation, GAIN vouchers provide funds to assist applicants seeking access to the world class expertise and capabilities available across the United States. GAIN seeks to provide the nuclear industrial community with access to the technical, regulatory, and financial support necessary to move new or advanced nuclear technologies toward commercialization, while ensuring the continued safe, reliable, and economic operation of the existing nuclear fleet. More information about this program can be found at the following link: <https://gain.inl.gov/SitePages/Nuclear%20Energy%20Vouchers.aspx>
- **Consolidated Innovative Nuclear Research (CINR) Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA):**

The CINR is made up of the following programs: Nuclear Energy University Program (NEUP), Nuclear Energy Enabling Technologies (NEET) Crosscutting Technology Development (CTD), and the Nuclear Science User Facilities (NSUF).
- NEUP utilizes up to 20 percent of funds appropriated to NE's Research and Development (R&D) program for university-based infrastructure support and R&D in key NE program-related areas: Fuel Cycle Research and Development (FC R&D), Reactor Concepts Research, Development and Demonstration (RC RD&D), and Nuclear Energy Advanced Modeling and Simulation (NEAMS).
- NEET CTD supports national laboratory- and university-led crosscutting research.
- NSUF provides access to world-class nuclear research facilities for researchers from U.S. universities, industry, and national laboratories.

More information about the CINR FOA can be found at the following link to the FOA: https://neup.inl.gov/SiteAssets/FY2018_Documents/NEGTN02-225431-FY_2018_CINR_FOA.pdf

- **Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E) program:**
ARPA-E issues periodic Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs), which are focused on overcoming specific technical barriers around a specific energy area. ARPA-E also issues periodic OPEN FOAs to identify high-potential projects that address the full range of energy-related technologies, as well as funding solicitations aimed at supporting America's small business innovators. More information about this program can be found at the following link: <https://arpa-e.energy.gov/?q=programs/apply-for-funding>

Additionally, the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization has several resources available to provide small businesses with assistance in developing a superior application for the Government. The link for OSDBU follows: <https://www.energy.gov/osdbu/small-business-services/guidance-small-businesses-how-do-business-department-energy>

In closing, the Office of Nuclear Energy supports research to develop and demonstrate technologies that enhance the safe operation of nuclear power plants and we appreciate your interest in the area of nuclear safety.

Sincerely,

...
Contracting
Officer



Department of Energy

Idaho Operations Office

1955 Fremont Avenue
Idaho Falls, ID 83415

April 30, 2020

Dr. Robert Leishear
Leishear Engineering, LLC
205 Longleaf Court
Aiken, SC 29803-5767
leishear@aol.com

SUBJECT: Dismissal of Application, Funding Opportunity Announcement DE-FOA-0001817, U.S. Industry Opportunities for Advanced Nuclear Technology Development, Application ARD-20.2-21608, The Autoignition of Nuclear Power Plant Explosions (CLN200911)

Dear Dr. Robert Leishear:

Thank you for your interest and application submitted under the subject Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA).

An initial review of your application, titled *The Autoignition of Nuclear Power Plant Explosions*, was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the subject FOA. We are writing to inform you that your application has been deemed unresponsive to the requirements of the FOA and has been removed from further consideration. Specifically, your application does not meet the objectives in Section I B of the FOA, as it proposes basic research on explosion dynamics, work that would neither address challenges to advanced reactor deployment nor improve existing fleet performance. A merit review of your application will not be conducted per standard procurement protocols.

We understand and very much appreciate that significant time and effort are required to prepare an application, and we sincerely appreciate your submittal. After consideration of this feedback, you are eligible to modify and resubmit your application for future submittals under this FOA.

If you have any questions, please contact me at ..., cell number ... or ...doe.gov.

Sincerely,

..., Contracting Officer Procurement
Services Division



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

March 23, 2015

Dr. Robert A. Leishear
205 Longleaf Court
Aiken, SC 29803

Dear Dr. Robert Leishear:

Thank you for your submittal of October 27, 2014, which contained a proposed issue for evaluation in the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) Generic Issues (GI) program. In that submittal, you postulated that an auto-ignition of a hydrogen-oxygen mixture can occur in the reactor coolant system (RCS) piping of nuclear power plants due to a sudden compression of the mixture during a fluid transient. You further postulated that the auto-ignition can cause a pressure increase that lifts a safety valve or ruptures the RCS, which can expel a flame that causes a hydrogen burn or explosion inside containment under severe accident conditions. Enclosure 1 contains a detailed description of the proposed GI.

The GI Program staff have completed an initial review of the proposed GI in accordance with the NRC's Management Directive 6.4, "Generic Issues Program." The purpose of an initial review is to determine whether the proposal clearly meets all of the seven screening criteria required for it to continue in the GI process. Based on the initial review, the staff determined that the proposed GI did not meet all seven screening criteria, and therefore will not continue to be assessed in the GI program. Enclosure 2 summarizes the results of the staff's initial review.

In summary, the staff evaluated the proposed GI and determined that existing requirements for hydrogen control and mitigation in the containments of nuclear power plants are sufficient to ensure that the concentration of combustible gases in any part of the containment is below a level that supports combustion or detonation that could cause loss of containment integrity in realistic scenarios. Specifically, the NRC established requirements in Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Section 50.44, "Combustible Gas Control for Nuclear Power Reactors," for licensees to analyze their plants for this phenomena and ensure that their plants can prevent and mitigate the consequence of hydrogen production. The analyses ensure that ignition sources, regardless of their cause, would not result in unacceptable consequences. Therefore, a postulated ignition source of water hammer in the RCS is bounded by these plant analyses. Enclosure 3 contains a discussion of the control of hydrogen during severe accidents.

In addition, the industry and the NRC staff have implemented the appropriate actions to minimize the accumulation of gas in the RCS during normal operations, which would reduce the risk of auto-ignition during accident conditions. Enclosure 4 contains a summary of industry and NRC's actions to control hydrogen during normal operations.

Nonetheless, in response to the accident that occurred at Fukushima, Japan, in March 2011, the NRC established a task force to identify any other safety enhancements for hydrogen control and mitigation inside containment and other reactor buildings that might be required. The study falls under the scope of Recommendation #6 from the report by the Near-Term Task

Force, "Recommendations for Enhancing Reactor Safety in the 21st Century."¹ The scope of the staff's review includes generation, transport, distribution, and combustion of hydrogen gas. This task has been prioritized as a Tier 3 item in SECY-11-0137.² The staff provided updates to this item in SECY-15-0137³ and a draft White Paper (publicly available)⁴. Therefore, the NRC already has a program in place that will evaluate whether any additional regulatory requirements are necessary for combustible gas control during a Fukushima type event.

We appreciate your concern for the safe operation of nuclear power plants. Thank you again for proposing this issue for review.

Enclosures: As stated

Sincerely,

/RA/

Thomas H. Boyce, Chief
 Regulatory Guidance and Generic Issues Branch
 Division of Engineering
 Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research

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ADAMS Accession No.: ML15191A405

OFFICE	RES/DE	RES/DE/ RGGIB	SUNSI Review	QTE	RES/DSA/ FSCB	RES/DE/ RGGIB	RES/DE
NAME	AA: G. Vera	PM: S. Gardocki	PM: S. Gardocki	Tech Editor	BC: R. Lee	BC: T. Boyce	DD: B. Thomas
DATE	1/ /16	1/20/16	1/20/16	8/11/15	12/22/15		

OFFICIAL RECORD COPY

¹ SECY-11-0093, "Recommendations for Enhancing Reactor Safety in the 21st Century," July 12, 2011, [Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML111861807].

² SECY-11-0137, "Prioritization of Recommended Actions to be taken in response to Fukushima Lesson Learned," [ADAMS Accession No. ML113490055].

³ SECY-15-0137, "Proposed Plans for Resolving Open Fukushima Tier 2 and 3 Recommendations," [ADAMS Accession No. ML15254A006].

⁴ NRC draft White Paper titled "Closure Of Fukushima Tier 3 Recommendations Related To Containment Vents, Hydrogen Control, And Enhanced Instrumentation," February 2, 2016 [ADAMS Accession No. ML16020A245].

From: leishear@aol.com,

To: patricia.hance@hq.doe.gov,

Cc: hannerj@id.doe.gov, industryfoa@id.doe.gov, ighotline@hq.doe.gov, FOIA-Central@hq.doe.gov, allegations@nrc.gov,

Subject: Re: FOIA Request to DOE-OIG - HQ-2021-00078-F (with attachments)

Date: Thu, Dec 3, 2020 10:14 am

Attachments: DOE Inspector General Concern, R Leishear, PhD, 9-04-2020, Redacted.docx (3047K), Final Response HQ-2021-00078-F.pdf (7059K)

As I fight to make the world a little better place to live, I am extremely disappointed that people disregard loss of life. Granted, new technology is difficult to accept, but how can people just look the other way and allow nuclear accidents to continue? How can safety not be applicable to the US nuclear reactor fleet?

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP

In a message dated 12/3/2020 10:05:44 AM Eastern Standard Time, leishear@aol.com writes:

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP

In a message dated 12/3/2020 9:44:13 AM Eastern Standard Time, leishear@aol.com writes:

The mishandling of this issue by government agencies is tragic for US citizens and the nuclear industry as a whole. Lives can be lost and environmental damages can be catastrophic, yet DOE refuses to address this problem. Nuclear power plant explosions can be stopped.

The documents provided by DOE in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act do not address my safety concerns at all (see attached). The documents provided in response to the FOIA request simply quote the false and unethical responses that were initially provided by DOE with respect to my concerns about the safety of the US nuclear reactor fleet. None of my very detailed concerns were addressed. Essentially, DOE contends that safety is inapplicable to the US reactor fleet. Unless there is additional information available, these actions by DOE perpetrate the cover up of serious environmental and safety issues throughout the US reactor fleet. As mathematically proven in the complaint provided for the investigation performed by the DOE Office of the Inspector General, the next nuclear accident has a 50% probability before 2039, and there is a one in two probability of a Fukushima type explosion to spread radioactive contamination around the earth at that time.

Along with a list of specific concerns and a detailed discussion that were not addressed by the Office of Inspector General investigation or the DOE Operations Office, the FOIA request stated that "The DOE, Idaho Operations Office improperly, unethically, and dishonestly dismissed a research grant proposal to prevent explosions in nuclear power plants, and this decision will directly result in loss of life and disastrous environmental damages, i.e., this DOE decision can kill people and spew radioactive contamination across U.S. property. To dismiss this research proposal, the DOE falsely claimed that the prevention of nuclear power plant explosions does not "propose innovative technology development to improve the capability of the existing fleet" of nuclear power plants. That is, in blocking this grant, the DOE made this false claim and other false claims (dishonest, untruthful actions) to support their errant decision that violated their own procedures, i.e., Funding Opportunity Announcement (an improper action). These actions constitute a cover up (an unethical action and lack of integrity) of an important safety issue that can result in loss of life, property damage, and

major environmental damages, and this unethical DOE blockage of needed research is a threat to public safety."

My research continues, full time, without compensation. I believe that saving lives is important, even if DOE believes that saving lives is unimportant to the operations of the US reactor fleet.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP, ASME Fellow,

NACE Senior Corrosion Technologist,
NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist,
NACE Level 2 Protective Coating Inspector,
NACE Cathodic Protection Tester,

Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic.

Leishear Engineering, LLC
205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803
803-641-6753

Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

In a message dated 12/3/2020 8:36:22 AM Eastern Standard Time,
patricia.hance@hq.doe.gov writes:

Dear Mr. Leishear,

Attached is the response from the Department of Energy, Office of Inspector to your request for information under the FOIA.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you.

Patricia Hance | Government Information Specialist

Office of Inspector General

U.S. Department of Energy

Washington, D.C.

(202) 586-8228





Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

December 3, 2020

Via Email

Robert A. Leishear
Leishear Engineering, LLC
205 Longleaf Court
Aiken, SC 29803
leishear@aol.com

Re: Freedom of Information Act Request HQ-2021-0078-F

Dear Mr. Leishear:

This is a final response from the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Inspector General (OIG) to your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552. You are seeking a copy of your complaint file no. 20-0291-C.

The OIG has completed the search of its files and identified 15 documents responsive to your request. A review of the documents and a determination concerning their release has been made pursuant to the FOIA. Based on this review, the OIG determined that certain material should be withheld pursuant to subsections (b)(6) and (b)(7)(C) of the FOIA, referred to as Exemptions 6 and 7(C), respectively. Specifically, the OIG has determined:

- Documents 1-14 are being released to you with certain material withheld pursuant to Exemptions 6 and 7(C).
- The attachment to Document 1 is not being processed back to you because this document was addressed to you, written by you, or has already been provided to you. The document is identified in the enclosed listing. If you wish to receive a copy of this document, please contact Patricia Hance by email at Patricia.Hance@hq.doe.gov or by phone at (202) 586-8228, and inform her of your request.
- Document 15 originated with the Office of Nuclear Energy and is being referred to that office for a determination concerning its releasability. For questions, please contact Alexander Morris, FOIA Officer, by email at Alexander.Morris@hq.doe.gov or by phone (202) 586-3159.

Exemption 6 protects from disclosure “personnel and medical and similar files the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy” Exemption 7(C) provides that “records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes” may be

withheld from disclosure, but only to the extent the production of such documents “could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. . . .”

Names and information that would tend to disclose the identity of certain individuals have been withheld pursuant to Exemptions 6 and 7(C). Individuals involved in the OIG enforcement matters, which in this case include subjects, witnesses, sources of information, and other individuals, are entitled to privacy protections so that they will be free from harassment, intimidation and other personal intrusions.

In invoking Exemptions 6 and 7(C), we have determined that it is not in the public interest to release the withheld material. In this request, we have determined that the public interest in the identity of individuals who appear in these files does not outweigh these individuals’ privacy interests. Those interests include being free from intrusions into their professional and private lives.

For your information, Congress excluded three discrete categories of law enforcement and national security records from the requirements of the FOIA. See U.S.C. § 552(c) (2006 & Supp. IV 2010). This response is limited to those records that are subject to the requirements of the FOIA. This is a standard notification that is given to all our requesters and should not be taken as an indication that excluded records do, or do not, exist.

To the extent permitted by law, the DOE, in accordance with Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) § 1004.1, will make available records it is authorized to withhold pursuant to the FOIA unless it determines such disclosure is not in the public interest.

As required, all releasable information has been segregated from the material that is withheld and is provided to you. See 10 C.F.R. § 1004.7(b)(3).

This decision may be appealed within 90 calendar days from your receipt of this letter pursuant to 10 C.F.R. § 1004.8. Appeals should be addressed to the Director, Office of Hearings and Appeals, HG-1 /L’Enfant Plaza Building, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20585-1615. You may also submit your appeal by email to OHA.filings@hq.doe.gov, including the phrase “Freedom of Information Appeal” in the subject line.

Thereafter, judicial review will be available to you in the Federal district court either 1) in the district where you reside; 2) where you have your principal place of business; 3) where the Department’s records are situated, or 4) in the District of Columbia.

If you have any questions about the processing of your request, you may contact our FOIA Public Liaison, Mr. Alexander Morris. He may be contacted by phone at (202) 586-3159 or by email at Alexander.Morris@hq.doe.gov, to discuss any aspect of your request. Please know that you also have the right to seek dispute resolution services from the FOIA Public Liaison or the

Office of Government Information Services, <https://ogis.archives.gov>, via telephone at (202) 741-5770 // (877) 684-6448 (toll free), by fax: (202) 741-5769, or email: ogis@nara.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah Thomas". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Deborah M. Thomas
Acting Assistant Inspector General,
Office of Inspections, Intelligence Oversight,
and Special Projects
Office of Inspector General

Enclosures

HQ-2020-00078-F

Robert Leishear

Document not Processed Back to Requester

Attachment to Document 1: DOE COVERUP OF EXPLOSION DANGERS IN U.S. NUCLEAR
POWER PLANTS (54 pages).

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

From: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP <leishear@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 13, 2020 1:41 PM
To: IGHOTLINE
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Allegation: DOE COVER UP OF EXPLOSION DANGERS IN U.S. NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS
Attachments: DOE Inspector General Concern, R Leishear, PhD.pdf
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

I submitted an allegation to the DOE Inspector General today, noting that an additional document would be sent to record a significant concern to the safety of the U.S. nuclear reactor fleet. That document is attached.

Thank you.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP
 ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic
 Leishear Engineering, LLC
 205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803
 803-641-6753
 Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

 This message does not originate from a known Department of Energy email system.
 Use caution if this message contains attachments, links or requests for information.



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL**

COMPLAINT FORM

COMPLAINT FORM STATUSPRE-DECISIONAL: FINAL: **I. REFERENCE DATA**

Complaint No:	20-0291-C	Complaint Taken By:	(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Date:	13MAY2020	Complaint Method:	Online Complaint Form

II. COMPLAINANT INFORMATION

Name:	Robert Leishear		
Use Name Outside OIG:	Yes		
OIG Confidentiality Policy Explained:	Yes		
Acknowledged Understanding of OIG Confidentiality Policy:	Yes		
Advised of OIG Disposition Options:	Yes		
Complainant Referred to OIG Web Site for Details on Allegation Processing:	Yes		

Complainant Status:	General Public		
Employer:	Leishear Engineering, LLC		
Position/Title:	Consulting Engineer / President		
Work Address: (Street)	205 Longleaf Court		
(City, State & Zip):	Aiken, SC 29803		
Telephone & E-mail:	803-641-6753	leishear@aol.com	
Home Address: (Street)	205 Longleaf Court		
(City, State & Zip):	Aiken, SC 29803		
Telephone & E-mail:	803-641-6753	leishear@aol.com	

III. ALLEGATION(S) (Who, What, When, Where, Why and How. Identify Attachments, Documentation and Witnesses.)**OVERVIEW:**

On 13 May 2020, the Hotline received a complaint from Dr. Robert Leishear, President, Leishear Engineering, LLC, who stated the Department "dismissed a research grant proposal to prevent explosions in nuclear power plants, and this decision will directly result in loss of life and disastrous environmental damages... the DOE falsely claimed that the prevention of nuclear power plant explosions does not "propose innovative technology development to improve the capability of the existing fleet" of nuclear power plants. That is, in blocking this grant, the DOE made this false claim and other false claims to support their errant decision. These actions constitute a cover up of an important safety issue that can result in loss of life, property damage, and major environmental damages, and this unethical DOE blockage of needed research is a threat to public safety."

ALLEGATION DETAILS:

On 13 May 2020, the Hotline received a complaint from Dr. Robert Leishear, President, Leishear Engineering, LLC, who stated the Department "dismissed a research grant proposal to prevent explosions in nuclear power plants, and this decision will directly result in loss of life and disastrous environmental damages... the DOE falsely claimed that the prevention of nuclear power plant explosions does not "propose innovative technology development to improve the capability of the existing fleet" of nuclear power plants. That is, in blocking this grant, the DOE made this false claim and other false claims to support their errant decision. These actions constitute a cover up of an important safety issue that can result in loss of life, property damage, and major environmental damages, and this unethical DOE blockage of needed research is a threat to public safety."

According to the complainant, the National Energy Technology Laboratory responded to his unsolicited proposal abstract on 11 Jul 2018 advising that it fit the objective of DE-FOA-0001817 "U.S. Industry Opportunities for Advanced Nuclear Technology Development" which was to support innovation and competitiveness of the U.S. nuclear industry through cost-shared, cross-cutting basic/fundamental, applied R&D, and demonstration/commercial application R&D activities for all aspects of existing and advanced reactor development. However, when he submitted his final proposal in September 2019, the complainant was advised that his application did not "meet the objectives in Section I B of the FOA, as it proposes basic research on explosion dynamics, work that would neither address challenges to advanced reactor deployment nor improve existing fleet performance". Further "A merit review of your application will not be conducted per standard procurement protocols. Based on the limited information available in that abstract, this work appeared to be potentially consistent with the goals of the U.S. Industry Opportunities for Advanced nuclear Technology Development Financial Opportunity Announcement (FOA), but the Department of Energy, Office of Nuclear Energy (DOE-NE), reached a different conclusion based on the contents of the full proposal".

The complainant contends that other than a different title, the primary difference between the originally submitted abstract and the final proposal was the inclusion of examples, or accusations, of Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) malfeasance; a technical account of NRC malfeasance with detailed examples, and a detailed prediction of the next nuclear accident in 2039. The complainant stated that DOE thwarting this research further exposes an NRC cover up and makes DOE complicit in that cover up. NRC has refused to respond to several of the complainant's correspondences during the past two years, including an email to allegations@nrc.gov entitled "The NRC Cover Up".

(Attachments?) No

IV. OTHER NOTES

1. A review of investigative files revealed negative results for **ROBERT LEISHEAR**.
2. An OPENSOURCE review (<https://www.id.energy.gov>) revealed that the Funding Opportunity Announcement for the US Industry Opportunities for Advanced Nuclear Technology Development was initially announced 07 Dec 2017 and would be continuously open for 5 years. There will be quarterly application reviews and the first round of approvals was 27 Apr 2018. Applications can be submitted at any time and applicants may submit multiple applications.
3. On 26 Jun 2020 the OIG issued a Management Referral for Response to FE-1. Upon further review and discussion with FE program office, the Referral was withdrawn and re-issued to NE on 24 Jul 2020. On 18 Sep 2020 NE provided information responsive to the Referral.

(Attachments?) No

V. COMPLAINT DISPOSITION

Recommended Action: Refer to CCC

Pre-CCC Disposition: RS to FE-1

CCC Disposition: RS to FE-1

Initial CCC Review Date:

Final CCC Review Date: 01 Oct 2020



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

June 26, 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR FOSSIL ENERGY

FROM:

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Hotline Operations and Whistleblower Investigations

SUBJECT:

Grant Review and Determination Communications
(OIG File No. 20-0291-C)

This memorandum serves to advise you of a complaint received by the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Inspector General (OIG) Hotline. Our review determined the facts and circumstances of the complaint pertain to your office's programs and operations; therefore, we are referring this matter for appropriate action. In accordance with Departmental Order 221.2A, the OIG requests a written response within 30 calendar days of your office's receipt of this memorandum, regarding the actions you have taken, or plan to take, related to this complaint. We will review your response, including any additional facts you develop, to determine if further OIG action is warranted.

The details of the complaint are as follows:

Dr. Robert Leishear, President, Leishear Engineering, LLC, contacted our office with a concern regarding the rejection of his grant proposal for DE-FOA-0001817 "U.S. Industry Opportunities for Advanced Nuclear Technology Development". According to Dr. Leishear, he has been unable to get a response to his requests for clarification of why his draft proposal met the grant objective but his final proposal was rejected. Leishear alleges there were only minor changes between the two versions of the proposal.

The OIG Hotline has recently received numerous complaints alleging a failure to provide explanation and/or clarification of the rationale behind the rejection of grant proposals. Specifically, the complainants are alleging that they either (1) did not receive a response to their inquiries about the review and determination; or, (2) the response did not contain adequate information for them to understand the shortfalls of the proposal.

Our office is requesting the following information and, if the process is different for solicited versus unsolicited proposals, please provide the process for both:

- The process and policy for communicating to the submitter the initial results of a grant proposal review.
- The type and amount of information provided to submitters.

~~OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

- The policy for responding to subsequent inquiries from submitters as well as the nature of subsequent communications describing the merits or shortfalls of a proposal.

This memorandum, including any attachments and information contained therein, is the property of the Office of Inspector General and is for ~~OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~. The original and any copies of the memorandum must be appropriately controlled and maintained. Disclosure to unauthorized persons without prior Office of Inspector General written approval is strictly prohibited and may subject the disclosing party to liability. Unauthorized persons may include, but are not limited to, individuals referenced in the memorandum, contractors, and individuals outside the Department of Energy. Public disclosure is determined by the Freedom of Information Act (Title 5, U.S.C., Section 552) and the Privacy Act (Title 5, U.S.C., Section 552a).

Please contact [redacted] at (202) 586-[redacted] or [redacted]@hq.doe.gov should you have questions regarding this matter.

~~OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

From: IGHOTLINE
Sent: Thursday, September 03, 2020 1:56 PM
To: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Status: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG

Good Afternoon Dr. Leishear,

This complaint remains open and as we continue to evaluate information related to this issue.

Thank you,

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

US Department of Energy
Office of Inspector General

From: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP [mailto:leishear@aol.com]
Sent: Saturday, August 29, 2020 2:27 PM
To: IGHOTLINE <ighotline@hq.doe.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Status: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG

What is the current status of this safety concern for the US nuclear reactor fleet?

Thanks again.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP
ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic
Leishear Engineering, LLC
205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803
803-641-6753
Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

In a message dated 8/4/2020 9:57:41 AM Eastern Standard Time, ighotline@hq.doe.gov writes:

Good Morning Dr. Leishear,

This complaint is open pending additional evaluation.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

US Department of Energy
Office of Inspector General

From: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP [<mailto:leishear@aol.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, August 04, 2020 9:31 AM
To: IGHOTLINE <ighotline@hq.doe.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Status: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG

What is the current status of this safety concern?

Thank you.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP

ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic

Leishear Engineering, LLC

205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803

803-641-6753

Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

In a message dated 7/5/2020 11:39:23 AM Eastern Standard Time, ighotline@hq.doe.gov writes:

Hello Dr. Leishear,

The complaint is open as the OIG continues its review and evaluation. You can continue to request the status of the complaint.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

US Department of Energy

Office of Inspector General

From: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP [<mailto:leishear@aol.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, July 01, 2020 6:45 PM
To: IGHOTLINE <ighotline@hq.doe.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Status: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG

What is the current status of this Allegation?

Thank you.

-----Original Message-----

From: IGHOTLINE <ighotline@hq.doe.gov>
To: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP <leishear@aol.com>
Sent: Wed, Jun 10, 2020 1:32 pm
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Status: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG

Hello,

This complaint is currently open with the OIG.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

From: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP [<mailto:leishear@aol.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2020 1:10 PM
To: IGHOTLINE <ighotline@hq.doe.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Status: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG

What is the current status of this Allegation? I also sent copies of this email and the attachment to the NRC and the DOE Idaho office.

Thank you.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP

ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic

Leishear Engineering, LLC

205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803

803-641-6753

Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

From: leishear@aol.com
To: ighotline@hq.doe.gov
Sent: 5/28/2020 7:29:51 AM Eastern Standard Time
Subject: Re: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Thanks for your time yesterday. I thought about our conversation, and accordingly made some editorial comments to the allegation. There needed to be emphasis in the first paragraph that the DOE acted dishonestly in their dealings on this contract proposal to save lives and prevent an environmental disaster. This DOE lack of integrity is important to this allegation. The latest revision is attached.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP

ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic

Leishear Engineering, LLC

205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803

803-641-6753

Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

In a message dated 5/27/2020 3:42:06 PM Eastern Standard Time, leishear@aol.com writes:

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

As we discussed today, I updated Appendix A and the latest revision is attached. We also discussed the status of communications with DOE, and the attached document is current.

Thank you.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP

ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman
Sheet Metal Mechanic

Leishear Engineering, LLC

205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803

803-641-6753

Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

In a message dated 5/27/2020 11:32:41 AM Eastern Standard Time,
ighotline@hq.doe.gov writes:

Dr. Leishear,

I would like to speak with you regarding your recent complaint to our office. There are a few follow up and/or clarifying questions regarding your proposal submission and the actions that followed. We have your telephone number as 803-641-6753. Is this accurate and can you provide the date(s) and time(s) that would preferable for a call?

Thank you,

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

US Department of Energy

Office of Inspector General

This message does not originate from a known Department of Energy email system.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

From: IGHOTLINE
Sent: Tuesday, August 04, 2020 9:58 AM
To: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Status: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG

Good Morning Dr. Leishear,

This complaint is open pending additional evaluation.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

US Department of Energy
Office of Inspector General

From: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP [mailto:leishear@aol.com]
Sent: Tuesday, August 04, 2020 9:31 AM
To: IGHOTLINE <ighotline@hq.doe.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Status: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG

What is the current status of this safety concern?

Thank you.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP
ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic
Leishear Engineering, LLC
205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803
803-641-6753
Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

In a message dated 7/5/2020 11:39:23 AM Eastern Standard Time, ighotline@hq.doe.gov writes:

Hello Dr. Leishear,

The complaint is open as the OIG continues its review and evaluation. You can continue to request the status of the complaint.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

US Department of Energy
Office of Inspector General

From: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP [<mailto:leishear@aol.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, July 01, 2020 6:45 PM
To: IGHOTLINE <ighotline@hq.doe.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Status: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG

What is the current status of this Allegation?

Thank you.

-----Original Message-----

From: IGHOTLINE <ighotline@hq.doe.gov>
To: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP <leishear@aol.com>
Sent: Wed, Jun 10, 2020 1:32 pm
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Status: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG

Hello,

This complaint is currently open with the OIG.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

From: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP [<mailto:leishear@aol.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2020 1:10 PM
To: IGHOTLINE <ighotline@hq.doe.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Status: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG

What is the current status of this Allegation? I also sent copies of this email and the attachment to the NRC and the DOE Idaho office.

Thank you.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP

ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic

Leishear Engineering, LLC

205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803

803-641-6753

Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

From: leishear@aol.com
To: ig hotline@hq.doe.gov
Sent: 5/28/2020 7:29:51 AM Eastern Standard Time
Subject: Re: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Thanks for your time yesterday. I thought about our conversation, and accordingly made some editorial comments to the allegation. There needed to be emphasis in the first paragraph that the DOE acted dishonestly in their dealings on this contract proposal to save lives and prevent an environmental disaster. This DOE lack of integrity is important to this allegation. The latest revision is attached.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP

ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic

Leishear Engineering, LLC

205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803

803-641-6753

Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

In a message dated 5/27/2020 3:42:06 PM Eastern Standard Time, leishear@aol.com writes:

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

As we discussed today, I updated Appendix A and the latest revision is attached. We also discussed the status of communications with DOE, and the attached document is current.

Thank you.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP

ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic

Leishear Engineering, LLC

205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803

803-641-6753

Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

In a message dated 5/27/2020 11:32:41 AM Eastern Standard Time, ighotline@hq.doe.gov writes:

Dr. Leishear,

I would like to speak with you regarding your recent complaint to our office. There are a few follow up and/or clarifying questions regarding your proposal submission and the actions that followed. We have your telephone number as 803-641-6753. Is this accurate and can you provide the date(s) and time(s) that would preferable for a call?

Thank you,

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

US Department of Energy

Office of Inspector General

This message does not originate from a known Department of Energy email system. Use caution if this message contains attachments, links or requests for information.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

From: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP <leishear@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 05, 2020 5:39 PM
To: IGHOTLINE
Subject: [EXTERNAL] DOE Complaint

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Thank you. I need some time to put together a complete case.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP
ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic
Leishear Engineering, LLC
205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803
803-641-6753
Website: leishearengineeringllc.com
In a message dated 5/5/2020 4:44:49 PM Eastern Standard Time, ighotline@hq.doe.gov writes:

Good afternoon Robert,

Best means is via our website, to better capture the allegation in your own words. Please see the end of my signature block.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

U.S. Department of Energy

Office of Inspector General

<https://www.energy.gov/ig/ig-hotline>

From: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP [mailto:leishear@aol.com]
Sent: Tuesday, May 05, 2020 3:41 PM
To: IGHOTLINE <ighotline@hq.doe.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] DOE Complaint

How do file a complaint against a DOE agency that disregarded procedures, provided false statements to do so, and consequently endangered the public safety and welfare?

Thank you.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP

ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic

Leishear Engineering, LLC

205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803

803-641-6753

Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

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Use caution if this message contains attachments, links or requests for information.

This message does not originate from a known Department of Energy email system.
Use caution if this message contains attachments, links or requests for information.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

From: IGHOTLINE
Sent: Monday, May 11, 2020 12:40 PM
To: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Re: Department of Energy Office of Inspector General

Robert,

Try this link.

<https://www.energy.gov/ig/ig-hotline>

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

From: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP [mailto:leishear@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, May 11, 2020 12:22 PM
To: IGHOTLINE <ighotline@hq.doe.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Department of Energy Office of Inspector General

This link does not work. Is there another link?

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP
ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic
Leishear Engineering, LLC
205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803
803-641-6753
Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

In a message dated 5/5/2020 3:40:49 PM Eastern Standard Time, ighotline@hq.doe.gov writes:

Thank you for contacting the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Inspector General Hotline. This serves to acknowledge receipt of your message. The Hotline facilitates the reporting of allegations of fraud, waste, or abuse concerning Department of Energy programs and/or operations. You may obtain additional information regarding the Hotline at <http://energy.gov/ig/services>. The "Complaint Processing" section explains the actions the Office of Inspector General may take regarding your complaint.

Please note that your complaint to the Office of Inspector General does not preclude you from pursuing other remedies that may be available to you.

You may request an update on the status of your complaint by contacting the Hotline.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Inspector General

This message does not originate from a known Department of Energy email system. Use caution if this message contains attachments, links or requests for information.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

From: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP <leishear@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 14, 2020 9:00 AM
To: IGHOTLINE
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Allegation: DOE COVER UP OF EXPLOSION DANGERS IN U.S. NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS, Revised file
Attachments: DOE Inspector General Concern, R Leishear, PhD, 5-14-2020.pdf
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

The file was revised to improve the presentation of a significant concern to the safety of the U.S. nuclear reactor fleet.

Thank you.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP
 ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic
 Leishear Engineering, LLC
 205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803
 803-641-6753
 Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

In a message dated 5/13/2020 1:40:50 PM Eastern Standard Time, leishear@aol.com writes:

I submitted an allegation to the DOE Inspector General today, noting that an additional document would be sent to record a significant concern to the safety of the U.S. nuclear reactor fleet. That document is attached.

Thank you.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP
 ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic
 Leishear Engineering, LLC
 205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803
 803-641-6753
 Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

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(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

From: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP <leishear@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2020 7:56 PM
To: IGHOTLINE
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Allegation: DOE COVER UP OF EXPLOSION DANGERS IN U.S. NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS, Revised file
Attachments: DOE Inspector General Concern, R Leishear, PhD, 5-14-2020.pdf
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Was this complaint provided an Open Status?

Thank you.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP
ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic
Leishear Engineering, LLC
205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803
803-641-6753
Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

From: leishear@aol.com
To: ighotline@hq.doe.gov
Sent: 5/14/2020 8:59:54 AM Eastern Standard Time
Subject: Re: Allegation: DOE COVER UP OF EXPLOSION DANGERS IN U.S. NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS, Revised file

The file was revised to improve the presentation of a significant concern to the safety of the U.S. nuclear reactor fleet.

Thank you.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP
ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic
Leishear Engineering, LLC
205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803
803-641-6753
Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

In a message dated 5/13/2020 1:40:50 PM Eastern Standard Time, leishear@aol.com writes:

I submitted an allegation to the DOE Inspector General today, noting that an additional document would be sent to record a significant concern to the safety of the U.S. nuclear reactor fleet. That document is attached.

Thank you.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP
ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic
Leishear Engineering, LLC

205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803
803-641-6753
Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

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(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

From: IGHOTLINE
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 9:20 AM
To: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Re: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG: Revision

Good Morning,

The complaint you filed with our office is still open.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

US Department of Energy
Office of Inspector General

From: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP [mailto:leishear@aol.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 9:05 AM
To: IGHOTLINE <ighotline@hq.doe.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG: Revision

Is this concern about nuclear safety and potential loss of life still under evaluation?

Thank you.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP
ASME Fellow,
NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist,
NACE Level 2 Protective Coatings Inspector,
Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic
Leishear Engineering, LLC
205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803
803-641-6753
Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

In a message dated 9/4/2020 7:13:22 AM Eastern Standard Time, leishear@aol.com writes:

Since this evaluation is still in process, an attached revision updates Appendix A of my safety concerns for the lives of US citizens. The body of this paper remains the same - only Appendix A has been updated to ensure that this evaluation is not dismissed due to editorial issues.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP
ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic
Leishear Engineering, LLC
205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803
803-641-6753
Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

In a message dated 9/3/2020 1:56:14 PM Eastern Standard Time, ighotline@hq.doe.gov writes:

Good Afternoon Dr. Leishear,

This complaint remains open and as we continue to evaluate information related to this issue.

Thank you,

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

US Department of Energy

Office of Inspector General

From: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP [<mailto:leishear@aol.com>]

Sent: Saturday, August 29, 2020 2:27 PM

To: IGHOTLINE <ighotline@hq.doe.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Status: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG

What is the current status of this safety concern for the US nuclear reactor fleet?

Thanks again.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP

ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic

Leishear Engineering, LLC

205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803

803-641-6753

Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

In a message dated 8/4/2020 9:57:41 AM Eastern Standard Time, ighotline@hq.doe.gov writes:

Good Morning Dr. Leishear,

This complaint is open pending additional evaluation.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

US Department of Energy

Office of Inspector General

From: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP [<mailto:leishear@aol.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, August 04, 2020 9:31 AM

To: IGHOTLINE <ighotline@hq.doe.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Status: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG

What is the current status of this safety concern?

Thank you.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP

ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic

Leishear Engineering, LLC

205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803

803-641-6753

Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

In a message dated 7/5/2020 11:39:23 AM Eastern Standard Time, ighotline@hq.doe.gov writes:

Hello Dr. Leishear,

The complaint is open as the OIG continues its review and evaluation. You can continue to request the status of the complaint.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

US Department of Energy
Office of Inspector General

From: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP [<mailto:leishear@aol.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, July 01, 2020 6:45 PM
To: IGHOTLINE <ighotline@hq.doe.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Status: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG

What is the current status of this Allegation?

Thank you.

-----Original Message-----

From: IGHOTLINE <ighotline@hq.doe.gov>
To: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP <leishear@aol.com>
Sent: Wed, Jun 10, 2020 1:32 pm
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Status: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG

Hello,

This complaint is currently open with the OIG.

OIG Hotline Coordinator

From: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP [<mailto:leishear@aol.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2020 1:10 PM
To: IGHOTLINE <ighotline@hq.doe.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Status: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG

What is the current status of this Allegation? I also sent copies of this email and the attachment to the NRC and the DOE Idaho office.

Thank you.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP

ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic

Leishear Engineering, LLC

205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803

803-641-6753

Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

From: leishear@aol.com
To: ighotline@hq.doe.gov
Sent: 5/28/2020 7:29:51 AM Eastern Standard Time
Subject: Re: Your Allegation to the USDOE OIG

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Thanks for your time yesterday. I thought about our conversation, and accordingly made some editorial comments to the allegation. There needed to be emphasis in the first paragraph that the DOE acted dishonestly in their dealings on this contract proposal to save lives and prevent an environmental disaster. This DOE lack of integrity is important to this allegation. The latest revision is attached.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP

ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist,
Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic

Leishear Engineering, LLC

205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803

803-641-6753

Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

In a message dated 5/27/2020 3:42:06 PM Eastern Standard Time,
leishear@aol.com writes:

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

As we discussed today, I updated Appendix A and the latest revision is attached. We also discussed the status of communications with DOE, and the attached document is current.

Thank you.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP

ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion
Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic

Leishear Engineering, LLC

205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803

803-641-6753

Website: leishearengineeringllc.com

In a message dated 5/27/2020 11:32:41 AM Eastern Standard
Time, ighotline@hq.doe.gov writes:

Dr. Leishear,

I would like to speak with you regarding your recent complaint to our office. There are a few follow up and/or clarifying questions regarding your proposal submission and the actions that followed. We have your telephone number as 803-641-6753. Is this accurate and can you provide the date(s) and time(s) that would preferable for a call?

Thank you,

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

US Department of Energy

Office of Inspector General

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(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

From: Robert A Leishear, Ph.D, P.E., PMP <leishear@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2020 3:42 PM
To: IGHOTLINE
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Your Complaint to the USDOE OIG
Attachments: DOE Inspector General Concern, R Leishear, PhD, 5-27-2020.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

As we discussed today, I updated Appendix A and the latest revision is attached. We also discussed the status of communications with DOE, and the attached document is current.

Thank you.

Robert A. Leishear, Ph.D., P.E., PMP
 ASME Fellow, NACE Senior Internal Corrosion Technologist, Journeyman Sheet Metal Mechanic
 Leishear Engineering, LLC
 205 Longleaf Court, Aiken, S.C. 29803
 803-641-6753
 Website: leishearengineeringllc.com
 In a message dated 5/27/2020 11:32:41 AM Eastern Standard Time, ighotline@hq.doe.gov writes:

Dr. Leishear,

I would like to speak with you regarding your recent complaint to our office. There are a few follow up and/or clarifying questions regarding your proposal submission and the actions that followed. We have your telephone number as 803-641-6753. Is this accurate and can you provide the date(s) and time(s) that would preferable for a call?

Thank you,

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

US Department of Energy
Office of Inspector General

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Complaint Form

Timestamp: 05/13/2020

Confirmation #: B53F66EC34

IP Address: 24.145.47.124

Acknowledgement: true

Confidentiality Information: Consent to Disclosure: I consent to disclosure of my identity outside the OIG on a need-to-know basis.

Information About You:

Salutation: Dr.

First Name: Robert

Middle Name: Allan

Last Name: Leishear

Contact Number: 803-641-6753

Phone: Home

Best time to call: Any Time (6a - 9pm)

Employment Status:

Organization: Leishear Engineering, LLC

Position/Title: Consulting Engineer / President

Address: 205 Longleaf Court

City: Aiken

State: South Carolina

Zip Code: 29803

Country: United States

Email Address: leishear@aol.com

Allegation Detail:

Allegation Narrative: A detailed allegation will be sent as a separate document. Part of Executive Summary to that document follows. "The DOE, Idaho Operations Office dismissed a research grant proposal to prevent explosions in nuclear power plants, and this decision will directly result in loss of life and disastrous environmental damages, i.e., this DOE decision can kill people and spew radioactive contamination across U.S. property. To dismiss this research proposal, the DOE falsely claimed that the prevention of nuclear power plant explosions does not "propose innovative technology development to improve the capability of the existing fleet" of nuclear power plants. That is, in blocking this grant, the DOE made this false claim and other false claims to support their errant decision. These actions constitute a cover up of an important safety issue that can result in loss of life, property damage, and major environmental damages, and this unethical DOE blockage of needed research is a threat to public safety."

Other Actions You Are Taking:

Have you filed your complaint with any other office, to include other Inspector General offices, other law enforcement agencies, DOE management or program officials, or an Employee Concerns Office?: No

Agency or Office Complaint Filed With:

Your understanding of the current status of your complaint:

A description of responses you have received from other offices regarding your complaint:

Additional Documents:

Certification: true

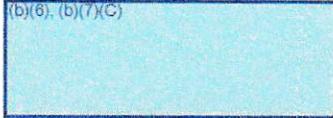


Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

July 24, 2020

**MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR
NUCLEAR ENERGY**

FROM:



Hotline Operations and Whistleblower Investigations

SUBJECT:

Grant Review and Determination Communications
(OIG File No. 20-0291-C)

This memorandum serves to advise you of a complaint received by the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Inspector General (OIG) Hotline. Our review determined the facts and circumstances of the complaint pertain to your office's programs and operations; therefore, we are referring this matter for appropriate action. In accordance with Departmental Order 221.2A, the OIG requests a written response within 30 calendar days of your office's receipt of this memorandum, regarding the actions you have taken, or plan to take, related to this complaint. We will review your response, including any additional facts you develop, to determine if further OIG action is warranted.

The details of the complaint are as follows:

Dr. Robert Leishear, President, Leishear Engineering, LLC, contacted our office with a concern regarding the rejection of his grant proposal for DE-FOA-0001817 "U.S. Industry Opportunities for Advanced Nuclear Technology Development". According to Dr. Leishear, he has been unable to get a response to his requests for clarification of why his draft proposal met the grant objective but his final proposal was rejected. Leishear alleges there were only minor changes between the two versions of the proposal.

The OIG Hotline has recently received numerous complaints alleging a failure to provide explanation and/or clarification of the rationale behind the rejection of grant proposals. Specifically, the complainants are alleging that they either (1) have not received clarification of why an initial abstract was approved but the final was rejected; (2) did not receive a response to their inquiries about results of the review, or refusal to review, their submissions; and/or, (3) the response did not contain adequate information for them to understand the determination to reject the proposal and the shortfalls of the submission.

Our office is requesting the following information which is not limited to Dr. Leisher's grant application. Also, if the process is different for solicited versus unsolicited proposals, please provide the process for both:

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- The process or policy for communicating with grant applicants regarding the results of a review of their initial and final proposal/abstract.
- The process or policy governing the depth of the information provided to grant applicants regarding the results of a review of their initial and final proposal/abstract.
- The process or policy for responding to subsequent inquiries from grant applicants describing the merits or shortfalls of a proposal.

This memorandum, including any attachments and information contained therein, is the property of the Office of Inspector General and is for ~~OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~. The original and any copies of the memorandum must be appropriately controlled and maintained. Disclosure to unauthorized persons without prior Office of Inspector General written approval is strictly prohibited and may subject the disclosing party to liability. Unauthorized persons may include, but are not limited to, individuals referenced in the memorandum, contractors, and individuals outside the Department of Energy. Public disclosure is determined by the Freedom of Information Act (Title 5, U.S.C., Section 552) and the Privacy Act (Title 5, U.S.C., Section 552a).

Please contact (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) at (202) 586-(b)(6), (b)(7)(C) or (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) [@hq.doe.gov](mailto: @hq.doe.gov) should you have questions regarding this matter.

~~OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~



Department of Energy

Idaho Operations Office

1955 Fremont Avenue
Idaho Falls, ID 83415

May 1, 2020

Dr. Robert Leishear
Leishear Engineering, LLC
205 Longleaf Court
Aiken, SC 29803-5767
leishear@aol.com

SUBJECT: Response to Dismissal of Application Letter (CLN201099)

REFERENCE: Dismissal of Application, Funding Opportunity Announcement DE-FOA-0001817, U.S. Industry Opportunities for Advanced Nuclear Technology Development, Application ARD-20.2-21608, The Autoignition of Nuclear Power Plant Explosions (CLN200911)

Dear Dr. Leishear:

As mentioned in our referenced letter, the dismissal of your application was not based on a judgment of its importance or merit; rather, the nature of the work is inconsistent with the goals of the specific funding announcement to which it was submitted. Thank you also for providing us a copy of the correspondence regarding your 2018 unsolicited proposal. Based on the limited information available in that abstract, this work appeared to be potentially consistent with the goals of the U.S. Industry Opportunities for Advanced nuclear Technology Development Financial Opportunity Announcement (FOA), but the Department of Energy, Office of Nuclear Energy (DOE-NE), reached a different conclusion based on the contents of the full proposal. Specifically, section I.B. of the FOA describes its purpose:

The objective of this FOA is to support innovation and competitiveness of the U.S. nuclear industry through cost-shared, cross-cutting basic/fundamental, applied R&D, and demonstration/commercial application R&D activities for all aspects of existing and advanced reactor development. These activities may include development of technologies that improve the capability of the existing fleet, methods to improve the timelines for advanced reactor deployments, the cost and schedule for delivery of nuclear products, services, and capabilities supporting these nuclear technologies, design and engineering processes, and resolution of regulatory/certification issues potentially impeding the introduction of these technologies into the marketplace.

The proposed work focuses on basic research, modeling the dynamics of the Three Mile Island explosion. The application did not propose innovative technology development to improve the

capability of the existing fleet, to improve the deployment timeline or capabilities of advanced reactors, or to resolve regulatory issues potentially impeding the introduction of such technologies.

As stated in the FOA, under which you applied, you may amend your application and resubmit it for consideration. DOE and other agencies may also have other funding opportunities under which you could apply. I have provided information on some other DOE opportunities below, but please be advised that DOE has not reviewed your application for consistency with these solicitations. You are responsible for ensuring that any application you prepare is consistent with the goals of, and appropriately responsive to, the associated solicitation.

Some of the other DOE programs that may be of interest to you are as follows:

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Programs:

The Office of Science supports U.S. small businesses and research organizations who engage in research and development that has the potential for commercialization and public benefit. These programs are one of the largest sources of American early-stage technology financing, and no cost-share is required. More information about these programs can be found at the following links:

<http://www.doesbirlearning.com/>

<https://science.energy.gov/sbir/>

- **Gateway for Accelerated Innovation in Nuclear (GAIN) Vouchers:** In support of nuclear energy innovation, GAIN vouchers provide funds to assist applicants seeking access to the world class expertise and capabilities available across the United States. GAIN seeks to provide the nuclear industrial community with access to the technical, regulatory, and financial support necessary to move new or advanced nuclear technologies toward commercialization, while ensuring the continued safe, reliable, and economic operation of the existing nuclear fleet. More information about this program can be found at the following link: <https://gain.inl.gov/SitePages/Nuclear%20Energy%20Vouchers.aspx>
- **Consolidated Innovative Nuclear Research (CINR) Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA):**

The CINR is made up of the following programs: Nuclear Energy University Program (NEUP), Nuclear Energy Enabling Technologies (NEET) Crosscutting Technology Development (CTD), and the Nuclear Science User Facilities (NSUF).
- NEUP utilizes up to 20 percent of funds appropriated to NE's Research and Development (R&D) program for university-based infrastructure support and R&D in key NE program-related areas: Fuel Cycle Research and Development (FC R&D), Reactor Concepts Research, Development and Demonstration (RC RD&D), and Nuclear Energy Advanced Modeling and Simulation (NEAMS).
- NEET CTD supports national laboratory- and university-led crosscutting research.
- NSUF provides access to world-class nuclear research facilities for researchers from U.S. universities, industry, and national laboratories.

More information about the CINR FOA can be found at the following link to the FOA: https://neup.inl.gov/SiteAssets/FY2018_Documents/NEGTN02-225431-FY_2018_CINR_FOA.pdf

- **Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E) program:**
ARPA-E issues periodic Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs), which are focused on overcoming specific technical barriers around a specific energy area. ARPA-E also issues periodic OPEN FOAs to identify high-potential projects that address the full range of energy-related technologies, as well as funding solicitations aimed at supporting America's small business innovators. More information about this program can be found at the following link: <https://arpa-e.energy.gov/?q=programs/apply-for-funding>

Additionally, the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization has several resources available to provide small businesses with assistance in developing a superior application for the Government. The link for OSDBU follows: <https://www.energy.gov/osdbu/small-business-services/guidance-small-businesses-how-do-business-department-energy>

In closing, the Office of Nuclear Energy supports research to develop and demonstrate technologies that enhance the safe operation of nuclear power plants and we appreciate your interest in the area of nuclear safety.

Sincerely,

JoAnne Hanners
Contracting Officer



Department of Energy

Idaho Operations Office

1955 Fremont Avenue

Idaho Falls, ID 83415

May 5, 2020

Dr. Robert Leishear
Leishear Engineering, LLC
205 Longleaf Court
Aiken, SC 29803-5767
leishear@aol.com

SUBJECT: Response to Leishear Engineering Comments to Letter in Reference (1)
(CLN201102)

REFERENCES: (1) Response to Dismissal of Application Letter (CLN201099)
(2) Dismissal of Application, Funding Opportunity Announcement DE-FOA-0001817, U.S. Industry Opportunities for Advanced Nuclear Technology Development, Application ARD-20.2-21608, The Autoignition of Nuclear Power Plant Explosions (CLN200911)

Dear Dr. Leishear:

As noted in the Department of Energy's (DOE) written response dated May 1, 2020 (CLN201099), the decision to dismiss was not related to your qualifications, references, or the merits of the technical content of your application. This decision does not represent any DOE position on your theory. The only assessment made on your application was that it did not align with the goals of this specific Funding Opportunity Announcement for which you applied.

Several other DOE programs that may be of interest to you were provided in the response letter referenced above. It is your responsibility to ensure that any application you prepare is consistent with the goals of, and appropriately responsive to, the associated funding opportunity.

Sincerely,

JoAnne Hanners
Contracting officer