



The Deputy Secretary of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

May 19, 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF DEPARTMENTAL ELEMENTS

FROM:  T. J. GLAUTHIER

SUBJECT: Actions to Support Employees of Accelerated Closure Sites

At present, there are approximately 400 employees assigned to accelerated closure sites. These sites are among our former nuclear production sites that are now being managed for clean up and closure on or before fiscal year 2006.

As you may know, these sites have been identified in the Department's appropriations language for accelerated closure for the purpose of transitioning the real property to private commercial activities or environmentally friendly set-asides. Accelerated closure of these sites requires that employees with critical skills be retained, to the extent possible, to complete closure activities. Upon completion of closure activities requiring their specialized skills, the employees must be provided the necessary tools to transition to other Department of Energy (DOE) positions, to other Federal positions, to the private sector, or into retirement.

Because the closure activities will occur over a number of years, the Department must plan for best use of these resources as they become available. Many of these employees have skills that will become surplus to one or more sites beginning in about 2002, following disposal of waste and nuclear materials. As employees complete tasks requiring their skills, they will be utilized at their current or other closure sites in other capacities to the extent possible.

These employees have a well-established record of dedicated and effective service to the Department as well as unique skills and talents. Therefore, I want us to do everything we can to support their transition to other DOE positions, to other employment and/or into retirement. The Department has proposed legislation, as a part of the fiscal year 2001 Defense Authorization Act, to obtain enhanced incentives to support retention and separation of employees based on completion of tasks at these sites. We are aware that these incentives alone may not be enough to ensure that we maintain the necessary skills to complete the closure requirements. For that reason, I have asked that the following actions be taken to enhance existing authorities available to the Department and to work in concert with any new authorities that we may be able to obtain.

- The Office of Management and Administration and the Office of Environmental Management (EM) will work together to develop guidelines to promote Department-wide enhanced EM-wide priority selection and provide adequate time (i.e. approximately 6 months) prior to the time employees become surplus at closure sites to identify other positions in the Department for which their skills can best be utilized.
- The Office of Environmental Management will develop a mobile cadre of technical experts to fill skills gaps at closure sites when attrition or changing needs lead to challenges that cannot be met through the existing workforce.
- Each closure site will establish a point of contact who will:
 - keep track of EM, departmental and other vacancies and ensure that employees are aware of vacancies for which they may be eligible.
 - actively seek employment opportunities for surplus employees from their site.
 - maintain a closure site home page to include resumes of employees as they become eligible for selection priority, a matrix of their skills, and their expected availability dates.
 - maintain resume books and provide them to departmental offices and other employers.

As we begin trying to identify future DOE employment for these closure site employees, keep the following in mind:

- DOE organizations can non-competitively select these employees in most cases once they have been identified as surplus, reducing the amount of time necessary to fill key positions.
- Accelerated closure sites may be able to pay or share in payment of authorized relocation costs associated with selections outside the employee's commuting area.
- Organizations can offer saved grade and pay retention to selectees from accelerated closure sites for other positions for which they qualify below their current grade level if they have been identified as surplus.

The Secretary and I are proud of the work being accomplished at the accelerated closure sites and want the employees who have performed this work to have every possible opportunity to remain within the DOE. I am requesting all departmental organizations to take part in promoting successful career transitions for accelerated closure site employees. There is a great deal of talent and unique experience among these employees, and we should do everything we can to retain those skills.

cc: Presidents of DOE Unions
Human Resources Directors