Consolidated Grant Topic Group Conference Call #2
January 19, 2000

Participating Members:

Chavarria, J. Michael, STGWG
Chavarria, Jospeh, STGWG
Gray. Ken, CTUIR
Holm, Judith, DOE/NTP
Macaluso, Corinne, DOE/RW
Moussa, Frank, State of KS, CSG/MW
Ott, Ellen, DOE/GC
Paull, Phillip, CSG/ERC
Reed, Jim, NCSL
Runyon, Tim, State of Illinois, CSG/MW
Sattler, Lisa, CSG/MW
Smith, Ralph, DOE/CAO (WIPP)
Steinhoff, Lew, DOE/DP
Usrey, Elgan, State of TN, SSEB
Wilds, Edward, State of CT, CSG/ERC
Wilkinson, J.R., STGWG

Research staff support: Judith Bradbury, PNNL

Discussion Topics:

1. Draft Task Plan

- Judith Holm explained that the purpose of the plan is to help the group to focus on important issues. She emphasized that the proposal to initiate a consolidated grant is still under debate within DOE and that TEC/WG members are being involved in the discussion and clarification of issues at an early stage. To date, the concept of a consolidated grant has been discussed by the Senior Executive Transportation Forum and is now in the process of being prepared for review at the Senior secretarial level.
- A member questioned whether the focus of the Topic Group should be to identify questions that DOE needs to address or to make recommendations on resolution of issues that already have been raised. Judith Holm replied that a dual focus is needed. She stated that the issues that had already been listed appeared to be the key issues for States and Tribes, but that DOE also needs to hear from stakeholders if there are other issues that need to be examined.
- It was agreed that the purpose of the group is to provide State and Tribal perspectives on the proposed consolidated grant and to prepare a paper outlining the issues—including proposals for resolution. Since the TEC/WG is not a FACA group and is not designed to reach consensus, there may be different perspectives on the issues and suggested resolutions.
- One member recommended that the topic group should distribute their draft issue paper to TEC/WG members two weeks before the meeting, rather than presenting it at the meeting. This would allow for prior review and enhance the meeting discussion.
- Additional issues were recommended for inclusion in the Task Plan:
  → The issue of state fees: how should these be taken into account under the grant?

→ Inspection and enforcement activities: although these are included under the category of "allowable activities," the importance of activities other than emergency response should be explicitly recognized.

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2. Additional Discussion

- Several members noted that the issue of state fees is important to the midwestern states. Their concern is that States that levy fees could effectively be punished if the amount collected in fees is subtracted from their grant—they pointed out that fees cover the operational costs of providing services, specifically an improved response structure and capabilities, and not all costs incurred.
- One member emphasized the need to clarify how the consolidated grant would address safe routine transportation activities. She noted that the proposed 180 © policy had gone into great detail to split the emergency response and safe transportation functions and that it would be useful for DOE to revisit how the policy had addressed this subject.
- A Tribal member questioned how funding would be allocated—would it be allocated according to a set amount or according to Tribes' needs? Judith Holm responded that, although funding allocations should address need, the difficult question that DOE faces is how to share out dollars when the agency has only a finite amount of money. This was the rationale for developing a formula—the intent is to develop an approach to allocating funding that is equitable, open, and based on defensible criteria. DOE would like input on the types of activities that should be allowable so that, within this framework, recipients can decide for themselves what their greatest needs are and use their funding accordingly.
- There were several question and comments about the FINCALC formula.:

→ One member noted that the discussion of the grant and the actual formula was an iterative one, since it is difficult to discuss the issues without realizing what the impact of the grant will be. He viewed FINCALC as a vehicle to help articulate the issues Judith B. agreed with this member that the most useful way to view FINCALC is to think of it as a tool—as a method to try to come up with the right mix.

→ Another member stated that he would welcome an opportunity to have a "hands-on" demonstration which DOE is planning to hold at the Las Vegas meeting. This will allow members to visualize how the dollars could be distributed and try out different factors and weightings.

→ Judith B. explained that FINCALC calculates the impact component of the grant on the basis of three equally-weighted factors: shipment numbers, mileage along potential routes, and population along those routes. However, the prototype on the web page allows users to alter these factors and weightings. [Point of clarification: There are two grant components, a base component that provides an equal amount of funding for all jurisdictions that experience a radioactive waste shipment, and an impact component that provides a variable amount of funding, based on the three factors. Thus, all States and Tribes that are projected to have DOE non-classified radioactive waste shipments will receive a base component/amount of funding as well as an impact amount.]

→ One member asked the source of information for population and highway miles and whether DOE would consider including factors such as accident factors/probability

of truck accidents. Judith H. responded that accident statistics are not included. The formula uses mileage along routes and (for States) representative population within one-half mile of potential routes as projected by HIGHWAY and INTERLINE. Alex Thrower added that allocations to Tribes are based on the entire population of the Tribe. Currently, route-specific data are not available for each Tribe. In addition, the Tribal lands are usually held in trust for the benefit of the whole Tribe; thus, although not every Tribal member lives close to a corridor that crosses a specific Tribal jurisdiction, it is appropriate to assume that the Tribe's entire membership should be considered.

→ Another member queried more specifically how the population was estimated. Judith Holm explained that RADTRAN estimates have State data broken down by census block.

→ In response to a question about the types of radioactive material included, Judith Holm replied that the historical database includes all types of (non-classified) radioactive material but that the prospective database is missing some data, especially on low-level waste.

→ A member from the northeastern region commented that population is an important factor for states in the northeast, while a Tribal member noted that DOE would need to address concerns of rural members and those related to environmental justice.

→ Another member asked that DOE provide the algebraic formula on which FINCALC is based.

NOTE: In response to the various comments and questions about FINCALC, Judith Bradbury committed to providing to members a revised explanation of the formula, along with the web page citation.

3. Member Activities in Preparation for the Las Vegas Meeting

Judith Holm discussed the format for the upcoming meeting in Las Vegas, from February 15-17. The meeting will be one full day and two half days. The topic groups will meet on the second day (Wednesday, February 16). The consolidated grant topic group is scheduled to meet from 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. The Tribal topic group will meet from 4:00-5:30 p.m. to allow members to participate in both groups. The first and final days will consist of an open plenary session and a morning-long session of topic group reports and discussion, respectively (longer than usual). We will be looking for volunteers to report out, although with help provided.

Judith B. asked for volunteers to draw up draft statements on issues of importance for general discussion at the Las Vegas meeting. The statement should include a brief discussion of the implications of the issue for his/her organization or constituency. If you have a recommendation for resolving the issue please add it. We have volunteers prepared to provide a statement on the issue of State fees (thank you!) but we are looking for volunteers on other issues. It will be helpful if we can have different perspectives on the issue.

Your help will be important in contributing to a productive discussion for all!
Please email me by January 31 on the issue of your choice (if the list does not include an issue of importance to you, please add it).

- State fees: Tim Runyon, Jim Reed, and Ralph Smith.
- Inclusion of base and impact components in the formula grant, including appropriate proportions for each component.
- Threshold for eligibility (How many shipments should trigger eligibility? Are there other options to address the needs of States and Tribes projected to receive a number below the threshold?)
- Inclusion/appropriate weighting of population as an impact factor in FINCALC: Elgan Usery. [We need input on this issue also from a western member, a Tribal member, and a northeastern member]
- Inclusion/appropriate weighting of different types of material as an impact factor in FINCALC.
- Inclusion of a discretionary grant, including basis for entitlement.
- Other.

Notes:

1. At the suggestion of members on the call, we decided to address the components of the formula rather than the formula as a whole, at this stage. We will have a hands-on demonstration so that members can become more familiar with how the formula works and possibly ask for volunteers to consider the larger formula question after the Las Vegas meeting.

2. Although we did not discuss this, on reflection, it would be helpful if members could give their issue statements to Judith Bradbury when they register for the meeting on Monday afternoon. There will be a box on the sign-in table. Please be sure to keep a copy for yourself.

Action Items

- All members will review the list of issues and respond to Judith B.'s request for volunteers to prepare a brief issue statement by January 31. They will provide the statement at the meeting registration as discussed in note 2, above.
- All members will review the revised FINCAL description and the FINCALC web site before the Las Vegas meeting (http://www.policycenter.com/fincalc).
- Judith Bradbury will:

  → Distribute to members a revised description of FINCALC and the url for the web site
  → Draw up an agenda for the Las Vegas topic group meeting based on today's discussion

→ Review issues/concerns expressed concerning 180© and compile a list of key, pertinent items for discussion in Las Vegas

→Draw up a strawman outline for the topic group's issue paper for discussion at the meeting that is based on the statement of issues received by January 31.