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Dated: September 8, 2003.

**Sally L. Stroup,**

*Assistant Secretary, Office of Postsecondary Education.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Amendment to the Record of Decision for the Department of Energy's Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Long-Term Management and Use of Depleted Uranium Hexafluoride

**AGENCY:** Department of Energy.

**ACTION:** Amendment to Record of Decision.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to 10 CFR 1021.315, the Department of Energy (DOE) is amending the Record of Decision (ROD) for its Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Alternative Strategies for the Long-Term Management and Use of Depleted Uranium Hexafluoride (DOE/EIS-0269) (DUF<sub>6</sub> PEIS) issued in August, 1999 (64 FR 43358; August 10, 1999). The DOE has now decided to transfer up to 1,700 of the approximately 4,700 cylinders containing DUF<sub>6</sub> from the East Tennessee Technology Park (ETTP) in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, to its storage facilities at DOE's enrichment facility at Portsmouth, Ohio, between 2003 and 2005.

The August 1999 ROD was based on the analysis in the DUF<sub>6</sub> PEIS, and announced that DOE anticipated shipment of approximately 4,700 cylinders containing DUF<sub>6</sub> from ETTP to a conversion facility. The DOE did not identify the specific location for shipment of ETTP cylinders at that time, but intended to leave that decision until it had concluded site-specific National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review. However, on August 2, 2002, while site-specific review was underway, the President signed the *2002 Supplemental Appropriations Act for Further Recovery From and Response To Terrorist Attacks on the United States* (Pub. L. 107-206). In pertinent part, this law required DOE to award a contract within 30 days of enactment for the design, construction, and operation of a DUF<sub>6</sub> conversion plant at each of the DOE sites at Paducah, Kentucky, and Portsmouth, Ohio. In response to Public Law 107-206, on August 29, 2002, DOE awarded a contract to Uranium Disposition Services, LLC (UDS). Now that a destination has been identified for the DUF<sub>6</sub> cylinders, DOE is amending its August 1999 ROD to ship up to 1,700 DUF<sub>6</sub> cylinders at ETTP to Portsmouth beginning in 2003 through 2005.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 1021.314c, DOE prepared a Supplemental Analysis (SA) to discuss the circumstances that are pertinent to deciding whether to prepare a new Supplemental EIS. DOE determined that no further NEPA documentation is required. DOE intends to transport the ETTP cylinders and continue its site-specific NEPA reviews of the conversion facilities.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For further information on the long-term management and use of depleted uranium hexafluoride or to receive copies of the SA, initial ROD or this

Amended ROD contact: Gary S. Hartman, U.S. Department of Energy, Oak Ridge Operations Office, Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37831, telephone (865) 576-0273, fax (865) 576-0746, e-mail: [hartmangs@oro.doe.gov](mailto:hartmangs@oro.doe.gov). For general information on the DOE NEPA process, contact Carol M. Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Compliance, EH-42/Forrestal Building, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585-0119, telephone (202) 586-4600, or leave a message at (800) 472-2756.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### I. Background

DUF<sub>6</sub> results from the process of making uranium suitable for use as fuel for nuclear power plants or for military applications. The use of uranium in these applications requires increasing the proportion of the uranium-235 isotope found in natural uranium through an isotopic separation process called uranium enrichment. Gaseous diffusion is the enrichment process currently used in the United States. The DUF<sub>6</sub> that is produced as a result of enrichment typically contains 0.2 percent to 0.4 percent uranium-235 and is stored as solid in large metal cylinders at the gaseous diffusion facilities. Large-scale uranium enrichment in the United States began as part of atomic bomb development during World War II. Uranium enrichment activities were subsequently continued under the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission and its successor agencies including DOE. Uranium enrichment was carried out at three locations: the K-25 Plant (now called the East Tennessee Technology Park or ETTP) at Oak Ridge, Tennessee, the Paducah Site in Kentucky and the Portsmouth Site in Ohio. DOE maintains approximately 700,000 metric tons (1 metric ton or mt = 1,000 kilograms, or approximately 2,205 pounds) of DUF<sub>6</sub> in about 58,000 cylinders stored at the Paducah, Portsmouth, and ETTP sites. DUF<sub>6</sub> is stored as a solid at all three sites in steel cylinders. Each cylinder holds approximately 9 to 12 metric tons of material. The cylinders usually are stacked two layers high in outdoor areas called "yards." The Paducah site has approximately 36,200 DUF<sub>6</sub> cylinders, the Portsmouth Site has approximately 16,100 DUF<sub>6</sub> cylinders, and the ETTP has approximately 4,700 DUF<sub>6</sub> cylinders.

Beginning in 1994, the DOE began work on a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) to select a new long-term strategy for managing its