



U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Inspector General
Office of Audits and Inspections

INSPECTION REPORT

Followup on the National Nuclear Security
Administration's Ability to Meet the Aircraft
Requirements of the Joint Technical
Operations Team

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May 2016



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

May 18, 2016

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ACTING ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR AND DEPUTY
UNDER SECRETARY FOR COUNTERTERRORISM AND
COUNTERPROLIFERATION

Michelle Anderson

FROM: Michelle Anderson
Assistant Inspector General
for Audits and Inspections
Office of Inspector General

SUBJECT: INFORMATION: Inspection Report on the “Followup on the National
Nuclear Security Administration’s Ability to Meet the Aircraft
Requirements of the Joint Technical Operations Team”

BACKGROUND

The Department of Energy’s National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) is responsible for enhancing national security through the military application of nuclear science. NNSA works to reduce global danger from weapons of mass destruction and responds to nuclear and radiological emergencies in the United States and abroad. NNSA’s Joint Technical Operations Team (JTOT) provides scientific and technical support to the lead Federal agency during all aspects of a nuclear or radiological weapon of mass destruction terrorist incident. The JTOT’s response areas include, but are not limited to, foreign nuclear weapons, improvised nuclear devices, radiological dispersal devices, and recapture and recovery.

In our June 2003 inspection report on *National Nuclear Security Administration’s Ability to Meet the Aircraft Requirements of the Joint Technical Operations Team* (DOE/IG-0605), we found that NNSA was not prepared to meet its aircraft requirements for JTOT missions and there was no contingency planning for those occasions when NNSA aircraft were not available for JTOT missions.

We initiated this review to determine whether NNSA had taken corrective actions to meet the aircraft requirements of the JTOT missions. For national security reasons, we have excluded specific JTOT operational capabilities and details from this report.

RESULTS OF INSPECTION

Our inspection determined that NNSA had taken corrective actions in conjunction with Presidential Policy Directive 25 (PPD-25) *Domestic Guidelines*, dated January 17, 2014, that addressed the recommendations noted in our 2003 report. In the 2003 report, we recommended

that NNSA develop a formal written agreement with the Department of Defense (DOD) detailing the specific JTOT aircraft support responsibilities and establish contingency plans for JTOT aviation support when NNSA aircraft are not available. Specifically, since our 2003 report, NNSA entered into several signed Memorandums of Agreement (MOAs) and Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) within NNSA and with the DOD. The purpose of these memorandums is to increase readiness response to emergencies and to provide clarification on the roles and responsibilities of both the NNSA and DOD with respect to aviation support. PPD-25 and the NNSA–DOD MOA outline the contingency plans to ensure aviation support when NNSA aircraft are not available.

Directive, Agreements, and Understandings

PPD-25 established contingency planning for those occasions when NNSA aircraft are incapable of performing the emergency response mission and tasks another government agency with airlift support responsibilities. NNSA and DOD entered into a signed formal written MOA in conjunction with PPD-25 that outlined contingency plans to ensure aviation support when NNSA aircraft are not available. The MOA detailed each agency’s transportation responsibility and delineated the type of aircraft available for emergency response operations. Further, a signed MOA exists between NNSA’s Office of Secure Transportation (OST), Office of Emergency Response Operations, and the Department of Energy’s Office of Aviation Management that establishes mutual responsibilities of aviation support, to include NNSA OST aircraft requirements and priorities for actual radiological incidents.

Additionally, NNSA and DOD signed formal written MOUs that outlined the roles and responsibilities of NNSA and DOD with respect to terrorist nuclear threats and to increase readiness to respond to emergencies. Specifically, NNSA’s MOU with the U.S. Army’s 20th Support Command established the roles, responsibilities, and resource commitments in response to improvised nuclear devices and radiological dispersion devices worldwide. Finally, a signed MOU exists between DOD’s U.S. Northern Command and NNSA to establish regular and formal cooperation in planning emergency response activities, to include information sharing procedures and processes.

Aircraft Requirements

There are three NNSA OST aircraft available to support the JTOT missions. OST Aviation Operations Division (AOD) is required to maintain one aircraft, an aircrew, ground support, and maintenance personnel on alert to launch not more than 4 hours after notification of a nuclear or radiological incident, 365 days a year. In addition, there are a total of seven pilots supporting the mission, and two pilots are always on call and must be ready to respond within 3 hours of notification.

To verify NNSA’s JTOT mission aircraft capability and timeline requirements, we attended a joint drill exercise in 2015. We observed an NNSA aircraft that was equipped with a uniquely modified cargo door to quickly load prepackaged emergency response equipment. The exercise simulated a mission and included the deployment of JTOT and DOD explosive ordinance

disposal personnel on NNSA aircraft. The mission demonstrated the capabilities of the NNSA aircraft and JTOT coordination with DOD. We confirmed that NNSA conducted an after action report after the exercise to document lessons learned.



NNSA OST AOD 737-400 aircraft that shows a uniquely modified cargo door, which expedites the loading and transporting of cargo to support the OST AOD missions to include JTOT.

PATH FORWARD

Based on our review, NNSA has taken corrective actions in conjunction with the issuance of PPD-25 that addressed the issues identified in our 2003 inspection report. Therefore, we are not making any formal recommendations. We appreciate the cooperation of your staff during our inspection.

Attachment

cc: Deputy Secretary
Chief of Staff
NNSA Administrator

OBJECTIVE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this review was to determine if the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) had taken corrective actions to meet the aircraft requirements of the Joint Technical Operations Team (JTOT) mission.

SCOPE

The inspection was conducted at the NNSA Complex located in Albuquerque, New Mexico. We also participated in an emergency response exercise in March 2015. The inspection was performed from November 2014 to May 2016 and focused on a review of NNSA's ability to meet the aircraft requirements of the Joint Technical Operations Team. The inspection was conducted under the Office of Inspector General project number S15IS003.

METHODOLOGY

To accomplish our objective, we:

- Conducted interviews with appropriate Department of Energy, Department of Defense, and NNSA officials responsible for managing and implementing the JTOT program;
- Reviewed relevant Memorandums of Agreement, Memorandums of Understanding, Presidential Policy Directives, Office of Secure Transportation (OST) Aviation Operations Division (AOD) criteria, Department of Energy and NNSA policies and procedures relating to JTOT emergency response missions;
- Reviewed OST AOD aircraft utilization reports and NA-40 aviation requirements for fiscal year (FY) 2014 and FY 2015;
- Observed a JTOT joint drill exercise that demonstrated NNSA aircraft and equipment capabilities as well as JTOT coordination with other Federal agencies; and
- Judgmentally sampled one aircraft request per quarter for FY 2014 and FY 2015 and verified that NNSA aircraft were available for exercises during the period reviewed.

We conducted this management-based inspection in accordance with the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency's *Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation*. Those standards require that we plan and perform the inspection to obtain sufficient appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our conclusions and observations based on our inspection objective. We believe the evidence obtained provided a reasonable basis for our conclusions and observations based on our inspection objective. Accordingly, the inspection included tests of controls and compliance with laws and regulations to the extent necessary to satisfy the inspection objective. Because our review was limited, it would not necessarily have

disclosed all internal control deficiencies that may have existed at the time of our inspection. We did not rely on computer-processed data to satisfy the inspection objective; therefore, we did not conduct a reliability assessment.

An exit conference was waived by NNSA Management on May 2, 2016.

PRIOR REPORT

Inspection Report on [*National Nuclear Security Administration's Ability to Meet the Aircraft Requirements of the Joint Technical Operations Team*](#) (DOE/IG-0605, June 2003). The inspection was initiated to determine if the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) could meet the aircraft requirements of the Department of Energy's Joint Technical Operations Team (JTOT) missions. The report noted that NNSA aircraft were not always available to support potential JTOT missions. Furthermore, there was no formal contingency planning for those occasions when NNSA aircraft were not available for JTOT missions. Also, there were significantly differing views regarding the Department of Energy's intent or obligation to provide aircraft support to Department of Defense for the missions. The issues identified were due to the lack of written guidance and formal plans to address aviation support responsibilities and ensure aviation assets would be available to support JTOT missions.

FEEDBACK

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