

INL News Release
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Energy Department retains INL contractor until 2014

IDAHO FALLS -- The U.S. Department of Energy has decided to retain its Idaho National Laboratory contractor for the duration of the 10-year contract, which means Battelle Energy Alliance will continue to run INL through September 2014.

After concluding a special assessment mandated by BEA's 2005 contract, DOE announced the decision. The clause required DOE to review the contractor's performance by Sept. 30, 2008, and decide whether to reduce the contract term.

"The department takes this evaluation seriously and a lot of work went into evaluating the lab performance over the past three years," said Beth Sellers, manager of DOE's Idaho Operations Office. "It pleases me very much to report that the contract will run its full term."

The department assessed BEA's overall performance against established standards, helping ensure both the short- and long-term ability of BEA to meet DOE missions and promote innovation.

The special assessment summary report commended BEA in several areas, including support of nuclear research and energy programs, environment, health and safety, and campus development. It also spelled out areas of opportunity that require focused attention by BEA.

The assessment also evaluated general management of the lab, saying BEA achieved a "notable increase in accountability and performance," and that "DOE is optimistic that recent results are a good indicator of future performance." And the report commended "particularly strong performance in the National and Homeland Security programs, validating [INL's] strategies in critical infrastructure protection and nuclear nonproliferation."

"Now we have to continue the momentum in making the INL a truly world-class laboratory during what will likely be challenging economic times," Sellers said. "I believe we're up for the challenge."

INL director John Grossenbacher also congratulated employees and managers.

"That confidence that DOE has put in us allows us the opportunity to continue building what we've started here, and to make the important contributions that we think are essential to the energy future, the energy security of our country," he said. "It allows us to have continuity in our people, purpose, standards and principles."

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By Brad Bugger