



## Administrator D'Agostino's Remarks at the HEUMF Dedication Event

### Speech

Mar 22, 2010

Good afternoon.

Thank you, Ted, for that kind introduction and for the excellent job you have done here as our Site Office Manager. We have a terrific leadership team at our sites, but Y-12 is fortunate to have one of our best here in Ted. Thank you for your service.

When I first started in the position of Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs a number of years ago I was struck by how we were viewed by our customers in the Department of Defense. We had a reputation as being well intentioned but challenged technically, and having a very difficult time delivering our work on time, and within cost. You and I were not satisfied with this reputation. In response we undertook a multi-year effort to focus on our mission, improve our reputation and define our future. As a result of that effort we adopted a phrase and an approach for our work in Defense Programs. That phrase was Getting the Job Done! Getting the Job Done means delivering on our commitments each and every time. Getting the Job Done means that all organizations in the NNSA, whether they are laboratories or production sites, are judged not on what they accomplish separately, but on what we accomplish together. Getting the Job Done means delivering the products and capabilities required to keep our nation and the world safe. That is what all of you have done here at Y12. You are Getting the Job Done and I thank you.

I have been fortunate to serve in the NNSA for many years, and am honored to have this opportunity to serve as Administrator during what I consider to be one of the most important periods in our history. This month marks the 10th anniversary of NNSA, and I believe that the accomplishment we are celebrating today provides the proof that we are turning the corner in transforming the Y12 site, and that we are doing so with clarity of mission and purpose.

As you know the President's FY2011 Program and Budget Request includes the largest increase in effort since the NNSA was stood up. This reflects the emerging bipartisan consensus in Washington that now is the time to recapitalize an aging, outdated and expensive nuclear security infrastructure so it can meet the ever more complex set of nuclear security challenges of the 21st century.

The work you do here at Y-12 is critical to our nation's security, and critical to the future of our enterprise. From managing the enduring nuclear stockpile, to dismantling retired weapon systems, to supporting the President's nuclear nonproliferation agenda, to providing the U.S. Navy with sound, safe and reliable nuclear propulsion, the HEUMF supports all of these missions.

But, more importantly, HEUMF is a powerful reminder of what is possible for the future of our enterprise. As Vice President Biden said in a recent speech, "some of the facilities we use to handle uranium and plutonium date back to the days when the world's great powers were led by Truman, Churchill, and Stalin." The facilities that used to store Highly Enriched Uranium fall under that category. But as you see before us today, we now have a new, modern, state of the art facility.

HEUMF provides a clear example, I'll call it the Poster Child, of what we are trying to accomplish as we work to transform an Old Cold War nuclear weapons complex into a 21st Century Nuclear Security Enterprise. We must invest in the tools and capabilities required to effectively manage the stockpile and support the full range of nuclear security missions.

As you know, the Administration is putting the final touches on the Nuclear Posture Review. Some of the early analysis of the Review concluded that maintaining the safety, security and effectiveness of the enduring nuclear deterrent requires increased investments to strengthen an aging physical infrastructure and sustain a depleting technical human capital base. That includes ensuring our nation has modern uranium processing facilities here at Y-12.

The President's FY2011 Program and Budget Request includes specific funds to continue the design of the Uranium Processing Facility because this President and this Secretary understand that investing now in a modern, sustainable Nuclear Security Enterprise is the right thing to do.

With HEUMF, you have shown what can be done if we have sound management and the resources we need to do the job. I am proud of the fact that, by condensing initial loading of HEUMF into 90 days or less, you have already saved the taxpayers about \$26 million in security costs.

Now we need to get the job done on the Uranium Processing Facility. That means doing everything we can to improve the way we do business.

During this month's budget hearings, I was repeatedly asked about our ability to manage complex construction projects like UPF. It's a fair question. If we expect Congress to trust us with increased resources during challenging economic times, we must renew our commitment to being effective stewards of taxpayer dollars. We take this responsibility very seriously.

That is why, under the Secretary's leadership, we have undertaken a series of management reforms that will change the way we do business in NNSA, the Department, and across the enterprise. For example, at NNSA, we started a process known as the Zero-Based Security Review that has helped drive down our security costs while sustaining core physical security capabilities at our sites.

We also established a Supply Chain Management Center that has already saved the taxpayers more than \$130 million by pooling purchasing power across our sites and adopting modern procurement tools.

My point in raising these matters is that we will not be operating on a "business as usual" basis. We are making continuous improvements to assure the taxpayers that we are good stewards of their money. But, we need to do more, and we need to do much better.

That is why the Department recently issued a new construction policy that will significantly improve the way we manage large construction projects like UPF.

First, we're going to improve our cost estimates by spending more money up front figuring out exactly what we want before we ask Congress to fund construction. Ensuring greater design maturity will help ensure that we stick to our project baselines.

Next, we will make sure we have the right people managing these projects by ensuring that we have fully qualified federal project directors on every single project.

Also, instead of having independent cost estimates done only at the performance baseline, we're going to do it at the end of each critical decision stage in order to have somebody outside of the organization validate the numbers independent of the NNSA.




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Our mission is as important today as it has ever been. We are seeing that in this year's Program and Budget Request; We are seeing it in the Department's commitment to leveraging our nation's investments in the Nuclear Security Enterprise to identify new tools to tackle our nation's broader challenges; and We are seeing it in the renewed focus on innovation in science and technology.

We can't fulfill any of these missions without the great work that each and every one of you do in defense of our country. With the Highly Enriched Uranium Materials Facility, and the upcoming Uranium Processing Facility, you will have the 21st Nuclear Security Enterprise to tackle 21st Century Nuclear Security mission work in nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear counter terrorism, nuclear propulsion, nuclear forensics, and of course nuclear stockpile stewardship.

Like many of you, I have a special draw to our nation's security, not just because of my current position, but also because of my 27 years of active duty and reserve time as a Naval Officer in the Submarine Force. There is a tradition in the Navy that goes back to World War I. When a ship or command does a particularly good job, the commanding officer hoists two signal flags up the yardarm. One flag represents the letter "B" and the other the letter "Z". For the past 90 years, "BZ" or Bravo Zulu signifies exceptional work. And commanding officers, when conveying a job well done, typically end their message with this phrase.

As Administrator for the NNSA and your Commanding Officer, I thank you for Getting the Job Done here at Y12. Bravo Zulu.

Now, it is my honor to invite Secretary Chu, Ted Sherry and Darrel Kohlhorst to join me in unveiling a new plaque commemorating the dedication of the Highly Enriched Uranium Materials Facility here at the Y-12 National Security Complex.

Location:  
Y-12 National Security Complex, Oak Ridge, Tenn.

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