



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE April 29, 2014

Contact: Jay Coghlan, Nuclear Watch NM, cell 505.692.5854, jay@nukewatch.org
Scott Kovac, Nuclear Watch NM, office 505.989.7342, scott@nukewatch.org

**NNSA Releases Long-Range Plans for New/Revamped Nuclear Weapons
Misleading sales pitch to Congress claims cost savings through delays,
Undocumented lowered estimates and incomplete reporting.
\$7.5 - 9.5 billion in cost savings claimed for a program that doesn't exist.
Basic maintenance and dismantlements of nuclear weapons deprioritized.**

Santa Fe, NM – The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) recently released its FY 2015 Stockpile Stewardship and Management Plan (SSMP), in which it continues to push its “3+2 strategy” for a future nuclear weapons stockpile. NNSA proposes three “interoperable” warheads for ICBM and sub-launched missiles, plus two air-delivered weapons, the refurbished B61-12 bomb and a new cruise missile warhead. These five heavily modified weapons would be created through exorbitant Life Extension Programs for existing nuclear weapons. This is all part of a pattern in which the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that \$355 billion will be spent over the next decade on nuclear weapons and their missiles, subs and bombers, while the following two decades will cost even more because “modernization” is only now beginning. This will no doubt cost the American taxpayer more than a trillion dollars for nuclear weapons of debatable utility.

However, NNSA reworks the numbers in its latest Plan to make its 3+2 strategy appear more fiscally palatable.

To begin with, NNSA’s 3+2 strategy is ill-advised because:

- It is very expensive, robbing funding from needed nonproliferation, dismantlement, nuclear safety and cleanup programs.
- The U.S. Navy does not support interoperable warheads.
- Life Extension Programs (LEPs) may adversely affect stockpile reliability by introducing major changes to existing nuclear weapons that are currently known to be highly reliable.

Given budget constraints, NNSA is paying for its 3+2 strategy by robbing from virtually all other programs. Increased nuclear weapons funding will be paid for off the back of nonproliferation and dismantlement programs; by keeping cleanup funding flat, even as cost estimates of genuine cleanup rise; and potentially cutting funding for nuclear facility safety when “the decrease is to reduce base operational costs and funds higher NNSA priorities.” NNSA has made explicit what its higher priorities are: The B61 and subsequent Life Extension Programs under its 3+2 strategy.

But NNSA now claims that the 3+2 strategy is “generally affordable and more executable than the program proposed in the FY 2014 SSMP.” Detailed analysis by Nuclear Watch New Mexico shows that the new Plan is highly misleading because it:

- Delays projects and their costs, which almost always results in higher total costs.

- Lowers budget estimates while claiming undocumented improved cost modeling, when NNSA has an abysmal record in cost estimates.
- Claims \$7.5 – 9.5 billion in savings for NOT doing a Life Extension Program that was never planned.
- Omits costs of directly related programs, which may exceed the costs of the LEPs themselves.
- Depicts costs as gradually tapering off, while failing to disclose that even more expensive follow-on LEPs are planned to begin 20 years after the first round of Life Extension Programs.

Meanwhile, according to a recent DOE Inspector General audit report, NNSA and the nuclear weapons labs have failed to diligently keep original weapon design information, which hollows out their claimed mantle of ensuring stockpile reliability.

Jay Coghlan, Nuclear Watch Director, commented, “The antidote to the exorbitant, potentially harmful 3+2 strategy is genuine stewardship or “curatorship” of the nuclear weapons stockpile, which would preserve original designs as much as possible. This would free up money for critically needed nonproliferation, dismantlement, nuclear safety and cleanup programs. NNSA’s case for its 3+2 strategy is hollow. Congress should direct the nuclear weapons complex to get back to the basics of ensuring stockpile safety and reliability, while saving taxpayers money.”

###

Nuclear Watch’s detailed analysis of NNSA’s FY 2015 Stockpile Stewardship and Management Plan, including sources and key NNSA excerpts, is available at

<http://nukewatch.org/importantdocs/resources/FY2015-SSMP-analysis.pdf>

An Executive Summary is available at

<http://nukewatch.org/importantdocs/resources/FY2015-SSMP-analysis-summary.pdf>

The NNSA FYs 2014 and 2015 Stockpile Stewardship and Management Plans are available at

<http://www.nnsa.energy.gov/ourmission/managingthestockpile/ssmp>

The Congressional Budget Office report *Projected Costs of Nuclear Forces 2014 -2023* is available at <http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/12-19-2013-NuclearForces.pdf>

Related, please see “[The Trillion Dollar Nuclear Triad: US Strategic Nuclear Modernization Over the Next Thirty Years](#)”, The James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, January 7, 2014.

For U.S. Navy lack of support for interoperable warheads see “Navy Perspective of W78/88 LEP Phase 6.2,” 9/27/12, <http://www.nukewatch.org/importantdocs/resources/Navy-Memo-W87W88.pdf>

For NNSA’s failure to keep original nuclear weapons designs, see DOE Inspector General Report, [NNSA Nuclear Weapons Systems Configuration Management](#) (DOE/IG-0902), DOE Office of Inspector General, March 2014.