



Under Secretary for Science

Washington, DC 20585

October 24, 2006

Dr. Michelle S. Broido
Associate Vice Chancellor for Basic Biomedical Research,
And Director, Office of Research, Health Sciences
University of Pittsburgh
Scaife Hall, Suite 401
3550 Terrace Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15261

Dear Dr. Broido:

By this letter, I am charging the Biological and Environmental Research Advisory Committee (BERAC) to convene a panel to assess the effectiveness of the combined stationary and mobile Atmospheric Radiation Measurement (ARM) facilities as a national scientific user facility – The ARM Facility. I am also charging the BERAC to assess the cost effectiveness of operating the ARM facility. The facilities are funded by the BER Climate Change Research Program.

The panel is specifically charged to assess how well the ARM facility is serving the needs of members of the open scientific user community who are not funded by the ARM program. For example, are the stationary and mobile ARM facilities being maintained and operated effectively to serve their needs? What changes, if any, are needed to better serve the needs of outside users? What evidence demonstrates that these facilities are being effectively used by the open scientific user community?

With respect to cost effectiveness of the ARM facility operations, what factors are driving the costs of maintaining and operating the ARM facility and what has been the trend in these factors over the past 5 years? What actions, if any, have been taken to optimize ARM facility operations over the past 5 years and what are the cost savings that have been realized? What are additional actions that could be implemented to optimize ARM facility operations and realize additional cost savings?

The panel is also asked to assess whether critical recommendations from an earlier independent review conducted in 2005 of the operations of the ARM facility have been or are being adequately implemented. The report from the 2005 review of ARM facility operations is accessible at:

<http://www.arm.gov/publications/programdocs/doe-er-arm-0502.pdf>

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Raymond L. Orbach".

Raymond L. Orbach
Under Secretary for Science



Cc: Elwood, Jerry
Ferrell, Wanda