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## AT THE NEVADA TEST SITE . SMALL BUSINESSES SOUGHT FOR SECURITY CONTRACT

The National Nuclear Security Administration is considering setting aside the upcoming Nevada Test Site protective force contract for small businesses, which could force incumbent WSI to join up with small businesses to retain the site security contract it has held since 1965. In a June 22 solicitation, the NNSA said that it was looking for small businesses, small business-led teams and joint ventures that qualify as small businesses to perform security protective force services at NTS, the Remote Sensing Laboratory at Nellis Air Force Base, and the North Las Vegas Complex. WSI's five-year contract at the test site expires in May of 2011. WSI has performed well at the site, earning 95.7 percent of its available fee (\$3.1 million out of an available \$3.2 million) and an "outstanding" rating in FY2009.

The new contract is expected to last five years and has an estimated value of more than \$300 million. According to the NNSA's solicitation, it would like to determine whether small businesses could perform the protective forces work at the site. "The purpose of this announcement is solely to determine the availability of small businesses having interest and capability to provide protective force services for the NNSA/NSO supported sites," the agency said. The contract is anticipated to be a performance-based fixed labor rate with cost-only reimbursable other direct costs and award-fee hybrid. A Request for Proposals is expected to be released in October, according to the solicitation. Interested small businesses are asked to submit statements of capabilities by July 7 to Contracting Officer Larry Veltman via email at [Lveltman@doeal.gov](mailto:Lveltman@doeal.gov).

## AT LOS ALAMOS . . . . . COST OF TA-55 SEISMIC UPGRADES SOARING

Los Alamos National Laboratory is confronting an unexpected 20-fold increase in the cost of seismic upgrades to high-risk gloveboxes in the lab's Technical Area 55 (TA-55) plutonium complex, according to a recent report from the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board. Seismic upgrades to stabilize gloveboxes with either ignition sources or significant quantities of plutonium—10 kilograms or greater—is a key part of the lab's near-term strategy to deal with the risks associated with a worst-case earthquake scenario at PF-4, the 1970s-era plutonium complex where the lab's pit fabrication and other heavy plutonium work is done. The DNFSB has raised questions about the issue in a strongly worded series of communications because of the possibility that a major earthquake could cause fires within PF-4's plutonium glovebox lines and breach the building's containment, sparking a release that exceeds exposure guidelines to the maximally exposed individual by "by more than two orders of magnitude" (*NW&M Monitor*, Vol. 14 No. 44).

A near-term fix for the problem had involved seismic upgrades to high risk gloveboxes, which the lab and NNSA had estimated would cost some \$80,000 each. The plan under the lab's Documented Safety Analysis approved by the NNSA in 2008 was to upgrade all of the high risk gloveboxes by 2011. Such improvements would result in a 10-fold decrease in dose to the maximally exposed off site individual. But according to a June 4 report from the DNFSB, the estimated price tag per glovebox for seismic upgrades has risen to \$850,000 each. In addition, the DNFSB reported that a new comprehensive survey by the lab has concluded that 157 gloveboxes need to be upgraded, "roughly twice as many as originally expected."

The work is being done as part of Phase 2 of the TA-55 Reinvestment Project (TRP). But the Obama administration's Fiscal Year 2011 budget requests just \$20 million for that project, part of a time line that according to the DNFSB would upgrade just 40 gloveboxes by 2014. Los Alamos officials did not respond to a request for comment.

## AT LOS ALAMOS . . . . . CONSTRUCTION WORK CONVERGING ON PAJARITO MESA

Ten significant construction projects are underway or planned for Los Alamos National Laboratory's "Pajarito Corridor," a surge in work that will bring a major increase in short-term work force and change the face of the lab's main nuclear work and waste handling areas, lab officials said in plans laid out before members of the public at a recent meeting. At the peak of work in 2015, nearly 1,000 workers beyond the lab's regular work force will be occupied in building the lab's new Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Replacement-Nuclear Facility (CMRR-NF) along with other projects underway at the same time, lab

Deputy Associate Director John Bretzke said during a "construction forum" held for members of the community interested in participating in the sweeping set of projects.

While acknowledging that federal budget uncertainties pose a potential constraint on the work, lab officials told members of the public attending that they could expect major changes in the area, the largest of which may be the practical problem of closing Pajarito Road, a major corridor for lab workers, for as much as two years. Some 4,600 lab workers currently use the road daily. Pajarito