

DoD laboratory directors can and do take on specific projects for other Government agencies on a fund reimburseable basis. In general, the decision to do so rests with the laboratory director, and is shared with his management agency. However, the major constraint here is personnel ceiling. If significant additional manpower is required, it must generally be obtained through the performing agency rather than the agency with the problem. It is for this reason I recommend that consideration be given to the elimination of manpower ceilings for cross-agency work.

Let me re-emphasize again that we must be careful in assigning non-agency missions to existing laboratories. We must not so dilute their performance that they lose the very focus which made them a quality laboratory.

*Question No. 9. Based on your experience, what advantages and disadvantages would you see in an office of Government laboratory management located at the level of or within the Office of Science and Technology? Such an office would be analogous to the present Office of the Assistant Director (Laboratory Management), in the Department of Defense's Office of Defense Research and Engineering.*

Answer. In terms of improving the ability of the DoD to accomplish its mission, I can see no advantage in the establishment of such an office in OST. In fact, it would add an additional echelon and would certainly retard our ability to take decisive action in a timely fashion. As far as I can determine, there has been no problem in obtaining the support of other agencies for the priority needs of the DoD. In certain areas the OST has been directly involved in assisting us to achieve our objectives either through studies by PSAC or the FCST. We will and have assisted new agencies in the performance of R&D to support their mission, at least during the early, formative years. The direct assistance of OST is seldom needed since the agencies involved can work out mutually acceptable arrangements with a minimum of difficulty.

There may be one function which OST could perform or for which it could provide leadership. When a new agency is established, a new, important program emerges, or an existing program takes on added importance or priority, OST could appraise their RDT&E needs in terms of existing capability and assist the new program or agency in obtaining the required assistance.

I must emphasize, however, that the day-to-day management and the decision-making process must remain with the agency heads who are really the only ones who can assure the proper balance, purpose and priorities of his laboratory structure in relation to the needs of his total mission.

*Question No. 10. It has been said that within Government we tend to force everything into one prescribed pattern whether it fits well or not. Do you believe that Federal laboratories operate most efficiently under the same current system of controls over manpower, dollars and facility acquisitions as for other types of organizations? Do you believe it is possible or desirable to tailor a system of controls for creative organization which might differ significantly from the "standard" control system? What would be the advantages? The disadvantages? Cite examples.*

Answer. The evidence is overwhelming that the standard patterns of Government operation are unhealthy for laboratories. We must find a way to create a management climate for the Federal laboratories equal to the most progressive, high technology industrial organizations. Virtually every study that has been made of the in-house laboratory system has been critical, in varying degrees, of the management of manpower, facilities, funding and personnel resources. Responsibility over these resources are fragmented among many staff agencies, whose concerns and interests are much broader than merely RDT&E.

Within the Government, RDT&E activities are bound too often by practices designed for logistical and operational activities—in contrast to the more generally recognized practices of industrial organizations, which are tailored specifically for the creative, laboratory-type organization.

In spite of these constraints, however, we find many successful laboratories which have found a way around the rigidity in the system or have been somehow protected from these patterns. We have also made a great deal of progress within the Federal Personnel System. Many special provisions have been provided to give flexibility with respect to personnel administration. Part of the problem is that a great deal of the flexibility available just isn't being used. Within DoD we have initiated a concerted effort to see that these flexibilities are available to and utilized by the laboratory directors. Comparable increased flexibilities in other resource areas are also needed.