

II. USING THIS PLAN

This plan is intended to be used as a management tool to give the Department, along with Laboratory Operations Board and the Congress, a common basis for making decisions to guide the laboratory complex towards the vision outlined in the plan. The information in the plan gives managers in both DOE program offices and the laboratories a better understanding of how their work relates and compares to other work in the Department. We expect this to lead programs and laboratories, at all levels of their organizations, to take actions to differentiate and/or integrate their activities with respect to other activities in the Department. This process will lead to sharper focus at each laboratory, greater collaboration among elements of the laboratory system, and better management.

The Department and Laboratory Operations Board will provide impetus to this process by reviewing the Department's R&D programs and the roles of the laboratories. These reviews are described in Section VI.

The information in this plan also provides Congress with information that is useful in its oversight of the Department and its laboratories. This will help the Department and Congress work together to address the complex issue of eliminating redundancies within the national laboratory system without sacrificing clear areas of R&D excellence or jeopardizing the complementary skills and diversity of approaches needed to stimulate innovation and maintain excellence.

We expect this process to result in a clearer understanding of how the Department manages the national R&D programs for which it has responsibility, and in management changes that will improve the productivity of these programs. In this fashion, the plan will help the Department and its laboratories achieve their vision of a cost-effective, world-class laboratory complex for the 21st century.