



Department of Energy
Office of Science
Washington, DC 20585

Office of the Director

April 21, 2004

Dr. Keith O. Hodgson
Director, Stanford Synchrotron Radiation Laboratory
Department of Chemistry
Stanford University
Stanford, CA 94305

Dear Dr. Hodgson:

One of the five initiatives on the President's Management Agenda is budget and performance integration. This initiative builds on the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) and previous efforts to identify program goals and performance measures and to link them with the budget process. The FY 2003 President's Budget was the first to include explicit assessments of program performance.

The Administration has taken unprecedented steps to reform the budget process by establishing a systematic, consistent process for developing program performance ratings and then using that information to make budget decisions. To enhance the practical use of performance information, OMB, in collaboration with other Federal agencies, has developed the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART), comprised of assessment criteria on program performance and management. The PART establishes a high, "good government" standard of performance and will be used to rate programs in an open, public fashion. Ratings for 20 percent of programs will be published in the FY 2004 Budget, and the basis for the rating made available to the public.

Last year, BERAC helped us develop long term performance measures for BER along with definitions of success for each of the measures. These measures, along with those from the other program offices in the Office of Science, are available on the web at <http://www.sc.doe.gov/measures/>. I now need BERAC's help with the next steps in the process. We have been working with Joel Parriott at OMB to better define how progress and success toward achieving our long term performance goals will be measured between now and 2015. Joel is currently scheduled to make a presentation at the upcoming BERAC meeting on April 29 to better define what we need to do. BERAC then needs to define a process that it will use to regularly evaluate BER's interim progress toward achieving its long term performance goals.

In addition, one of BER's annual performance measures is based on the efficiency of operation of its scientific user facilities. The list of BER user facilities is now expanded to include not only structural biology user stations (tracked by Basic Energy Sciences as



part of synchrotron light source operation) and the Environmental Molecular Sciences Laboratory but now Atmospheric Radiation Measurement sites, the Laboratory for Functional and Comparative Genomics at Oak Ridge (the new mouse facility), and the Joint Genome Institute's Production Genomics Facility. The last three facilities are nontraditional facilities for which definitions of an "operating hour" are not intuitively obvious. I would like for BERAC to help us define an operating hour for these nontraditional facilities so that we can then decide if it is reasonable to increase our operating efficiency goal from 90 percent to 95percent of total operating hours.

I need BERAC's recommendations for both of these items by August 6, 2004, so that we can incorporate this information into our FY 2006 budget documents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Raymond L. Orbach".

Raymond L. Orbach
Director