



U.S. NUCLEAR WASTE TECHNICAL REVIEW BOARD

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET JUSTIFICATION FISCAL YEAR 2024

**INCLUDING BOARD PERFORMANCE AND MANAGEMENT GOALS FOR
FISCAL YEARS 2023 THROUGH 2024**

AND

EVALUATION OF BOARD PERFORMANCE IN FISCAL YEAR 2022

MARCH 2023

U.S. NUCLEAR WASTE TECHNICAL REVIEW BOARD

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

FISCAL YEAR 2024

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INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board (Board) is an independent agency in the Executive Branch of the federal government. The Board performs ongoing and objective peer review of the technical and scientific validity of activities undertaken by the Secretary of Energy under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act (NWPA) (Public Law 97-425), as amended, including the packaging, transportation, and disposal of spent nuclear fuel (SNF) and high-level radioactive waste (HLW). The Board also advises and makes recommendations to Congress and the Secretary on technical issues related to nuclear waste management and disposal.

Contained in this Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Congressional Budget Justification is the Board's Performance Plan for FYs 2023 through 2024 and the Board's evaluation of its FY 2022 performance. The Board's budget request for FY 2024 is \$4,064,000, which is a 2.9% increase from the agency's FY 2023 enacted budget. The Board's FY 2024 request reflects its continued strong commitment to sound budgeting and cost-effective management practices and the focus of the Board's leadership on maximizing program performance and efficiency through evidence-based decision making and ongoing evaluation of the agency's performance.

ABOUT THE BOARD

The Board was established in the 1987 amendments to the NWPA to "...evaluate the technical and scientific validity of activities undertaken by the Secretary after the date of enactment of the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1987" (NWPAA). In accordance with this mandate, and in line with the legislative history of the NWPAA, the Board conducts independent analyses of U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) activities and provides expert advice to DOE and Congress on technical issues related to nuclear waste management and disposal.

The law requires the Board to report its findings, conclusions, and recommendations to Congress and the Secretary. The legislative history of the NWPAA makes clear that the Board cannot compel DOE to accept Board recommendations, but DOE is expected to heed the Board's advice or clearly state why it does not. According to the NWPAA, "the Board shall cease to exist not later than one year after the date on which the Secretary begins disposal of high-level radioactive waste or spent nuclear fuel in a repository."

THE BOARD'S CONTINUING ROLE

When Congress amended the NWPA in 1987 to identify Yucca Mountain in Nevada as the sole site to be characterized for its suitability as the location for a deep geologic repository, concerns were raised that, without a comparison of sites, the technical and scientific credibility of the site-characterization effort might be questioned. Congress created the Board to ensure that an ongoing independent peer review of DOE's nuclear waste management activities would be undertaken, including packaging and transporting SNF and HLW and developing a repository for the permanent disposal of the wastes.

For more than 30 years following the enactment of the NWPAA, the Board’s review largely focused on DOE work related to characterizing the Yucca Mountain site and developing a deep geologic repository. Since 2010, the Board’s review has changed to focus on DOE research related to the packaging, storage, and transportation of SNF, the performance of SNF and HLW in a repository, DOE studies related to the potential siting of a repository in different geologic environments, and efforts to integrate the waste management system. From the time the Board began operation, it has continued to report the findings, conclusions, and recommendations from its ongoing review of the technical and scientific validity of DOE’s activities to Congress and the Secretary of Energy. The Board will continue these activities in FY 2024.

The Board’s objective and independent review and analysis of DOE’s activities will continue to be indispensable to the technical credibility, successful implementation, and public acceptance of the nuclear waste management program in the future.

BOARD STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR FYS 2022 THROUGH 2026

The Board established three Strategic Objectives in its Strategic Plan for FY 2022 through 2026. The Strategic Objectives reflect the Board’s continuing commitment to its mission established in the NWPAA, including (1) conducting an ongoing, independent technical and scientific evaluation of DOE activities related to the NWPA and (2) advising Congress and the Secretary.

During FYS 2022 through 2026, the Board will:

- 1) continue its evaluation of DOE activities related to implementation of the NWPA and relevant amendments to that Act. Based on its evaluation, the Board will report its findings, conclusions, and recommendations to Congress and the Secretary.
- 2) develop objective technical and scientific information that will be useful to policy makers in Congress and the Administration on issues related to SNF and HLW management and disposal. The Board will communicate such information to Congress and the Secretary in letters, reports, and testimony.
- 3) compile information and report to Congress and the Secretary on its findings, conclusions, and recommendations from experience gained during 35 years of reviewing the U.S. nuclear waste management and disposal program and from observing waste management efforts in other countries.

ACHIEVING THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

LEADERSHIP ENGAGEMENT. On an annual basis, in accordance with the Government Performance and Results Act, as amended, the Board’s leadership identifies Performance Goals (PGs) and Management Goals (MGs) for the current year and identifies Goals for the subsequent year that will lead to the accomplishment of the Strategic Objectives. The PGs and MGs are included in the Board’s Performance Plan.

LEARNING AGENDA APPROACH. The Board’s Performance Plan for a given year includes its *Strategic Objectives*, its *PGs*, its *MGs*, and a description of Board attributes, activities, and practices supporting achievement of the Goals. An evaluation of Board performance for the preceding FY is included in the Board’s budget request and used as input in updating the Performance Plan and developing the Board’s budget request for the subsequent FY. In updating and implementing the plan, the Board’s leadership is committed to using a learning agenda approach by consistently building and using evidence to:

- 1) proactively evaluate the agency’s performance to determine what works well and where performance can be improved;
- 2) maximize results by strategically focusing resources and attention where the needs are greatest;
- 3) reinforce the strategic direction, timeliness, and relevance of the Board’s technical evaluations of DOE activities;
- 4) adapt agency direction as evidence and context shifts; and
- 5) ensure effective communications with DOE and Congress and ensure other stakeholders are informed of the Board’s activities.

Adopting a learning agenda approach ensures that the Board’s Performance Goals and Strategic Objectives are prioritized to meet the agency’s mission.

EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH. To ensure the effective and efficient execution of its mission, as noted above, the Board employs a learning agenda and evidence-based approach to set priorities that guide its decision making, operational planning, and development of its budget. Additionally, in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum M-19-23, *Phase 1 Implementation of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018*, the Board has appointed a Chief Data Officer and Data Governance Body.

PERFORMANCE PLAN FOR FYS 2023 THROUGH 2024

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE GOALS FOR FYS 2023 THROUGH 2024. Presented below are the Board’s Strategic Objectives for FYS 2022 through 2026, followed by the relevant PGs for FYS 2023 through 2024. Both the Strategic Objectives and the PGs reflect the goals of the agency leadership and are outcome-oriented.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1: *The Board will continue its evaluation of DOE activities related to implementation of the NWPA and relevant amendments to that Act. Based on its evaluation, the Board will report its findings, conclusions, and recommendations to Congress and the Secretary.*

PERFORMANCE GOALS FOR FYs 2023 THROUGH 2024

PG 1-A: In FY 2023, the Board will hold a public meeting on DOE activities to evaluate the removal of SNF from commercial nuclear power plant sites.

PG 1-B: In FY 2023, the Board plans to hold a public meeting on DOE activities to site and develop a federal interim storage facility for SNF.

PG 1-C: In FYs 2023 through 2024, the Board plans to hold a public meeting on DOE's research and development (R&D) related to the potential for chloride-induced stress corrosion cracking in SNF canisters.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #2: *The Board will develop objective technical and scientific information that will be useful to policy makers in Congress and the Administration on issues related to SNF and HLW management and disposal. The Board will communicate such information to Congress and the Secretary in letters, reports, and testimony.*

PERFORMANCE GOALS FOR FYs 2023 THROUGH 2024

PG 2-A: In FY 2023, the Board will report on the system-wide implications of using large canisters for the dry storage of SNF, with a focus on the potential for direct disposal of those canisters.

PG 2-B: In FY 2023 through 2024, the Board plans to hold a public meeting on the DOE activities related to packaging, drying, and dry storage of DOE-managed SNF, including aluminum-clad SNF.

PG 2-C: In FY 2023 through 2024, the Board will continue to review the technical issues DOE will need to address before it can begin the implementation of an integrated program for the nationwide transport of SNF and HLW.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #3: *The Board will compile information and report to Congress and the Secretary on its findings, conclusions, and recommendations from experience gained during 35 years of reviewing the U.S. nuclear waste management and disposal program and from observing waste management efforts in other countries.*

PERFORMANCE GOALS FOR FYs 2023 THROUGH 2024

PG 3-A: In FY 2023 through 2024, the Board will build upon its 2015 report to Congress and the Secretary on selecting a site for a repository and identify recent siting lessons-learned, such as those from Canada and the United Kingdom, that could be applicable to DOE's effort to use a consent-based siting approach for a federal interim storage facility.

PG 3-B: In FY 2023 through 2024, the Board will continue its technical information exchange activities with countries, such as France, Switzerland, and Finland, where sites for deep geologic repositories for SNF or HLW are being selected, licensed, or constructed.

PG 3-C: In FYs 2023 through 2024, the Board will continue to monitor activities in other countries related to programs for the management and disposal of SNF and HLW.

MANAGEMENT GOALS FOR FYS 2023 THROUGH 2024. To enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Board activities supporting its Strategic Objectives and PGs, the Board has identified the following MGs for FYS 2023 through 2024:

MG-1: The Board will continue to implement actions to optimize organizational efficiency and accountability and maximize employee performance.

MG-2: The Board will identify any potential constraints on the agency’s ability to perform its mission and implement the changes that may be necessary for mitigating such constraints through proactive management and allocation of resources.

MG-3: The Board will continue to maintain effective communications among its geographically dispersed Board members. The Board will also facilitate communication between Board members and the professional staff members who support the Board’s technical and scientific review of DOE activities from the Board offices in Arlington, VA.

MG-4: The Board will continue webcasting its meetings and making available archived recordings of the webcasts on its website. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board will use videoconferencing to hold its meetings in a hybrid format (virtual and in-person), to the extent this can be done without reducing the effectiveness of the meetings concerned.

MG-5: The Board will continue to conduct its ongoing reviews in the most cost-effective means possible.

MG-6: The Board will take action to ensure that, as far as possible, institutional memory and expertise are passed on to succeeding Board members and staff. When appropriate, the Board may also provide opportunities for one or more undergraduates or graduate students in disciplines related to the Board’s activities to support the Board’s technical staff in performing information research and technical analysis.

MG-7: The Board will update its technical resources and capabilities, as necessary, to maintain and improve the core competencies of its professional staff. The Board will develop and implement initiatives to identify, recruit when necessary, and retain highly qualified professionals with the expertise and related knowledge needed to support the work of the Board members and to help the Board achieve its Strategic Objectives and PGs.

BOARD ATTRIBUTES, ACTIVITIES, AND PRACTICES SUPPORTING THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE GOALS. The following attributes, activities, and practices support the implementation of the Board’s ongoing peer review and reflect the Board’s commitment to its core values of objectivity, openness, technical and scientific rigor, and timeliness.

AUTHORITY UNDER THE LAW. The Board has the necessary authority, under current law, to achieve its Strategic Objectives and PGs.

CULTURE OF ACCOUNTABILITY. Analyses of DOE’s technical and scientific work are performed by Board members who are appointed by the President from a list of nominees submitted by the National Academy of Sciences. The Board members are eminent experts in their fields and serve part-time. They are supported by a small, full-time professional staff whose members are highly credentialed in the relevant scientific and technical disciplines. The Board reports its findings, conclusions, and recommendations to Congress and the Secretary of Energy. The Chair, other Board members, and professional staff testify before Congress, as requested. Board reports, testimony, and correspondence, along with meeting agendas, transcripts, presentations, webcasts, and public comments, are posted on the Board’s website at www.nwtrb.gov.

EFFECTIVE USE OF ANALYTICAL RESOURCES. Board members and the Board’s professional staff are assigned by the Chair to lead or support Board activities, as appropriate. The Board maintains the option of organizing panels and working groups to help facilitate, integrate, and focus its technical and scientific review, and for other purposes. When necessary, the Board is authorized by its enabling legislation to hire expert consultants to support the Board’s in-depth reviews of specific technical topics.

TRANSPARENCY, COLLABORATION, AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT. To support its peer review and information gathering activities, the Board holds public meetings, at which technical information is presented by representatives of DOE, its contractors, and other organizations involved in nuclear waste management and disposal. At these meetings, Board members and professional staff question presenters, and time is provided for input and comments from interested members of the public. The Board typically holds two or three public meetings per year and announces them in the *Federal Register* four to six weeks before the meetings are held. The Board continues its goals of transparency of deliberations by webcasting its public meetings and archiving them on the Board’s website. In addition to the Board’s public meetings, Board panels or other small groups of Board members and staff also hold smaller meetings, as needed, to investigate specific technical topics. In order to continue its review of DOE’s activities as effectively as possible, the Board has held several virtual meetings since July 2020 and hybrid meetings since September 2022 due to the pandemic. Both the virtual and hybrid (virtual and in-person) meetings were managed successfully; thus, the Board will continue to host its public meetings in the hybrid format, unless the virtual option is in the best interest of participant safety.

Board members and staff also engage in site visits, visits to national laboratories and facilities, and meetings with DOE and national laboratory and contractor staff working on specific projects and programs. Board members and staff attend technical symposia and conferences related to SNF and HLW management and disposal. Representatives of domestic and international organizations involved in the management and disposal of SNF and HLW are invited to participate in Board public meetings and workshops. On occasion, Board members and/or staff travel to other countries to meet with such organizations to observe their technical programs and best practices, perform benchmarking, and assess potential analogs, among other things. Information gathered from these visits is used to enhance the Board’s evaluation of DOE activities and to advise and inform Congress and the Secretary of Energy. Since the pandemic began in March 2020, Board members and staff have participated in virtual meetings, symposia, and conferences.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY. In executing its reviews and analyses, the Board will continue to adhere to diversity and equity good practices and to ensure its actions do not adversely affect disadvantaged communities, consistent with the Board’s Equity Action Plan. The Board has expanded its outreach to a broader range of Tribal nations that may have an interest in the DOE activities related to the potential transportation of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste near or through Tribal lands. As one example, the Board has invited representatives from several Tribal nations to participate in the Board’s public meeting planned for March 2023 (for more information see [Spring 2023 Board Meeting - March 28, 2023](#)).

FEDERAL MISSION RESILIENCE (FMR) STRATEGY. The Board has an established continuity of operations plan that implements a proactive posture to minimize disruption in executing the Board’s mission. Furthermore, the Board’s succession plan enables leadership to ensure the essential functions of the Board continue to be carried out as required in its enabling legislation.

EVALUATION OF BOARD PERFORMANCE IN FY 2022

The Board uses annual evaluations of its performance as input in updating its PGs and MGs for the current year and identifying PGs for the subsequent year. The PGs reflect the objectives of the agency leadership and are outcome-oriented. The annual evaluations of the Board’s performance also are used as input to the development of the Board’s annual budget request.

BOARD PERFORMANCE IN FY 2022 – PERFORMANCE GOALS. The PGs, which are the subject of this evaluation, were included as part of the Board’s Performance Plan for FYs 2022 through 2023 contained in the Board’s FY2023 Budget Request. In the following evaluation, the Strategic Objectives on which the PGs are based are stated followed by a table displaying the associated PGs and the activities undertaken by the Board to accomplish the PGs in FY 2022.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1: *The Board will continue its evaluation of DOE activities related to implementation of the NWPA and relevant amendments to that Act. Based on its evaluation, the Board will report its findings, conclusions, and recommendations to Congress and the Secretary.*

FY 2022 – 2023 PERFORMANCE GOALS	BOARD ACTIVITIES
<p><u>PG 1-A:</u> In FY 2022, the Board will hold a public meeting on DOE activities to develop its Geologic Disposal Safety Assessment Framework.</p>	<p>The Board held a virtual public meeting during November 3–4, 2021, on DOE activities to develop its Geologic Disposal Safety Assessment Framework: November 3–4, 2021 Meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Following the meeting, the Board issued a letter to DOE, providing the Board’s findings and recommendations: January 7, 2022, Board Letter.

<p>PG 1-B: In FY 2022, the Board will hold a public meeting on DOE’s generic disposal R&D activities related to the disposal of SNF and HLW in clay-bearing rocks.</p>	<p>The Board held a public meeting during September 13–14, 2022, on DOE’s R&D related to the disposal of SNF and HLW in clay-bearing rocks: September 13–14, 2022 Meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Following the meeting, the Board issued a letter to DOE, providing the Board’s findings and recommendations: December 14, 2022, Board Letter.
<p>PG 1-C: In FYs 2022 through 2023, the Board plans to hold a public meeting on DOE activities to site and develop a federal interim storage facility for SNF and HLW.</p>	<p>The Board held public meetings during November 3-4, 2021 and March 1–2, 2022, on a variety of topics, including DOE’s effort to develop a consent-based siting effort leading to the development of a federal interim storage facility: November 3-4, 2021 Meeting and March 1–2, 2022 Meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Following the meetings, the Board issued letters to DOE, providing the Board’s findings and recommendations: January 7, 2022, Board Letter. June 7, 2022, Board Letter. <p>During August 9-11, 2022, several Board members and staff members attended a DOE Annual Program Review and Planning Meeting that included detailed progress updates and future plans for developing a federal interim storage facility.</p>
<p>PG 1-D: In FYs 2022 through 2023, the Board plans to hold a public meeting on DOE technology development activities related to aluminum-clad SNF packaging, drying, and dry storage.</p>	<p>Due to the limited progress by DOE on this topic, there was not enough technical substance to warrant a public meeting. Instead, the Board held a fact-finding meeting August 17, 2022, with DOE and its laboratory researchers to gather technical information on DOE activities related to aluminum-clad SNF packaging, drying, and dry storage. The Board continues to monitor DOE’s efforts in this topical area.</p>

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #2: *The Board will develop objective technical and scientific information that will be useful to policy makers in Congress and the Administration on issues related to SNF and HLW management and disposal. The Board will communicate such information to Congress and the Secretary in letters, reports, and testimony.*

FY 2022 – 2023 PERFORMANCE GOALS	BOARD ACTIVITIES
<p>PG 2-A: In FY 2022, the Board will report on the system-wide implications of using large canisters for the dry storage of SNF.</p>	<p>The Board continued to develop a report to Congress on the system-wide implications of using large canisters for the dry storage of SNF. The emphasis of the report will be on DOE R&D efforts focused on the direct disposal of SNF in large canisters. The Board expects to issue this report in FY 2023.</p>
<p>PG 2-B: In FY 2022 through 2023, the Board will finalize a report summarizing its review activities, and its findings, conclusions, and recommendations, from January 1, 2019, through December 31, 2021.</p>	<p>The Board is finalizing a report to Congress and the Secretary of Energy on <i>Board Activities for the Period January 1, 2019 - December 31, 2021</i>. The Board expects to publish the report in early FY 2023.</p>
<p>PG 2-C: In FY 2022 through 2023, the Board will continue to review the technical issues DOE will need to address before it can begin the implementation of an integrated program for the nationwide transport of SNF and HLW.</p>	<p>The Board held a public meeting during March 1–2, 2022, on a variety of topics, including DOE’s R&D on SNF and HLW storage, transportation, and DOE’s integrated waste management system: March 1–2, 2022 Meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Following the meeting, the Board issued a letter to DOE, providing the Board’s findings and recommendations: June 7, 2022, Board Letter. <p>During August 9-11, 2022, several Board members and staff members attended a DOE Annual Program Review and Planning Meeting that included detailed progress updates and future plans for implementing an integrated program for the nationwide transport of SNF and HLW.</p>

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #3: *The Board will compile information and report to Congress and the Secretary on its findings, conclusions, and recommendations from experience gained during 35 years of reviewing the U.S. nuclear waste management and disposal program and from observing waste management efforts in other countries.*

FY 2022 – 2023 PERFORMANCE GOALS	BOARD ACTIVITIES
<p>PG 3-A: In FY 2022, the Board will update its 2016 report to Congress and the Secretary presenting a Survey of National Programs for Managing HLW and SNF.</p>	<p>The Board issued a report to Congress and the Secretary of Energy on <i>Survey Of National Programs For Managing High-Level Radioactive Waste And Spent Nuclear Fuel: 2022 Update</i> in July 2022.</p>
<p>PG 3-B: In FY 2022 through 2023, the Board will continue its technical information exchange activities with countries, such as Finland and Sweden, where deep geologic repositories for SNF or HLW are being licensed or constructed.</p>	<p>The Board conducted technical information exchanges with a representative of the United Kingdom and the Board’s counterpart organization in France. The UK representative provided a technical presentation at the Board’s Fall 2021 public meeting: November 3–4, 2021 Meeting.</p> <p>In 2022, the Board interacted with a representative from Spain to better understand the Spanish disposal program. That representative provided technical presentations at the Board’s September 2022 meeting: September 13–14, 2022 Meeting.</p>
<p>PG 3-C: In FYs 2022 through 2023, the Board will continue to monitor activities in other countries related to programs for the management and disposal of SNF and HLW.</p>	<p>A member of the Board staff began participating in the Nuclear Energy Agency’s (NEA) Integration Group for the Safety Case as an official US representative. He participated virtually in the 23rd meeting of the group in May 2022. He also participated virtually in a joint meeting with the NEA’s Forum for Stakeholder Confidence on uncertainty management.</p> <p>The Board met in Washington, DC, in June 2022, with the French Commission Nationale d’Evaluation to exchange information on waste management issues.</p>

BOARD PERFORMANCE IN FY 2022 – MANAGEMENT GOALS. To enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Board activities supporting its Strategic Objectives and PGs, the Board identified the MGs in the table below for FYs 2022 through 2023. The MGs were included in the Board’s FY2023 Budget Request. The associated activities undertaken to accomplish the MGs are opposite their respective MGs in the table.

FY 2022 MANAGEMENT GOALS	BOARD ACTIVITIES
<p>MG-1: The Board will continue to implement actions to optimize organizational efficiency and accountability and maximize employee performance.</p>	<p>In FY 2022, the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ proactively evaluated its performance to identify opportunities for improvement; ➤ focused on where needs were greatest to ensure efficient operations; and ➤ evaluated how to achieve the best results.
<p>MG-2: The Board will identify any potential constraints on the agency’s ability to perform its mission and develop and implement integrated strategies for mitigating such constraints through proactive management and allocation of resources.</p>	<p>In FY 2022, the Board assessed operational constraints that may affect its ability to achieve its mission and focused attention and resources on addressing and mitigating the constraints.</p>
<p>MG-3: The Board will continue to maintain effective communications among its geographically dispersed Board members. The Board will also facilitate communication between Board members and the professional staff members who support the Board’s technical and scientific review of DOE activities from the Board offices in Arlington, VA.</p>	<p>In FY 2022, the Board continued to use an electronic drop box to facilitate Board member access to source materials, information write-ups by professional staff, and draft Board documents. The Board continued to hold monthly video teleconferences as telework continued throughout the pandemic.</p>
<p>MG-4: The Board will continue webcasting its meetings and making available archived recordings of the webcasts on its website. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board will use videoconferencing to hold its meetings virtually, to the extent this can be done without reducing the effectiveness of the meetings concerned.</p>	<p>The Board continued to hold virtual public meetings and, in line with its past practices, archived the meetings on the Board’s website at www.nwtrb.gov. Despite the continued challenges brought on by COVID-19, the Board held three successful virtual meetings in FY 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ November 3-4, 2021 ➤ March 1-2, 2022 ➤ September 13-14, 2022

<p><u>MG-5:</u> The Board will continue to conduct its ongoing reviews in the most cost-effective means possible.</p>	<p>In FY 2022, meetings were held virtually due to COVID-19. The Board continues to reduce the demand for printed copies of reports by making electronic versions available for download from its website. Internal documents are coordinated electronically, and the staff will continue transitioning to electronic records.</p>
<p><u>MG-6:</u> The Board will take action to ensure that, as far as possible, institutional memory and expertise are passed on to succeeding Board members and staff. When appropriate, the Board may also provide opportunities for one or more undergraduates or graduate students in disciplines related to the Board’s activities to support the Board’s technical staff in performing information research and technical analysis.</p>	<p>In FY 2022, updates and briefings on the Board’s mission, the Board’s work-in-progress, and plans for future review activities were discussed by Board members and staff at Board business meetings held in conjunction with the Board’s public meetings.</p>
<p><u>MG-7:</u> The Board will update its technical resources and capabilities, as necessary, to maintain and improve the core competencies of its professional staff. The Board will develop and implement initiatives to identify, recruit when necessary, and retain highly qualified professionals with the expertise and related knowledge needed to support the work of the Board members and to help the Board achieve its Strategic Objectives and PGs.</p>	<p>In FY 2022, the Board continued to increase the efficiency of its technological resources and capabilities by providing training on relevant software. On an ongoing basis, key IT systems and programs are updated to take advantage of recent technological advances. The Board is currently moving to maximize the use of electronic resources to reduce its reliance on its physical library system.</p>

APPROPRIATIONS LANGUAGE

U.S. NUCLEAR WASTE TECHNICAL REVIEW BOARD

SALARIES AND EXPENSES (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

“For necessary expenses of the U.S. Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board, as authorized by Public Law 100-203, § 5051, *\$4,064,000* to be derived from the Nuclear Waste Fund and to remain available until September 30, 2025.”

(Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2023.)

FY 2024 BUDGET JUSTIFICATION BY OBJECT CLASS

U.S. Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board

Budget Justification by Object Class

(Figures Rounded in Thousands of Dollars)

Object Class Code	Object Class Title	FY 2022 Enacted	FY 2023 Enacted	FY 2024 Request
11	Salaries	\$2,246	\$2,351	\$2,473
12	Benefits	\$587	\$613	\$637
21	Travel and Transportation	\$75	\$70	\$85
23.1	Rent	\$380	\$382	\$384
23.3	Communications and Utilities	\$50	\$40	\$45
24	Printing and Reproduction	\$20	\$15	\$10
25	Consultants	\$85	\$85	\$95
25.1/2	Contractual Services - Other	\$85	\$89	\$120
25.3	Contractual Services - Federal	\$222	\$250	\$180
26	Supplies and Materials	\$30	\$30	\$20
31	Equipment	\$20	\$20	\$15
Total Budgetary Resources		\$3,800	\$3,945	\$4,064
<i>Total Full Time Equivalent Employees</i>		<i>16</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>16</i>

DETAILS OF BUDGET JUSTIFICATION BY OBJECT CLASS

To fulfill its statutory mandate for reviewing the technical and scientific validity of activities undertaken by the Secretary of Energy related to nuclear waste management and for providing independent technical and scientific information and advice to Congress and the Secretary, the Board requests \$4,064,000, which reflects a 2.9% increase from the FY 2023 enacted budget. The Board's request reflects its continuing commitment to efficient and cost-effective budgeting and management practices.

A detailed explanation of the Board's request by object class follows.

OBJECT CLASS 11.0, SALARIES: \$2,473,000

The estimate for this object class includes funding for 11 part-time Board members, one senior executive, professional staff, and General Schedule (GS) administration staff, and includes within-grade increases. The Board members are Special Government Employees and, in accordance with the Board's enabling legislation, each member is compensated at the rate of pay of Executive Schedule Level III. The senior executive acts as the chief operating officer for the Board, and the professional staff members support the work of the Board members in evaluating the technical and scientific validity of DOE activities related to the management and disposal of SNF and HLW. The GS staff members perform administrative activities related to the Board's ongoing technical and scientific evaluation and the operation of the organization. Administrative support activities include budget preparation and financial management, dissemination of Board publications, information technology activities, facilities management, travel planning, management of meeting logistics, and preparation and implementation of Board responses to federal directives.

The request also includes a 5.2% pay increase in civilian salaries (as directed by OMB), FERS contribution increases, and supplemental funds for a performance award pool. The Board plans to allocate 3.5% percent of its projected employee salaries (to include the salaries of personnel expected to be hired in FY 2023 and FY2024), toward awards to retain highly skilled staff and incentivize continued high-level performance. As a result, the Board's FY 2024 projected awards spending level included in this object class is \$70,620.

OBJECT CLASS 12.0, CIVILIAN PERSONNEL BENEFITS: \$637,000

The estimate for this object class represents the government's contribution for the government employee fringe benefits for Board members and staff as required by OMB memo M-08-13.

OBJECT CLASS 21.0, TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION: \$85,000

The estimate for this object class reflects reduced travels costs due to the COVID-19 pandemic as the Board plans to host both virtual and in-person meetings. The Board expanded its leased office space, in part to reduce future travel costs. Travel costs may consist of trips for Board members, staff, and consultants for fact-finding meetings, professional meetings, conferences, orientation activities, national laboratory visits, and other events, briefings, and venues related to accomplishing the Board's Strategic Objectives and Performance Goals, as detailed in the Board's Performance Plan for FYs 2023 through 2024.

OBJECT CLASS 23.1, RENTAL PAYMENTS TO THE GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (GSA): \$384,000

The amount requested in this object class category is to cover the expense of rental payments to GSA Public Building Services (PBS) under an Occupancy Agreement for leased office space in Arlington, VA. The amount reflected includes the estimated tax assessment, tax escalation fee, and GSA PBS fee for the FY 2024 lease year period.

OBJECT CLASS 23.3, COMMUNICATION, UTILITIES, MISCELLANEOUS: \$45,000

The estimate for this object class represents costs for telephone service, postage, local courier services, video teleconferencing, webcasting support, internet, and mailing services. Furthermore, this amount includes the estimated cost of services under GSA's Enterprise Infrastructure Solutions (EIS) telecommunications contract, which the Board fully transitioned to in October 2022.

OBJECT CLASS 24.0, PRINTING AND REPRODUCTION: \$10,000

The estimate for this object class is for costs associated with creating and publishing Board reports that are required by statute to be sent to Congress and the Secretary of Energy and the Board sends to other interested parties that request them. The estimate also includes the costs associated with the publication of additional copies of earlier reports and technical materials, as well as such other costs as those associated with publishing meeting notices in the *Federal Register*. In keeping with the federal government's efforts to increase efficiency, the Board makes all its reports, publications, and correspondence available for download from its website to reduce the number of hard copies it needs to produce.

OBJECT CLASS 25.0, CONSULTANTS: \$95,000

The estimate for this object class includes funding for consultants to support and supplement Board and staff analyses of specific technical and scientific issues as authorized by the Board's enabling statute. Requested funding for this object class also includes estimates for expert consultants to assist the Board in developing and implementing methods that will increase public on-line access to its publications, informational resources, and other Board matters.

OBJECT CLASS 25.1/2, CONTRACTUAL SERVICES – OTHER: \$120,000

The estimate for this object class includes the cost of such items as meeting-room rentals, stenography and audio-visual support services, webcasting services for hybrid (virtual and in-person) meetings, and video recording equipment rentals for public meetings; facility maintenance agreements; and professional development for Board supervisors and staff. Other program support contracts include services for report editing and production, as well as provision of an offsite data center to allow Continuity of Operations in the event of loss of power or an incident in the Board's offices, along with contracted commercial information technology (IT) support in compliance with the Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA) of 2014. Support includes information security protections to prevent unauthorized access, use, disclosure, disruption, modification, or destruction of information and information systems on our network. Furthermore, the Board's network is monitored

to timely detect and report cyber incidents and ensure necessary resources are maintained for cybersecurity needs at the Board's offsite data center. This budget estimate also includes funding to ensure the Board complies with Executive Order (E.O.) 13556, *Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI)*, E.O. 14028, *Improving the Nation's Cybersecurity*, policies issued by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), 32 CFR Part 2002, "Controlled Unclassified Information," along with OMB memo M-19-21, *Transition to Electronic Records*, and OMB memo M-21-31, *Improving the Federal Government's Investigative and Remediation Capabilities Related to Cybersecurity Incidents*. This estimate also includes funding to support the Board's requirement to maintain an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program as required in E.O. 12067, *Providing for Coordination of Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Programs* and E.O. 14035, *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce*.

OBJECT CLASS 25.3, CONTRACTUAL SERVICES - FEDERAL: \$180,000

The estimate for this object class includes funding for administrative support services provided by other federal agencies, including payroll and accounting services received from GSA Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) as well as human resource (HR) services related to managing electronic official personnel folders, conducting personnel actions, and initiating personnel clearances, and legal support services received from GSA Commissions and Boards Services (CABS). The estimate also includes security background investigations performed by the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency (DCSA), USAJOBS recruitment assistance received through the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), and other support provided through interagency agreements. The Board's enabling legislation authorizes the procurement of necessary administrative services from GSA on a reimbursable basis. This estimate includes an increase in the costs of payroll and financial reporting and services and \$6,200 in building security fees levied by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Federal Protective Service (FPS). Furthermore, this estimate encompasses the support received from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Federal Occupational Health Service (FOH) to provide occupational and/or environmental health services as well as personal identity verification (PIV) card support from GSA's Managed Service Office (MSO) for all Board personnel.

OBJECT CLASS 26.0, SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS: \$20,000

This estimate includes anticipated expenses for office supplies, subscriptions to technical publications and on-line academic journals and research databases, meeting supplies, and off-the-shelf technical reports and studies.

OBJECT CLASS 31.0, EQUIPMENT: \$15,000

This object class includes costs to maintain IT and other electronic equipment, including computer hardware and software. The object class includes funding for the continuation of ongoing maintenance to the Board's IT and physical security equipment, Continuity of Operations, support of E-Gov telecommuting efforts, and technical support for the management and ongoing maintenance and upgrades of the Board's cybersecurity initiatives.