



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

July 28, 1983

OFFICE OF
THE ADMINISTRATOR

Honorable William D. Ruckelshaus
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Mr. Ruckelshaus:

On July 27 the Executive Committee of the Science Advisory received the Report of its Laboratory Organization Review Group which reviewed proposals developed by the Office of Research and Development (ORD) to reorganize its research laboratories and its headquarters' staff offices. The Review Group was chaired by Dr. John Cantlon of Michigan State University who is a former chairman of the Science Advisory Board. The Executive Committee reviewed the Review Group's report and unanimously endorsed its conclusions.

Among the major conclusions of the report are:

- the offices of Assistant Administrator and Deputy Assistant Administrator for Research and Development should be redesigned so as to emphasize professional qualifications as the primary criteria for selecting candidates for these positions. The Assistant Administrator should be a scientist with great stature in the scientific community, and the Deputy Assistant Administrator should possess skills as a research manager.

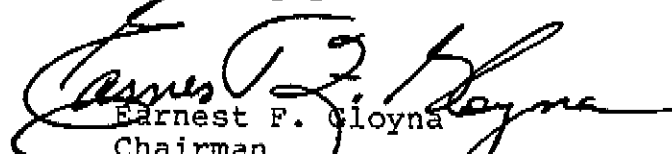
- the current organization of ORD headquarters is characterized by excessive centralization of research decision-making and planning authority. The headquarters reorganization plan does not adequately resolve this problem.

- the proposed reorganization of the existing laboratories into mega-laboratories is strongly supported by the Laboratory Organization Review Group. The reorganization provides for a more cohesive representation of each of the major disciplinary areas in ORD and encourages the Assistant Administrator and the mega-laboratory directors to communicate directly on the individual and joint strategic objectives of ORD laboratories.

It is the view of the Executive Committee that a speedy decision ought to be made on whether to adopt the reorganization proposals. Equally important, however, is the fact that the report addresses issues that are significant to ORD irrespective of what happens to the reorganization proposals. We unanimously recommend that you and the new Assistant Administrator for Research and Development promptly review these issues--which include delegation of authority to laboratory directors, research planning, the administrative and peer review system, program peer reviews, the exploratory research program, improving relationships with universities, upgrading ORD information systems and others--because they directly affect ORD's current capability to carry out its research mission for EPA.

The Executive Committee is pleased to have had the opportunity to review the proposed reorganization and associated issues and transmit this report to you. We would welcome the opportunity to further discuss these issues with the new Assistant Administrator following his Senate confirmation.

Sincerely yours,


Earnest F. Gloyna
Chairman
Science Advisory Board