

**Comments from Dr. Thomas Burke on MARSAME May 28, 2008**

“Report on Agency Draft entitled ‘Multi-Agency Radiation Survey and Assessment of Materials and Equipment (MARSAME) Manual,’ Draft Report for Comment, December 2006”

General comments:

Overall the review panel has been a very good job addressing the questions. They may however have been a bit too polite concerning the clarity of the MARSAME draft. I find the draft itself to be a very difficult read and am concerned that it may not adequately address the information needs of the users. Perhaps this is reflected in the panel’s first recommendation to “provide training”. The report is in essence a very complex cookbook with varying degrees of detail on methods that range from very specific quantitative approaches to very general qualitative approaches to selecting action levels. The MARSAME is very strong on process but does not clearly present the underlying environmental protection and public health goals.

*(a) Are the original charge questions to the SAB Panel adequately addressed in the draft report?*

The MARSAME Review Panel has addressed all of the charge questions.

*(b) Is the draft report clear and logical?*

Project report is clear and logical and the recommendations will greatly improve the clarity of the MARSAME document.

*(c) Are the conclusions drawn, and/or recommendations made, supported by the information in the body of the draft SAB report?*

The conclusions and recommendations are well supported throughout the body of the draft SAB report. However there is one conclusion that may be overly optimistic: page 11 line 5 question 1b “The decision rules are admirably clear”. This conclusion is not consistent with the multiple recommendations for clarifying this chapter.

Other comments:

The MARSAME draft needs to more clearly present the target audience of users, and the intended or actual applications of the process. What are the most likely uses of the approach? Might there be future broader applications in the event of natural disasters or accidental or intentional contamination scenarios?

I strongly agree with the recommendations for strengthening the case studies by including actual application of the roadmap and decision rules. This should include plans for evaluation of the adequacy of the approach under real-world conditions.