



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

July 8, 2003

Dr. Vanessa Vu, Staff Director  
Office of the Science Advisory Board  
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF  
AIR AND RADIATION

Dear Dr. Vu:

The purpose of this letter is to transmit to the SAB Council (1) a set of revised pages for the section 812 study analytical blueprint and (2) revised charge questions for the Council to consider in its review of the blueprint.

I also want to take this opportunity to apologize to the members of the Council for the delay in their scheduled review of the blueprint and the charge questions. I recognize that many of them had devoted substantial time in reviewing the May 12 version of the blueprint and charge questions and that it was inconvenient, to say the least, that we asked the Council to suspend their review so that we could make revisions to both documents. I believe, however, that the changes we have made to the blueprint and charge questions will result in an improved analysis.

As you know, many EPA offices – not just the Office of Air And Radiation – look to the 812 analysis to guide their benefit-cost analysis. The Council's review and comments are highly relevant to a number of important cross-Agency issues, including probability analysis, VSL issues, use of life years as a metric for benefits or cost-effectiveness, treatment of latency, cessation lags, ecosystem benefit measurement issues, and problems with using avoided costs as a measure of benefits. Before proceeding with the Council's review of these issues in the context of the 812 process, we wanted to be sure that we had fully discussed these issues with the other EPA offices that have an interest in them.

In the past, EPA did not necessarily develop a detailed blueprint. I think our current blueprint represents a big step forward – especially in light of the additional changes we have made in response to comments from other EPA offices – and I am very pleased that the Council will help guide us through the Second Prospective Analysis from the initial planning stage.

Please note that we have tried to format the attached materials in a way that will minimize the disruption caused by our postponement of the initial review. The individual revised blueprint pages attached to this letter are intended to replace the similarly numbered pages in the original May 12 version of the blueprint. Significant changes relative to the May 12 original blueprint are indicated by blue text. A revised set of charge questions is also attached. In addition, to clarify which charge questions have been modified or renumbered, a redline-strikeout version indicating additions and deletions relative to the May 12 original is attached. Please note that we are still working on Chapter 8 of the related to economic valuation. We will send you the changed pages for this chapter within two weeks.

On behalf of the Agency, I want to thank the Council members for their willingness to review and respond to the blueprint and charge questions. We place a high value on the advice and assistance provided by the Council, and we very much look forward to your input as we complete the planning phase of this new analysis and begin study implementation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey R. Holmstead".

Jeffrey R. Holmstead  
Assistant Administrator

24 Attachments

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