



Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

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MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION

FROM: SAMUEL N. CALLAHAN
DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF SECURITY
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH, SAFETY
AND SECURITY

SUBJECT: Policy Clarification on the Government Accountability Office
Report on the Welfare of Working Dogs

REFERENCES:

1. Government Accountability Office Report, *Working Dogs: Federal Agencies Need to Better Address Health and Welfare* (GAO-23-104489), October 19, 2022
2. Department of Energy Order 473.2A, *Protective Force Operations*, August 30, 2021

The Office of Environment, Health, Safety and Security (EHSS) initiated this policy clarification based on the Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued report to Congress: *Working Dogs: Federal Agencies Need to Better Address Health and Welfare* (GAO-23-104489) on October 19, 2022 (Reference 1). GAO identified 18 issues important to the health and welfare of working dogs.

In its report, the GAO had two recommendations for the Department:

- Recommendation 5: The Secretary of Energy should direct all of the Department of Energy's (DOE) agencies with federally managed working dog programs to revise their policies as necessary to ensure that they address all of the 18 issues identified by the GAO as important to the health and welfare of working dogs.
- Recommendation 6: The Secretary of Energy should direct all of the DOE's agencies with contractor-managed working dog programs to ensure that all 18 issues identified by the GAO as important to the health and welfare of working dogs are addressed, as appropriate, in future contracts.

The Department responded to the GAO, partially concurring with its recommendations stating that DOE will evaluate the 18 issues GAO identified as important to the health and welfare of working dogs to determine their applicability to DOE's Canine Program and will issue a policy clarification to address those areas DOE determines are applicable.

Reference 2 requires that DOE Canine Programs include "plans for operations, training and maintenance, training aid storage and handling, canine kenneling and healthcare, and

canine/handler team certification. EHSS, in coordination with the Canine Subcommittee of the Performance Test Working Group, has determined that all 18 issues identified by the GAO are applicable to the Department's Canine Program and provide additional clarity to the current requirement to address "kenneling and healthcare." DOE Canine Programs, in addition to the requirements currently listed in Reference 2, must include documented plans for the 18 GAO-identified recommended items below:

- Abuse and neglect
- Emergency medical care
- Euthanasia
- Exercise
- Food and water
- Grooming
- Health and welfare training
- Housing
- Medical needs after retirement
- Medical records
- Medication
- Procurement
- Rest and length on duty time
- Retirement
- Routine veterinary care
- Routine welfare evaluations
- Sanitation
- Transportation

Should you have additional questions or require additional information in support of updating your sites' respective plans, please contact Mr. Kevin Webber at (301) 903-4291 or kevin.webber@hq.doe.gov.

Attachment: GAO Report to Congress (GAO-23-104489)

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