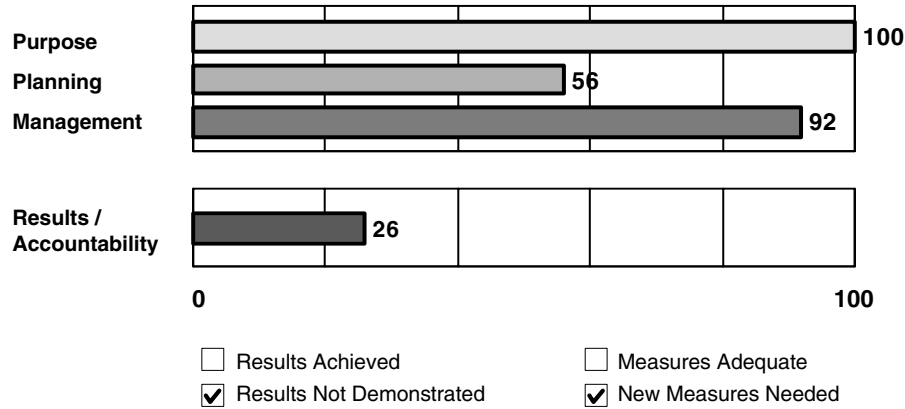


Program: Nuclear Energy Research Initiative

Agency: Department of Energy

Bureau: Energy Programs



Key Performance Measures

Year Target Actual

Key Performance Measures	Year	Target	Actual
Long-term Measure: Measures under development			
Annual Measure: Measures under development			

Rating: Results Not Demonstrated

Program Type: Research and Development

Program Summary:

The Nuclear Energy Research Initiative (NERI) funds research to solve technical problems that impede the expanded use of nuclear energy in the United States. The program uses a competitive, expert peer-review process to select awardees for research at universities, national laboratories, and industry.

The assessment indicates that while the program purpose is very clear, the lack of long-term and near-term performance measures makes it impossible to objectively determine the program's technical accomplishments. Additional findings include:

1. NERI funds investigator-initiated, innovative R&D projects annually through grants and cooperative agreements for up to three years with specific milestones and deliverables that are monitored routinely, but the individual projects' contributions to larger program goals are not assessed.
2. Basing project selection on independent expert peer-review recommendations helps DOE select the most scientifically-meritorious applications for funding.
2. NERI publishes an annual report describing the projects funded and the Department annually reviews the research topics for which applications will be considered. However, it has not conducted an independent overall program evaluation.
3. Program performance has been measured in terms of numbers of projects awarded. This output measure is not acceptable, because it does not demonstrate the program's effectiveness in resolving the problems on which it is focused.

In response to these findings, the Administration:

1. Will establish a program baseline and measurable long-term performance objectives against which to plan and measure annual performance of individual projects and the program as a whole.
2. Will plan independent program evaluations to guide program management and development.

Program Funding Level (in millions of dollars)

<u>2002 Actual</u>	<u>2003 Estimate</u>	<u>2004 Estimate</u>
30	25	25