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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **DOE Releases Report with Recommendations to Improve Processing of Sick Workers' Health Claims**

**WASHINGTON, DC** – In its continuing efforts to improve the processing of workers' claims, the Department of Energy released a report today commissioned by its Office of Worker Advocacy on the processing of applications made under Part D of the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA).

The report, prepared by the Hays Companies, national experts on workers compensation, makes a number of recommendations to improve the department's case processing. The Hays Companies evaluated the full range of case processing activities, including intake, records management, case development and Physicians Panel Review. Examples of the report's recommendations include: improving the functionality of the Case Management System computer system, restructuring staff and streamlining roles and responsibilities to ensure efficient handling of cases and, where appropriate, streamlining the work of the independent physician panels.

The Office of Worker Advocacy has already implemented a number of the recommendations and the remainder are under consideration.

The Office of Worker Advocacy is processing an unexpectedly high volume of applications from former Department of Energy contract workers, filed under Part D of EEOICPA. Earlier this month, the Department of Energy met a commitment by Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham to process 100 claims per week, up from about 40 claims per week earlier this year. DOE plans to continue to maintain this production level.

EEOICPA has two primary programs. Part B is an entitlement program run by the Department of Labor and supported by DOE. This program pays lump sum benefits plus continuing medical coverage for former workers with diseases potentially related to radiation exposure, silicosis and chronic beryllium disease. Part D, administered by the Department of Energy, provides no direct benefits but assists workers in pursuing claims with state workers' compensation programs. This second program covers a much broader array of medical conditions and requires extensive employment history development to provide the workers with the best opportunity for claim defense.

The report and a table of the key recommendations and implementation plan are available on the Web at [www.eh.doe.gov/advocacy](http://www.eh.doe.gov/advocacy).

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