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Congress of the United States
OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

JOHN H. GIBBONS
DIRECTOR

May 25, 1984

TO: Technology Assessment Board
FROM: John H. Gibbons *JH Gibbons*
RE: TAB Review of OTA Documents

Over the past five years OTA has responded to urging from both TAB and Committees to find ways in addition to our assessment Reports in which to meet Congressional needs. Because these needs are often keyed to a tight legislative timetable, we developed interim documents (e.g., Technical Memorandum, Background Paper) that are less formal than an Assessment Report.

Except in rare cases, I have sent these less formal documents (FYI) to TAB two or three days before release; the absence of Board review is prominently mentioned at the front of the documents.

This process has served us well. Our ability to respond more quickly has drawn much favorable response from the Committees. However, I believe that recent experience suggests changes in these procedures. It has become apparent to me that when OTA addresses a sufficiently controversial issue we need document review by an advisory panel and TAB prior to release.

I therefore propose the following changes in TAB procedure, to be implemented effective immediately unless there is objection:

1. In addition to present practice with respect to review and release of final Assessment Reports, I will submit to TAB, for review and authorization to release, any other OTA documents to be published that deal with particularly sensitive or controversial issues.

2. Documents which do not fall in the above category may be released with Director approval as in the past. However, caveats about documents that are released without TAB review will be printed on the front cover instead of inside the document.

cc: Director's Office
Assistant Directors
CRPA
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