

Bombplex Fact Sheet

What is Complex 2030?

Complex 2030 (a.k.a. Bombplex) is a complete overhaul of the U.S. nuclear weapons complex. The goal is to continuously produce new nuclear weapons, with the so-called Reliable Replacement Warheads being the first off the line. It is being sold by the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) as a smaller, more efficient, more modern, safer nuclear weapons complex than the current one. But the facts tell a different story: All of the existing nuclear weapons sites would still be in operation and the fundamental environmental problems of weapons productions remain unsolved. The increased design and production capabilities of the Bombplex could spark a new nuclear arms race.

What would Complex 2030 Look Like?

There are three options being considered by the NNSA.

1. THE BOMBPLEX

Because the so-called Complex 2030 plan is NNSA's preferred option, it is referred to as the Proposed Action in the Notice of Intent. Broadly, this is what NNSA wants out of the new Bombplex:

-Plutonium manufacturing, research and other work consolidated at a single facility

This giant, costly facility would include a bomb plant with the capacity to produce a minimum of 125 plutonium pits, the cores of nuclear weapons, annually. This bomb plant would threaten human and environment health as well as U.S. nonproliferation goals. It is likely that the current stockpile of pits will be effective for decades longer than originally thought – rendering such a facility totally unnecessary.

-Consolidation of large quantities of plutonium and highly-enriched uranium, the key ingredients of nuclear weapons

These materials would be moved from some sites to other sites. At sites where work with large amounts of plutonium and highly enriched uranium continues (Los Alamos, Y-12, Savannah River, Pantex, Nevada Test Site), fewer locations on those sites will house such activities. This would allow for more effective security around these dangerous materials. Although ANA feels that further nuclear weapons research is unnecessary, consolidation of such materials does reduce the risk of theft and contamination.

-Consolidation and relocation of redundant facilities and capabilities across the complex

Claims that Complex 2030 will result in a smaller complex are misleading. NNSA's Bombplex plan would consolidate eight sites to... eight sites. Not a single one will be closed. Plus, new construction or facility upgrades are planned for all eight sites, and would cost billions.

-Acceleration of Dismantlement Activities

Dismantlement of nuclear weapons is a step in the right direction and increasing this activity is one of very few positive attributes to the otherwise provocative and dangerous Bombplex plan.

2. “NO ACTION” – Or more accurately: greater weapons production capabilities at major NNSA sites

Under this option, NNSA would continue to operate the current nuclear weapons complex with the possible implementation of major changes planned for Y-12, Savannah River Site and Los Alamos.

Even if this option were the “status quo” as NNSA claims, it should be pointed out that the status quo contains several tremendously expensive weapons design programs, the over-budget and underachieving National Ignition Facility, for example. Because of unaddressed waste problems from Cold War production, the current complex poses a threat to precious water resources. Even without a huge, costly series of upgrades, the current nuclear weapons complex annually certifies the U.S. stockpile and can support projects like the Life Extension Programs that continue to enhance the military capabilities of the U.S. nuclear stockpile.

3. REDUCED OPERATIONS AND CAPABILITY-BASED COMPLEX – INCREASING CURRENT BOMB-MAKING CAPACITIES

This option retains the plans to merge sites with large quantities of plutonium and highly enriched uranium and the “consolidation” of redundant facilities and capabilities from the Complex 2030 scenario. The only important difference between Complex 2030 and “Reduced Operations” is the withdrawal of the “plutonium center.” Under this option, pit production would remain at Los Alamos with output increased to 50 pits, annually.

The “Reduced Operations” plan actually *increases* capabilities beyond the current complex. Under this option, NNSA would “maintain a basic capability for manufacturing technologies for all stockpile weapons.” Such a capability does not currently exist and this option would leave the door open for NNSA to produce new design weapons.

CONCLUSION

Improvements over the Bombplex, the status quo, and the “capability-based complex” could be achieved through an approach that truly reduced operations. A “curatorship” approach (maintaining the current stockpile through surveillance, non-nuclear testing and repair) could accomplish the major stated goals of Complex 2030: ensured safety/reliability of the stockpile (consisting of previously tested designs), no return to testing, increased dismantlement, removal of dangerous/vulnerable nuclear materials from many sites, and economic/programmatic efficiency -- while meeting our nation’s disarmament obligations.