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For Immediate Release

WIPP Satellite Tracking System Relocates to Carlsbad

Carlsbad, N.M., December 7, 2005 – The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Carlsbad Field Office has announced that effective December 2, the DOE Transportation Tracking and Communication System (TRANSCOM) is fully staffed and operational in Carlsbad, N.M.

The TRANSCOM system, previously based in Albuquerque, N.M, is used to track transuranic waste shipments to the Waste Isolation Plant (WIPP) near Carlsbad and other DOE nuclear waste shipments nationwide. Security Consultant Group (SCG), operator of the TRANSCOM satellite system, maintains a staff of seven operators in Carlsbad. The new TRANSCOM Communications Center is located at the Skeen-Whitlock Building, where DOE and WIPP project contractors maintain administrative offices.

The TRANSCOM system employs state-of-the-art mapping and satellite tracking computer software, an embedded e-mail system to document communications and a database that contains information specific to each shipment. The tracking system features two-way communications between center operators and WIPP drivers and multiple levels of access to safeguard shipments. The system also can be used to notify emergency responders or other authorities in the event of a transportation incident.

In addition to WIPP shipments, TRANSCOM operators will continue to track other high-visibility and spent nuclear fuel shipments for the DOE. Casey Gadbury, Carlsbad Field Office TRU waste logistics coordinator, said the TRANSCOM Communications Center will continue to

provide its customers with a high level of service from the Carlsbad center. Since its inception in 1992, TRANSCOM has successfully tracked more than 10,000 DOE shipments.

WIPP, located 26 miles east of Carlsbad, NM, is the nation's solution for cleaning up defense-generated transuranic waste located at DOE sites across the nation. Operational since March 1999, WIPP has received more than 4,100 waste shipments and safely disposed of more than 33,000 cubic meters of transuranic waste in the repository located nearly one-half mile underground.

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