

**SUMMARY OF
NRC/DOE QUARTERLY MANAGEMENT MEETING
July 31, 2002**

Intraduction:

This NRC/DOE Quarterly Management Meeting was held on July 31, 2002 in Rockville, Maryland with video and audio connection to the Yucca Mountain Project Office in Las Vegas, Nevada, and the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analysis in San Antonio, Texas. Participants included representatives from the NRC, DOE, Bechtel SAIC Co. LLC, State of Nevada, Nye County, Electric Power Research Institute, Nuclear Energy Institute, and members of the public. Copies of the agenda and a list of attendees are attached as Enclosures 1 and 2, respectively.

Opening Remarks:

Margaret Federline (NRC) opened the meeting by providing an overview of NRC expectations during the current phase of pre-licensing up to and including the submittal of the license application. NRC indicated that they were committed to open communications, public involvement, timely feedback on DOE products and continued interactions. NRC added that its expectations of DOE are those of an applicant and that DOE should be committed to timely completion of scheduled information, implementation of important initiatives and prompt feedback on new information that could affect NRC reviews.

Dr. Margaret Chu (DOE) added that the Program is fully engaged in meeting the management challenges associated with issue resolution, schedules and budgets. DOE emphasized management's commitment to address the root causes of past deficiencies, utilize change agents to implement improvements, and use industry personnel to review the effectiveness of the improvements.

Dr. Russ Dyer (DOE) provided an overview of its tactical approach of transitioning from site recommendation to license application. The DOE characterized the overall sequence of work to support the license application to involve three major components: postclosure safety, design, and pre-closure safety analysis. An overview of the scope and schedule associated with these activities was presented. John Greeves (NRC) inquired if the documents developed between site recommendation and license application would be quality or non-quality documents. In response, Dr. Dyer noted that documents used to feed the license application will meet the applicable QA requirements.

The NRC provided a status update for the issuance of the Yucca Mountain Review Plan and integrated Issue Resolution Status Report (IRSR). The forecast for issuance of the YMRP is spring 2003, and issuance of the IRSR is planned for the end of September 2002. The NRC also noted that for the September 2002 Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste (ACNW) meeting in Las Vegas, the NRC would be presenting their perspective on recent DOE/NRC interactions (e.g., criticality, igneous peer review, KTI schedule) and an overview of the purpose and scope of the integrated IRSR.

Presentations:

Dr. Gene Runkle (DOE) highlighted the five key areas associated with the Management Improvement Initiatives (MII): roles and responsibilities, Project procedures, quality assurance program, corrective action program, and safety-conscious work environment (SCWE). Additional detail was provided in each area regarding the activities DOE intends to implement to support the development of the LA (Enclosures 3, 4, and 5). DOE noted that the progress for implementing the MII would be monitored and reported for the key activities only. DOE added that there will be some flexibility in the implementation schedule for the lower tier activities based upon the extent of improvements needed. Margaret Federline (NRC) questioned if implementation of the management initiatives was contingent upon funding. Dr. Chu responded that despite funding concerns the initiatives would remain DOE management's highest priority. John Greeves (NRC) expressed concern that based on the MII schedule, some of the initiatives (e.g., procedures) would not be complete until late 2003 which may not afford the NRC enough time to review, inspect, and make a decision on the effectiveness of the improvements. Dr. Chu acknowledged that her goal is to provide the NRC completed products as soon as practical for their review.

Nancy Williams (BSC) briefed the NRC on the March 26, 2002 near-miss electrical incident at the Yucca Mountain site (Enclosure 6). Corrective actions taken and lessons learned from this incident provide an example of implementation of the key elements of the MII. Also, lessons learned have been presented to affected and non-affected organizations to re-emphasize the importance of procedural compliance and the potential consequences associated with failure to follow procedures. Ms. Williams noted that as a result of corrective actions, there is evidence throughout the site of a stronger safety and quality culture and stronger interactions between management and labor.

Ram Murthy (DOE) reiterated the distinction between the BSC and the Office of Quality Assurance (OQA) audit and surveillance activities presented at the quarterly QA Meeting on July 30, 2002 (Enclosure 7). In addition, the statistics for recent OQA audits and surveillances were provided. Ken Hess (BSC) discussed the BSC Quality Assurance program, specifically, the independence of the QA organization (Enclosure 8). Mr. Hess noted that the BSC quality assurance program is consistent with the industry practice for the line organizations to be responsible for QA. As such, BSC accepts this responsibility and is committed to self identify and correct deficiencies.

Joseph Ziegler (DOE) presented the status and schedule for key activities to be completed in support of the license application (Enclosure 9). John Greeves indicated a need to better understand the data feeds supporting the activities. DOE noted its receptiveness to future interactions to discuss specifics of license application support activities. Nancy Slater Thompson (DOE) is preparing a strategy for interactions that involve homeland security issues.

Nancy Voltura (DOE) and Dr. Runkle briefed the NRC on the OCRWM concerns program, progress made in clearing the backlog of employee concerns, its approach for providing employee feedback on the actions taken to address specific, broad-based "anonymous" concerns (Enclosure 10). DOE noted that the FY 2001 backlog would be cleared by the end of August 2002. Also, BSC is establishing a concerns program to allow for issues to be managed at the working level. It was noted that the BSC program would not preclude employees to directly access or come to the OCRWM Concerns Program, if they chose to. Also, the goals and metrics established for closeout of future employee concerns were discussed. John Greeves noted that although DOE's past performance would not have met these goals, the NRC is encouraged by DOE's efforts to improve the process.

John Greeves (NRC) asked what provisions were in place for site-wide distribution of actions taken in response to substantiated employee concerns. DOE (Voltura) indicated that for instances where the source was known, responses were provided to the affected individuals; however, for anonymous concerns a general response was provided in the YMP Announcements which is accessible to project personnel. Relative to this issue, Ken Hess (BSC) stated that it was BSC's corporate policy to not disseminate information related to employee disciplinary action taken against specific individuals regarding workplace behavior issues. In response to a question from Robert Latta (NRC) regarding employee concerns identified through the Conditions/Issues Identification and Reporting/Resolution System (CIRS), DOE (Voltura) stated that two related employee concerns had been documented as CIRS items and that these issues had been entered into the employee concerns program for disposition.

The NRC added that they would continue to monitor DOE's performance in meeting the metrics. The NRC requested a copy of the OCRWM policy statement on SCWE. A copy was provided to the NRC during the meeting and will be attached to the meeting summary (Enclosure 11).

The State of Nevada (Susan Lynch) asked whether there were open concerns dated prior to the present FY 2000 and 2001 backlog. Ms. Voltura stated that there were two earlier concerns that will also be closed out in August 2002.

Timothy Gunter (DOE) provided an overview of the Key Technical Issue (KTI) schedule for FY2002-FY2005 (Enclosure 12). DOE and NRC acknowledged the need to develop an interaction schedule to discuss the scope and schedule of individual KTIs in more detail. Margaret Federline expressed a concern regarding the potential impact associated with the volume of KTI resolution in FY04 and FY05 on submittal of a license

application in December 2004. Dr. Chu responded that DOE would attempt to accelerate the KTI resolution schedule where possible. As an aside, Margaret Federline requested additional dialogue with DOE regarding the modular design approach for the license application. Dr. Chu noted that DOE would schedule this interaction prior to the next quarterly meeting.

Action Items:

Tim Gunter (DOE) presented the status of the action items from past meetings. In addition, two new action items were agreed to:

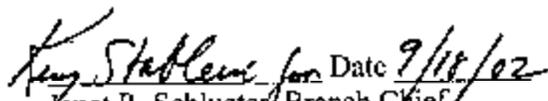
New Action Items:

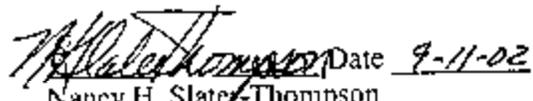
1. DOE/NRC to decide on a date for an LSN/BIE interaction before the next quarterly meeting.
2. DOE to assess the frequency and team makeup for performance-based QA audits.

The current status of action items is shown in Enclosure 13.

Closing Remarks:

None.

 Date 9/18/02
Janet R. Schlueter, Branch Chief
Division of Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material
Safety and Safeguards
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

 Date 9-11-02
Nancy H. Slater-Thompson
Regulatory Coordination Division
Office of Civilian Radioactive
Waste Management
U.S. Department of Energy

 Date 9/9/02
Joseph D. Ziegler
Acting Assistant Manager
Office of Licensing and
Regulatory Compliance
Yucca Mountain Site
Characterization Office
U.S. Department of Energy