



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NUCLEAR WASTE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

ACNWS-0100

PDR

September 18, 1998

The Honorable Shirley Ann Jackson
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

SUBJECT: SUMMARY REPORT – 103RD MEETING OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON
NUCLEAR WASTE, AUGUST 27-28, 1998, AND OTHER RELATED COMMITTEE
ACTIVITIES

Dear Chairman Jackson:

During its 103rd meeting on August 27-28, 1998, at Two White Flint North, 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, the Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste (ACNW) discussed several matters and approved the following reports:

- Report to the Honorable Shirley Ann Jackson, Chairman, NRC, from Dr. B. John Garrick, Chairman, ACNW, "Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste Comments on NRC's Draft 10 CFR Part 63 and Revision 0 of the Total System Performance Assessment Issue Resolution Status Report," dated September 3, 1998.
- Report to the Honorable Shirley Ann Jackson, Chairman, NRC, from Dr. B. John Garrick, Chairman, ACNW, "Issues and Recommendations Concerning the Near-Field Environment and the Performance of Engineered Barriers at Yucca Mountain," dated September 9, 1998.

HIGHLIGHTS OF KEY ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE COMMITTEE

1. Development of a Standard Review Plan for Decommissioning

Dr. K.I. McConnell, NMSS, discussed recent progress made by the staff on the development of a Standard Review Plan (SRP) for Decommissioning.

Dr. McConnell reviewed the conclusions resulting from the staff's technical meeting held on July 28 and 29, 1998, on the appropriateness of the approach used in selecting default parameters for the DandD

RS02

computer code. He noted that while it was decided that additional work is needed, there were no "fatal flaws" identified in the staff's current approach. He then proceeded to outline the staff's current plans for developing guidance for implementing the license termination rule.

Mr. D. A. Orlando, Project Manager, NMSS, presented a timeline that indicated four tentative milestones in the SRP development schedule when ACNW review and comment will be solicited.

Dr. Garrick closed this session by stating that the development of the license termination rule is another prime opportunity for the staff to continue to move towards risk-informed, performance-based regulation.

Conclusions/Action Items

The staff indicated that it intends to present to the Committee at its December 1998 meeting a discussion of technical issues it has identified thus far that require resolution. The Committee is planning to issue a letter with comments on the development of an SRP for Decommissioning.

2. Status Report on the NRC Task Force on External Regulation of Certain Department of Energy Nuclear Facilities

Dr. J. H. Austin, Deputy Chairman of the Task Force, reviewed the history of the NRC's program for the external regulation of certain Department of Energy (DOE) nuclear facilities. He stated that in 1997, the NRC and the DOE entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the intention of examining the desirability of NRC's regulation of certain DOE nuclear facilities. He noted that the MOU called for 6 to 10 pilot projects of simulated regulation that would test objectives, such as the value added by NRC's review and cost. The first three facilities selected were Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory, the Radiochemical and Engineering Development Center at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and the receiving basin for offsite fuel at the Savannah River site. Dr. Austin discussed associated lessons learned from the review of these sites to date. The question of which entity should be the licensee for the laboratories, DOE or the laboratory operators, arose during these site reviews. In the future, pilot programs may include the Pacific Northwest Laboratory, a nonpower nuclear reactor, and an environmental management site.

Conclusions/Action Items

This was an information briefing. The ACNW will continue to keep abreast of the status of this program.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE FOR THE 104TH ACNW MEETING

The Committee agreed to consider the following during its 104th meeting on October 19-21, 1998, in the Amargosa Valley and Las Vegas, Nevada:

- On Monday, October 19, 1998, the Committee will tour the Yucca Mountain site. During this tour the Committee plans to visit the Exploratory Studies Facility, particularly alcoves 1 and 5; the new east-west transect drift; and the Calico Hills tracer migration test at Busted Butte. Before concluding the tour, the Committee also plans to visit Devils Hole and the Ash Meadows National Wildlife Preserve.
- Planning Session - The Committee will conduct a day long planning session during which it will do a self-evaluation of its performance over the past year, examining steps it can take to improve its operational efficiency. The Committee will also examine and select priority issues for review in 1999 and beyond. Time will be allocated at the end of the planning session for public comments and discussion.
- Format and Content Guide - The Committee will review the NRC staff's Format and Content Guide for Reactor License Termination.
- Public Comments - The Committee will hear comments from members of the public, representatives from the State of Nevada and affected local counties, and Tribal Nations on concerns related to nuclear waste disposal.
- Preparation of ACNW Reports - The Committee will discuss planned reports, including reports on potential regulations for licensing the Yucca Mountain repository; proposed importance measures for evaluating nuclear waste repository performance; issues related to the regulatory guides and SRP for Decommissioning; recent international experience; a report on Committee Fiscal Year 1999 priorities and planning; comments on Yucca Mountain site characterization and viability assessment; and other topics discussed at this and previous meetings.

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OTHER RELATED ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE

The ACNW met with the Reaktorsicherheit-Kommission (Reactor Safety Commission, Germany) during the week of September 14-18, 1998. The Committee also toured the Konrad, Morsleben, and Gorleben facilities during its visit to Germany.

There is no ACNW meeting scheduled for November 1998. The 105th ACNW meeting is scheduled for December 15-17, 1998.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. John Garrick', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

B. John Garrick
Chairman