

June 15, 2000

Dr. Kevin D. Crowley, Director  
Board on Radioactive Waste Management  
National Research Council  
2101 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20418

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION AND PARTIAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT  
FOR A STUDY ENTITLED "CIVILIAN LOW-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE  
DISPOSAL: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD"

Dear Dr. Crowley:

I am responding to your April 11, 2000 letter to Dr. William Travers of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), requesting participation and partial financial support for the Board on Radioactive Waste Management (BRWM) study entitled, "Civilian Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal: Challenges and Opportunities Ahead." We recognize the potential value of such a study to low-level radioactive waste (LLW) generators in the United States and to the national LLW program. States and compacts have not been successful in developing new disposal capacity in the United States under the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1985. Although disposal capacity is available today, the long-term disposal needs of LLW generators are not assured.

We would be pleased to participate in the study, for example, through briefings of the Committee study group on our LLW disposal regulatory program. We are also working to determine the extent to which we can provide the financial support that you requested and will promptly inform you of our decision.

In the interim, we suggest that the BRWM consider expanding the scope of the study to include an assessment of the key issues associated with managing waste streams other than LLW which pose a similar level of risk. These include naturally occurring radioactive materials, accelerator produced radioactive material, technologically enhanced naturally occurring radioactive material, material covered under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program, and exempt source material.

We look forward to participating with BRWM and other Federal and State agencies in this assessment of some of the key issues associated with the safe and responsible disposal of LLW. The NRC contact for this activity is James Kennedy. He may be reached at (301)-415-6668.

Sincerely,

*/RA/*

William F. Kane, Director  
Office of Nuclear Material Safety  
and Safeguards

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