

CENTER FOR NUCLEAR WASTE REGULATORY ANALYSES

TRIP REPORT
October 25, 1990

SUBJECT: Meeting of the LSS Advisory Review Panel
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DATE AND PLACE: October 10-11, 1990
Reno, Nevada

AUTHOR (S): R. Johnson, S. Young, C. Acree

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PERSONS PRESENT:

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BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF TRIP:

This was the fourth meeting of the Licensing Support System (LSS) Advisory Review Panel (LSSARP), which was established by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to make recommendations to the NRC and Department of Energy (DOE) on LSS issues. The meeting was open to the public. The agenda included a briefing on LSS design status, a proposed revision of topical guidelines, a discussion of bibliographic-header fields, and a briefing on the handling of LSS technical data

by the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses (CNWRA). A full transcript of the proceedings, with copies of viewgraphs, will be provided by the LSS Administrator (LSSA).

SUMMARY OF PERTINENT POINTS:

LSS Design

Ms. Cerny (DOE) said that the first cluster of LSS equipment could be installed at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas as early as August, 1993, if requested funding and staffing are approved. The design contract with the Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) ends on November 30, 1990, with the acceptance of a final design document. The DOE expects to award an implementation contract by November, 1992, following the issuance of an RFP. Estimated system costs, also to be released next month, are expected to be considerably higher than previously stated. Mr. Cameron (LSSA) commented that alternative cost/benefit design options would be explored before the RFP is issued and that the LSSA is developing an integrated project management schedule. The Panel urged the LSSA and DOE to work closely together.

In its briefing on LSS design, SAIC explained that it was replacing the term "document" with the term "unit", so that attachments and sections of publications by different authors would be separately catalogued. There will eventually be five capture stations, processing 15,000 pages daily. Once images are made, converted to machine-readable text (when possible) and verified, the materials provided for input will be destroyed. (Record copies will be retained on microfilm.) The system is expected to contain 42 million documents, averaging an upwardly-revised estimate of 30 pages each, at license hearing time. By then, all terminals will be upgraded to "Level 2", enabling them to display images, as well as ASCII text. Peak concurrent use of 260 terminals, with a five-second average response time, is anticipated. An estimated 10 million pages will be printed locally each year. Storage of images in optical-disk "juke-boxes" will be duplicated to safeguard the data base and may be decentralized to achieve lower communications costs.

Topical Guidelines

Mr. Treby (NRC) explained a proposed NRC revision of the topical guidelines, which define the kinds of documents that are expected to be relevant to the licensing process and should, therefore, be included within the LSS. The guidelines that were included in the LSS Rule in April, 1989 were considered to be interim ones subject to refinement. The NRC revision would exclude environmental and transportation related documents. Other members of the Panel objected strongly. They urged the NRC to subject this decision to a formal rulemaking proceeding so that judicial determination of its legality would be obtained sufficiently early in the process.

Bibliographic Header Fields

The Panel agreed to drop the Copyee and the related Copyee-Organization fields, intended for correspondence, as troublesome and unnecessary.

With regard to the abstract/summary field, the Panel concurred with the LSSA position that abstracts should not be specially written for text-searchable documents. The LSS should store abstracts only for those text-searchable documents that already contain author-generated abstracts (which can be moved automatically into the header field). These occasional abstracts, however, should not be made text-searchable; otherwise users might, inappropriately, depend on their imagined universality and thereby fail to retrieve relevant documents that lack abstracts.

The Panel agreed to add two new fields: one to flag copyrighted material and the other to create a "package identifier" which will permit the retention of document relationships.

Technical Data

The CNWRA presented a status report on its task, in behalf of the LSSA, to recommend access protocols for the retrieval of LSS "technical data" - in fulfillment of the LSS Rule. Viewgraphs shown are attached. The task is intended to focus upon documentary material that cannot be entered into the LSS in text-searchable form (e.g., graphics, numeric tables, handwritten notes, and magnetic media) and can, therefore, be found only with the help of a bibliographic header (including an abstract). A significant point is that the DOE's Yucca Mountain Project Office (YMPO), the primary producer of documentary material, is employing Data-Record Packages to store all of its material, and is using a single header and table of contents to describe each of its packages.

Three issues were identified for LSSARP discussion:

1. Should fields be added to the header to accommodate non-text-searchable material, for example: media category, storage location, regulatory category, and indication of qualified status?
2. What requirements should be placed on the submission of packaged material to the LSS?
3. How should non-imageable materials, such as computer tapes of numeric data, be made readily available to LSS users?

There was much discussion of these issues, but no consensus was sought or reached because exploratory efforts by the CNWRA are still in progress.

Scheduling of Future LSSARP Meetings

The next LSSARP meeting will be held on June 12-13, 1991, in the Washington, D. C. area. It will include discussion of access planning, compliance evaluation, and priority document loading. Mr. Cameron (LSSA) announced that the CNWRA will be tasked with examining the latter issue. LSSARP members will receive the SAIC design/cost documents (to be completed next month) for review.

IMPRESSIONS/CONCLUSIONS:

In the opinion of those who have attended previous LSSARP meetings, this one was especially lively. We understand that the CNWRA presentation on technical data was well received.

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED:

None.

PENDING ACTIONS:

The CNWRA will continue its efforts to develop access protocols for the retrieval of LSS technical data. A more compressed schedule for the definition of applicable header fields may be necessary. The concept of Data-Record packing was well received by the LSSARP, but clarification in a number of areas is required before adequate access protocols can be developed. The next step will be a second visit to the DOE's YMPO and to two of its prime contractors' local records centers to examine Data-Record packaging in greater detail. A visit will also be made to the State of Nevada's Nuclear Waste Project Office to observe its technical-data handling procedures. Nuclear-industry and tribal-interest representatives, who missed the briefing, will be contacted separately.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

None.

SIGNATURES:

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REFERENCES:

None.

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