

NOV 12 1991

Mr. John P. Roberts, Acting Associate Director  
for Systems and Compliance  
Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management  
U. S. Department of Energy, RW 30  
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Mr. Roberts:

SUBJECT: U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION (NRC) QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA)  
AUDIT OF THE U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY (USGS)

I am transmitting Audit Report No. NRC-91-01 for the NRC audit of USGS conducted at the Nevada Test Site from September 16-17, 1991, and at the USGS facilities in Denver, Colorado from September 18-20, 1991.

The purpose of this audit was to conduct an evaluation of the implementation of the USGS QA Program as it relates to the Site Potentiometric-Level Evaluation activity under the Study Plan for Characterization of the Site Saturated-Zone Ground-Water Flow System. Areas examined during the audit and our findings are discussed in the enclosed report. Within these areas, the audit consisted of an examination of procedures and representative records, interviews with personnel, and observations by the audit team members.

During the audit it was found that the USGS QA program has adequate procedural controls in place and that program implementation is effective for eight of the nine programmatic elements that were audited. However, deficient areas of implementation included failures to: (1) sign an entry or identify a data control platform in a well site logbook; (2) have sufficient detail in a Scientific Notebook; and, (3) retrieve an outdated technical procedure and maintain a check-out log for the distribution of technical procedures. The deficiencies are classified as Level 3, and are not significant in terms of the overall USGS QA program. The specific findings and references to the pertinent requirements are identified in the enclosures to this letter.

The NRC staff is requesting that DOE submit, within 45 days from the date of this letter, its response for each item that appears in the Notice of Deficiency. The response should contain: (1) a description of steps that have been or will be taken to correct the items and to prevent recurrence; (2) a determination of the root cause; and (3) the dates by which corrective actions and preventative measures were or will be completed.

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Mr. John P. Roberts

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If you have any questions concerning this audit, please call Jim Conway on (301)/FTS 492-0453.

Sincerely,

*for* (Original Signed by *Joseph J. Holonich*)  
John J. Linehan, Acting Director  
Repository Licensing and Quality  
Assurance Project Directorate  
Division of High-Level Waste Management  
Office of Nuclear Material Safety  
and Safeguards

Enclosures:

1. Appendix A - Notice of Deficiency
2. Appendix B - Audit Report No. NRC-91-01

cc: R. Loux, State of Nevada  
C. Gertz, DOE/NV  
L. Hayes, USGS  
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NRC/USGS AUDIT

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