

October 18, 2000

NOTE TO: Janice Dunn Lee, Director
Office of International Programs

FROM: Elizabeth L. Doroshuk */RA/*
Office of International Programs

SUBJECT: MEETING SUMMARY - WEEKLY FSU STATUS MEETING,
SEPTEMBER 7, 2000

Purpose:

The purpose of this note is to document the results of the weekly FSU Status meeting, held on Thursday, September 7, 2000. A list of attendees is included as an Attachment.

Discussion:

Gordon Fowler began the meeting by updating the group on several contracting issues related to licensing assistance activities being performed in Ukraine. Gordon projected that almost all of the available funding for nuclear safety assistance activities in Ukraine would be obligated by the end of the fiscal year. Gordon also reviewed several matters he planned to discuss during travel to Russia and Ukraine in September. He said he understood that DOE had renewed its agreement with GAN of Russia regarding MPC&A and research reactor activities, but that the Russian organization, Nikiet, is being excluded.

Gordon also mentioned that he planned to hold preliminary informal discussions with Mr. Smyshlyaev, of SNRA of Ukraine in order to pursue the question of whether it would be beneficial to SNRA if a board of international experts were established to advise the regulator on priorities. The matter would then be raised for consideration during the annual meetings in January 2001. Gordon added that now the Rovno2/Khmelnitski4 construction completion activities, and Chernobyl closure are the most important political concerns in Ukraine.

Some discussion took place on several options for receiving contract support for assistance in performing nuclear safety assistance activities in Ukraine, and Central and Eastern European countries(CEE), if procurement activities then underway were not successful. Janice expressed the need for some urgency in exploring these options, since procurement activities currently underway were expected to take some time to complete.

Jack mentioned that he has a need for additional support for performing nuclear safety assistance activities in Kazakhstan, and could utilize the new contact when finalized.

Janice mentioned that in connection with the funding and performance of nuclear safety assistance activities in the FSU and CEE countries, she would like arrange a meeting with

Bill Taylor and other AID representatives to discuss future nuclear safety assistance activities. In the meantime, she urged Gordon to ensure that Jon Johnson's goals and objectives for travel to Russia and Ukraine are met, and that heavy emphasis on program implementation details be avoided during those meetings. Janice reiterated the importance of OIP's need to receive NRR continuing support.

Mary Carter added that funds for interpretation in support of nuclear safety assistance activities in the FSU countries must be received prior to November 1, in order to avoid any interruption in planned nuclear safety assistance activities overseas.

Donna-Marie continued the discussions with a note that VATESI of Lithuania may be subsumed by the Ministry of Environment, and lose its authority to perform inspections. Although there is a desire to minimize any impact at VATESI, there is some concern that adherence to the tenets of the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS) may be in question.

Donna-Marie raised the question of how best to transmit the Czech Instrumentation and Controls (I&C) trip report summary to SUJB of the Czech Republic. It was decided that Donna-Maire would first verify that the report has already been made publicly available, and then consider the need to recommend that the U.S. Embassy in Prague issue the report as a cable.

Donna-Marie confirmed with the group that the Romanian request for approval of a foreign assignee at the NRC has been denied.

The question of whether a final meeting of the G-24 should be held in March to review the results of the recent questionnaire, was raised. Janice said that it would be important to first learn what the results are, and then develop a recommendation.

Donna-Marie asked again whether it would be worthwhile for an OIP representative to attend the VVER regulators' meeting in Odessa in October. Due to resource constraints here in OIP, the decision was made not to participate in the meeting, and Donna-Maire agreed to pass along this information to those planning the meeting.

Donna-Maire also discussed the status of bilateral agreements then being prepared for signature during the IAEA General Conference, and noted that they were moving forward. She also mentioned that the Chairman will have lunch with Slovak representatives, rather than dinner during that particular bilateral meeting.

Finally, Donna-Marie reviewed the status of AID funding agreements for CEE countries. She said that although the NRC has received new funding, AID did not agree to proceed with reprogramming funds made available through previous agreements, at this time. Instead, reprogramming and the need to transfer funds for assistance in the Czech Republic to the Lithuanian account will be addressed later. In response to Janice's query on relative funding levels for assistance activities in the CEE countries, Donna-Marie said that of five countries, Lithuania and the Czech Republic are the only substantially funded programs. Funding levels for assistance activities in the other countries are only enough to cover travel expenses.

Jack continued the discussions by mentioning that a seismic walkdown in Armenia will be underway for the next two weeks, and we will be very interested in learning the results. Jack explained that although in the past it always seemed that DOE funding provided to Armenia for plant safety modifications was never enough, DOE representatives think there may be some progress this year. Jack mentioned that Jim Turner may travel to Armenia in January or February of next year to participate in discussions on this work, and recommended that Janice consider participating in the discussions, as well. Janice indicated that she is favorably inclined toward participating in the discussions.

Jack noted that a debriefing of earlier meetings in Kazakhstan was to be held during the following week at DOE. The question of where spent fuel should be stored remains at an impasse, and little was resolved during the recent DOE meetings there. Janice suggested that an OIP representative attend the debriefing. Jack further inquired whether OIP had received any feedback on the Commission paper he prepared discussing nuclear safety assistance activities in Kazakhstan. Janice indicated that no feedback had been received.

Jack mentioned that another coordination meeting on the BN350 reactor is being scheduled in Kazakhstan in October, but he will likely not attend since he expects little progress to be made, based on the outcome of recent meetings.

Jack also provided draft copies of slides he prepared for briefing Commissioner Merrifield, and asked for our comments.

Before concluding the meeting, Janice suggested to Jack that OIP hold off soliciting NMSS involvement in the Chernobyl Shelter Implementation Plan (SIP) project until we have a better understanding of the project. In the meantime, Jack might contact the Southwest Research Institute in San Antonio, Texas, since research on waste issues is performed there.

It was noted that Department of State (DOS) representatives are planning to arrange periodic nuclear safety assistance status meetings, and that OIP should plan to attend. Donna-Marie agreed to find out when the first meeting is to be held.

Attachment: List of Attendees

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*See previous concurrence

OFFICE:	OIP/A	OIP/A	OIP/A	OIP/A
NAME:	*EDoroshuk	MCarter*	DMPerez*	GFowler*
DATE:	10/17/00	10/18/00	10/19/00	10/19/00

OFFICE:	OIP/A	OIP/DD	OIP/D
NAME:	*JRamsey	*RHauber	*JDunnLee
DATE:	10/23/00	10/24/00	10/27/00

WEEKLY FSU MEETING

September 7, 2000

LIST OF ATTENDEES

1. Gordon Fowler
2. Donna-Marie Perez
3. Jack Ramsey
4. Mary Carter
5. Janice Dunn Lee
6. Beth Doroshuk

ATTACHMENT