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FINAL REPLY:

Daniel S. Goldin
National Aeronautics
and Space Administration (NASA)

TO:

Chairman Meserve

FOR SIGNATURE OF : ** PRI **

CRC NO: 01-0203

Chairman

DESC:

ROUTING:

Request for a Designee to Serve as NRC's Technical
Advisor to the Interagency Nuclear Safety Review
Panel for the NASA Mars Exploration Rover
(MER)-2003 Project

Travers
Paperiello
Kane
Norry
Reiter
Craig
Burns
Virgilio, NMSS
Cyr, OGC

DATE: 04/13/01

ASSIGNED TO: RES CONTACT: Thadani

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS OR REMARKS:

Ref. G19990313.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
CORRESPONDENCE CONTROL TICKET

Date Printed: Apr 12, 2001 16:00

PAPER NUMBER: LTR-01-0203 **LOGGING DATE:** 04/12/2001
ACTION OFFICE: EDO

AUTHOR: Daniel Goldin (NASA)
AFFILIATION:
ADDRESSEE: Richard Meserve
SUBJECT: Requests a designee to serve as NRC's technical advisor to the Interagency Nuclear Safety Review Panel for the NASA Mars Exploration Rover (MER)-2003 project

ACTION: Signature of Chairman
DISTRIBUTION: Chairman, RF

LETTER DATE: 04/09/2001
ACKNOWLEDGED: No
SPECIAL HANDLING:

NOTES:
FILE LOCATION: ADAMS
DATE DUE: 04/26/2001 **DATE SIGNED:**

EDO --G20010145

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration
Office of the Administrator
Washington, DC 20546-0001



APR 9 2001

The Honorable Richard A. Meserve
Chairman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In accordance with the interagency cooperation reflected in paragraph 9 of Presidential Directive/National Security Council Memorandum #25 (PD/NSC-25), as amended, an *ad hoc* Interagency Nuclear Safety Review Panel (INSRP) is needed for the NASA Mars Exploration Rover (MER)-2003 project. This is to request the name of your designee who will serve as your Agency's technical advisor to the INSRP for this project.

The MER-2003 project includes two missions that are currently proposed for launch in 2003 from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida. Each proposed mission would consist of a separate launch of a Rover/Lander spacecraft aboard a Delta II-class/Star-48 launch system. The first launch could be as early as May 2003; the second launch could occur as early as June 2003.

The baseline rover design includes up to 11 Light Weight Radioisotope Heater Units (LWRHU) for thermal control in each rover. Each LWRHU contains approximately 2.7 grams of plutonium dioxide with about 33 curies of radioactivity. Other small sources for scientific instruments include cobalt-57 with up to 350 millicuries per rover, and curium-244 with up to 50 millicuries per rover.

The nuclear safety launch approval process is expected to be similar to the process used on previous missions using radioisotope heating (e.g., the Mars Pathfinder Rover mission). The INSRP will review the Department of Energy's nuclear Safety Analysis Report (SAR) for the mission and document its evaluation in a Safety Evaluation Report (SER). After Agency review and acceptance, the NASA Administrator will determine whether to request Presidential nuclear safety launch approval; and, if so, will, along with the request, formally transmit the SAR and SER, and other pertinent

information, to the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

If you have any questions concerning the enclosed letters you can contact Dr. Earle K. Huckins III, Deputy Associate Administrator for Space Science, on (202) 358-1413. The NASA INSRP coordinator for this project is Mr. John W. Lyver IV, Office of Safety and Mission Assurance, (202) 358-1155.

NASA looks forward to receiving the name of your INSRP designee, and to continuing our excellent working relationship in this important planetary exploration project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel S. Goldin". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Daniel S. Goldin
Administrator

Enclosures

cc:

S/Dr. Huckins
QS/Mr. Lyver
DOD/Mr. Oliver
DOE/Mr. Abraham
EPA/Ms. Whitman