

May 14, 2001

Mr. David A. Lochbaum  
Nuclear Safety Engineer  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
1707 H Street, N.W., Suite 600  
Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear Mr. Lochbaum:

Thank you for your letter of April 9, 2001, summarizing concerns that you have regarding NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS).

We are working hard to resolve issues that frustrate you and other public users and remain committed to implementing needed improvements. While much work remains to be done, we believe that ADAMS has benefitted the public in several ways:

- Publicly available documents are now released in days rather than weeks.
- The public can view documents at their desktops rather than having to travel to Local Public Document Rooms (LPDRs) or the headquarters Public Document Room (PDR).
- The public can download or print documents free of charge rather than pay for reproduction, resulting in a cost avoidance to the public of \$150,000 in PDR contractor reproduction costs last fiscal year.

The following are responses to specific issues you raised.

Cannot stop ADAMS searches without exiting

It is true that you cannot stop a search in ADAMS until the system identifies all the records meeting the search criteria and begins displaying the records. However, at that point, the STOP button and STOP sign in the lower right corner of the screen become active and you can stop the display of the retrieved records any time you desire by pressing either of the STOP icons.

We could not replicate your experience with the system not responding with search results. You did not indicate how long you waited before you exited. Accessing ADAMS via the Web as you do, we conducted seven tests in PARS doing a Simple search for the four words you specified, *reactor core isolation cooling*, with no restrictions on the order or proximity of these words or other criteria such as Document Date range. The system responded in all of our tests but it did take considerable time.

The following search strategies used separately or in combination, can reduce the time you wait before seeing a list of documents and/or can increase the likelihood that the documents you retrieve will be of interest.

- Limit your search to an exact phrase. This can be done in Simple Find by surrounding the phrase with quotation marks. In Advanced Find, you can specify the order and proximity of the words. Specifying the exact phrase "reactor core isolation cooling" reduces the result count from 4,478 to 954 records.
- Limit your search by other document characteristics, such as Document Type.
- Limit your search by another word or phrase in the text or title. This alone may not drastically reduce your response time, but it will retrieve a smaller, more relevant list of documents.
- Limit your search to a calendar period of time if you cannot narrow your search otherwise. Always limit a text search of a frequently used word or phrase to 1 month, just to get an idea of the prevalence of topic. (In your example, a 1 month search (October 2000) retrieved 201 hits in 1 minute.) After browsing the records, repeat the search for a different month. After looking at these records, you may find ways to refine or narrow your search. This will reduce your wait time and frustration. If you have to suspend your review of documents to work on another task or if you lose a connection for some reason, you can start again without losing much time.
- Lower the number of records specified in the Maximum Returned box. Although not all potentially relevant records will appear, the response time will be faster. You can then review the retrieved records for ideas on how you might narrow your search.

In addition, NRC is preparing to move to the most current versions of the software products used in the ADAMS system. We anticipate that the new versions will improve both system performance and reliability.

#### No legacy documents

The NRC has not made the pre-November 1999 document index available to the public because the response time of searches performed during testing was not acceptable. NRC has solved this problem and will shortly be migrating the index data to the public server. A complete collection of the ADAMS legacy library data is scheduled to be publicly available in fall 2001.

#### Blank pages in PDF files

Occasionally, documents generated from Corel software products (WordPerfect, Quattro Pro, Presentation) contain certain formatting and pagination codes that do not translate properly when the document is converted from the native file to a Portable Document Format (PDF) file. This problem can cause the PDF file to have blank pages between pages of text, and, under certain conditions, pages that contain only one character. Although all of the original document text is in the PDF file (we have not encountered a document where any text was completely missing), it is not displayed properly in the ADAMS Viewer. The new version of the ADAMS software that will be available on the public version of ADAMS this summer uses an upgraded version of Adobe Acrobat to generate and display the PDF files. We have also installed

software patches provided by Corel. We believe the upgraded Adobe software and the Corel patches will eliminate this problem.

After discovering this problem, we implemented a quality control process to review pages of PDF files generated from Corel software application files and ensure that the PDF file was properly paginated. However, PDF documents generated early in the ADAMS program may have pagination problems that we are not yet aware of. We will continue to correct these as soon as they are discovered. Please report any problems that you encounter to the PDR.

#### Turtle-like downloads

For those files (ADAMS Accession Numbers ML003719804 and ML003727905) in which the actual file size is the same as you provided, we found that the actual throughput (Kb/sec) via your digital T-1 telecommunications link was less than we got via a generic 28.8 bps analog modem connected to a leading consumer Internet service provider. We randomly picked an Internet site in each of the three branches of the Government and downloaded various documents to analyze the transfer rates. As you can see from the attached table, your transfer rates were consistently lower than the rates we got with the analog modem. You may wish to check with your local infrastructure support staff to determine why your transfer times are below average.

#### Unwanted exits after downloads

Disconnections are much more difficult to troubleshoot since they involve multiple components of the desktop hardware, the operating system, the local network infrastructure, the UCS Internet service provider, and finally the Internet itself. A contributing factor to the disconnections may be that the low throughput of your connection to the ADAMS Public Citrix server times out the connection during an extended interruption in the transfer of data.

#### Misfiled documents

As described in Challenge Area 2 of the ADAMS Action Plan, NRC is implementing a quality assurance program to improve ADAMS document and data integrity. The program includes the following activities:

- developing improved data standards for describing documents (for example, a standard approach to creating a title and/or description of reactor inspections)
- establishing a centralized Document Processing Center to process NRC-generated documents into ADAMS, with independent 100% quality control of the scanned image and index information describing the document (to be completely phased-in by June 2001)
- adding a list of controlled values for data entry to several fields (affiliation, docket, license number) to improve data integrity
- cleaning up the existing database (in progress)

These activities will improve search results for both NRC and public users. We also encourage you to use the services of PDR librarians, who are available to provide additional one-on-one customized training, or perform searches on your behalf.

NRC is also taking several actions to improve the ADAMS system for public users. They include:

Several system enhancements are also planned for the Public Library in our next ADAMS public release, scheduled for deployment this summer. The most notable upgrade is the online order module. With this feature, the public will be able to mark documents of interest found in a search and fill out an online order form to get copies of the documents in paper or electronic format (diskette or CD-ROM) from the PDR copy service. Another feature will allow users to choose page ranges for printing TIFF images by selecting the print option that opens a dialog box. There also will be more report formats than are available now. Finally, bibliographic reports will also be able to include packages.

We will soon be establishing an ADAMS Public Users Group and look forward to continuing communication with you directly and through participation in the Users Group.

Sincerely,

**/RA/**

Lynn Scattolini  
ADAMS Program Manager

Enclosure: As stated

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Sincerely,

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Lynn Scattolini  
ADAMS Program Manager

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ADAMS ACCESSION NUMBER: ML011240071

ADAMS DOCUMENT TITLE: Reply to Mr. David Lochbaum's Letter of April 9, 2001, Problems that ADAMS causes the Union of Concerned Scientists

OFFICE	ADAMS/OCIO				
NAME	L. Scattolini: <b>LBS</b>				
DATE	05/ 14 /2001				

**OFFICIAL RECORD COPY**

**DOCUMENT DOWNLOAD PERFORMANCE  
NRC VS. RANDOM GOVERNMENT AGENCIES VS. MR. LOCHBAUM**

**ADAMS via Citrix using 28.8 analog modem**

Document	File Size	Download Time	Transfer Rate
ML003725284	28 KB	9 seconds	3.11 kb/sec
ML992730103	436 KB	144 seconds	3.03 kb/sec
ML011090038	902 KB	305 seconds	2.96 kb/sec
ML003719804	3,057 KB	1020 seconds	2.99 kb/sec
ML003727905	4,330 KB	1475 seconds	2.94 kb/sec

**NRC Web Site using 28.8 Kbps analog modem**

Document	File Size	Download Time	Transfer Rate
Steam Generator Action Plan	55.3 KB	16 seconds	3.46 kb/sec
NUREG-1600, "NRC Enforcement Policy"	179 KB	57 seconds	3.15 kb/sec
NUREG/BR-0256, "The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission and How It Works"	511 KB	173 seconds	2.95 kb/sec

**Department of Justice (Executive Branch) using 28.8 Kbps analog modem**

Document	File Size	Download Time	Transfer Rate
The 21st Century Law Enforcement and Public Safety Act	93.5 KB	28 seconds	3.34 kb/sec
Address Based Geocoding, Final Report	378 KB	126 seconds	3 kb/sec
Drug Control Strategic Plan	553 KB	176 seconds	3.14 kb/sec

**General Accounting Office (Legislative Branch) using 28.8 Kbps analog modem**

Document	File Size	Download Time	Transfer Rate
Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service: National Organic Program	29.6 KB	8 seconds	3.70 kb/sec
Revised Final Performance Plan for Fiscal Year 2001 and Interim Adjustments to the Strategic Plan	303 KB	98 seconds	3.09 kb/sec
GAO's Reporter's Guide	1,080 KB	376 seconds	2.96 kb/sec

**U.S. Federal Courts (Judicial Branch) using 28.8 Kbps analog modem**

Document	File Size	Download Time	Transfer Rate
Federal Judicial Pay Erosion: A Report on the Need for Reform, February 2001	109 KB	34 seconds	3.22 kb/sec
Summary of Proposed Amendments to the Federal Rules	112 KB	36 seconds	3.11 kb/sec
Sample District Courtroom Layout for Technology	334 KB	121 seconds	2.76 kb/sec

**David A Lochbaum – Union of Concerned Scientists using T-1 (1.544 Mbps) digital circuit**

Document	Reported File Size	Actual File Size	Download Time	Transfer Rate
ML003748299	13,800 KB	6,440 KB (6.4 MB)	2,520 seconds	2.55 kb/sec
ML003727905	4,500 KB (4.5 MB)	4,330 KB (4.3 MB)	1,620 seconds	2.67 kb/sec
ML003719804	3,300 KB (3.3 MB)	3,057 KB (3.1 MB)	1,560 seconds	1.96 kb/sec
ML003727107	2,200 KB (2.2 MB)	48,018 KB (48MB)	900 seconds	53.35 kb/sec