

1. INTRODUCTION

The Licensing Support Network (LSN) responds to a congressional mandate that if the Department of Energy (DOE) submits a license application for construction authorization for a high-level radioactive waste repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) must reach a determination on the application in a three-year time frame. The NRC expects to accomplish this by replacing the classic "discovery" exchanges among parties with electronic access to discovery materials prior to the docketing of a license application. The LSN is codified in 10 C.F.R. (Code of Federal Regulations) Part 2, Subpart J (the LSN Rule).

Since the original rule establishing a centralized dial-up Licensing Support System (LSS) was promulgated in 1989, there has been extensive interaction with the parties and potential parties to the proceeding under the auspices of the LSS, and later the LSN Advisory Review Panel (LSNARP), a federal advisory committee chartered to provide advice and guidance on the design and operation of the system. Subpart J was revised in late 1998 to adopt the LSN, a World Wide Web (www) approach to connecting each party's documentary collections on whatever hardware and software platform they choose within general guidelines reflecting agreed-upon standards and formats. Proposed revisions were presented to the Commission in March 2001 which included clarification on the responsibilities of the LSN Administrator and also proposed design standards to ensure the exchange of data between the LSN central website and the participant document collections.

The purpose of these guidelines is to document the decisions reached by the LSNARP and the technical aspects of the proposed revisions to the rule of March 2001 which have contributed to the design basis of the LSN. Subsequent input from the LSNARP and its technical working groups will be documented and added to these guidelines as appropriate.