

July 19, 2001

MEMORANDUM TO: See Attached List

THRU: John T. Greeves, Director */RA/*
Division of Waste Management, NMSS

FROM: Thomas H. Essig, Chief */RA by C. Abrams Acting For/*
Environmental and Performance Assessment Branch
Division of Waste Management, NMSS

SUBJECT: IDENTIFICATION OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS

The purpose of this memorandum is to request your assistance in the identification of future support needs anticipated for the Environmental and Performance Assessment Branch (EPAB) within the Nuclear Materials Safety and Safeguards (NMSS) Division of Waste Management. A response to this memorandum is requested by August 17, 2001.

Background

In June 2000, the Division of Waste Management underwent a reorganization that resulted in the creation of the Environmental and Performance Assessment Branch (EPAB). EPAB is a service organization that provides technical support to the Office of NMSS, as well as other Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Offices and the Regions. The Branch's areas of expertise include low-level waste management, environmental protection, and performance assessment. In the environmental protection area, EPAB is responsible for the review or production of Environmental Impact Statements related to NMSS licensing actions, as well as the oversight of Environmental Assessments for materials and fuel cycle facilities. In the performance assessment area, EPAB staff perform complex radionuclide transport evaluations in support of waste management issues for NMSS, other NRC Offices/Divisions, and the Regions. I have attached, for information, a descriptive summary of the Branch's responsibilities and examples of current activities within the Branch's two sections.

In order to better serve its customers (i.e., NMSS, other NRC Offices/Divisions, and the Regions) in conducting environmental and performance assessment reviews, testing and developing performance assessment tools, and educating the staff in the use of performance assessment techniques or tools, EPAB needs to be able to clearly define its expected workload. This is extremely important for EPAB since it functions as a service organization. In addition, the performance assessment area of EPAB does not have a separate budget of its own, but relies upon its customers to budget for the work.

Contact: Sandra Wastler, NMSS/DWM
(301) 415-8733

Action Requested

In order for the Performance Assessment and Integration Section of EPAB to more clearly define its expected workload in the future, I am making two requests. First, for FY2002, I would request that you notify EPAB, by August 17, 2001, of any performance assessment work your organization might expect to request of the EPAB staff, along with an FTE estimate, the approximate dates, and an indication of its priority in your PBPM analysis. Secondly, for the future, I would request that you identify, in your operating level budget, performance assessment work expected from EPAB as soon as it is known to you, along with an FTE estimate, the approximate dates, and an indication of its priority in your PBPM analysis. The mechanism for accomplishing out-year (beyond FY-02) updates for EPAB work would be up to each individual organization; however, it could be as simple as putting the information in parentheses under a larger line item in the budget submittal.

In addition, to aid the Environmental and Low Level Waste Section in its assessment of upcoming work, I am requesting that you notify EPAB, by August 17, 2001, of any anticipated environmental work. This should include incoming actions that will require the preparation of an EIS, and any environmental assessments for which EPAB's review will be required.

It is our expectation that the information requested will allow EPAB to clearly define its workload for FY2002 and into the future to serve you better. If you have any questions, please contact me.

To: Attached List

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Environmental and Performance Assessment Branch

Environmental and Low-Level Waste (ELLW) Section

This section, led by Charlotte Abrams, serves as the NMSS focus for the development of all Office Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) and review of all Office Environmental Assessments, and review of outside EISs (e.g., DOE Yucca Mountain EIS, DOE West Valley EIS). This section also serves as the focus for implementation and overall coordination of the LLW program. The section provides technical assistance to Agreement States on LLW issues; implements an active interface program including ongoing consultation with Federal, State, Indian Tribes, and other entities to promote understanding of LLW programs and to resolve concerns in a timely manner. Some of the on-going activities of this section are:

- Review of the Supplemental Draft EIS for the proposed Yucca Mountain High-Level Waste Repository.
- Support of the EIS for the proposed Private Fuel Storage Facility.
- Preparation the EIS the Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility.
- Preparation of a guidance document for environmental reviews in support of licensing actions for materials and fuel cycle facilities.
- Preparation of the Sequoyah Fuels EIS.
- Review of Waste Control Specialist's request for 10 CFR 70 exemption for SNM concentrations in LLW.

Performance Assessment and Integration (PA&I) Section

This section, led by Sandra Wastler, is responsible for performing and facilitating high quality, realistic performance assessment (PA) analyses and reviews using risk-informed approaches to achieve the agency's strategic goals. The section performs PA analysis and reviews for non-routine and complex cases to demonstrate compliance with regulatory standards for HLW, LLW, and Decommissioning programs, as well as other programs as practicable. The PA&I facilitates the use of risk-informed approaches in PA through testing and evaluation of tools, codes, and models and through development of guidance, technical basis, staff positions, and new codes/models for conducting proper PA analysis of sites or systems associated with use, release, or disposal of radioactive materials. The section's staff also harmonizes and minimizes inconsistencies within the NRC and with other Federal Agencies in the dose/risk assessment approaches and methods, including selection of proper models, codes, and parameters to demonstrate compliance with dose/risk regulatory standards and limits. These efforts also involves inter-/intra-agency harmonization and development of multi-agency protocols related to PA and dose/risk assessment. The section also strives to communicate and educate the users and the public regarding PA analysis specifically risk-informed approaches for regulatory compliance. In addition, the section has the responsibility for the criticality analysis related to the proposed Yucca Mountain Repository, as well as, other disposal facilities. Some of the on-going activities of this section are:

- Pre-licensing review of DOE's Total System Performance Assessment for Yucca Mountain.
- Preparation of guidance for Partial Site Release in support of NRR rulemaking activity.

- Development of the independent Total System Performance Assessment code to use by the NRC staff in its assessment of DOE's performance assessment analysis for Yucca Mountain.
- Dose assessment for Trojan, Maine Yankee, Connecticut Yankee, and Saxton Decommissioning.
- Criticality Evaluation for Waste Control Specialist LLW Disposal Facility.

Attached List

Michael F. Weber, Director
Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguard, NMSS

Donald A. Cool, Director
Division of Industrial and Medical Nuclear Safety, NMSS

E. William Brach, Director
Spent Fuel Project Office, NMSS

Thomas L. King, Director
Division of Risk Analysis and Applications, RES

R. William Borchardt,
Associate Director for Inspection and Programs, NRR

Brian W. Sheron,
Associate Director for Project Licensing and Technical Analysis, NRR

James T. Wiggins, Deputy Director
Region I

Bruce S. Mallett, Deputy Director
Region II

James L. Caldwell, Deputy Director
Region III

Thomas P. Gwinn, Deputy Director
Region IV