

Mr. Sam Thomas, Senior Project Manager
National Nuclear Security Administration
Office of Fissile Materials Disposition
Office of International Technology Projects, NA-263
1000 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20585

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION REVIEW
SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF RUSSIAN FEDERAL REGULATIONS
FOR THE UNITED STATES/RUSSIAN FEDERATION PLUTONIUM
DISPOSITION PROGRAM

Dear Mr. Thomas:

I am responding to the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) request for U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) assistance in reviewing draft regulations that will be produced by the Russian Federation (RF) Gosatomnadzor (GAN) under the plutonium disposition program. The request was made in an e-mail from you to me dated October 16, 2001. I have discussed your request with my management and based on that discussion, NRC will be able to provide the requested assistance.

As a result of that discussion, it is our understanding that six regulations are expected to be completed by GAN in fiscal year 2002, with the first regulation being completed in early January 2002 and that NRC comments are being requested on these six regulations. The level of effort being requested by DOE is a medium level of review on the order of ½ - 2 person-weeks per regulation, depending on the length and complexity of the regulation. After comments by all parties have been incorporated into a revised regulation, DOE may seek a second NRC review but in much less depth. Further, it is also our understanding that DOE is not seeking a technical review but rather a licensing/regulatory review to include such aspects as completeness, comparison to U.S. regulations, and the overall organization of the GAN regulations. Additionally, one aspect to be considered is whether western standards have been appropriately incorporated and how this may influence other regulations. Upon completion of the NRC review of each regulation, NRC will provide its conclusions, along with any recommendations for improvement, to DOE.

NRC will be able to provide the assistance you requested based on the details that have been discussed with you, some of which are described in the preceding paragraph. We plan to do the reviews in-house by NRC personnel and not by contractors. We expect that the regulations that are provided to NRC will already have been translated into English and will have undergone some amount of review by DOE to assure that they are more than "rough drafts." Reviewing regulations that have not undergone prior DOE review would not be an efficient use of NRC resources. It is also our understanding that DOE will reimburse NRC for all costs associated with this review.

Sam Thomas

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It would assist us in planning our reviews if you would provide the titles of the six regulations and the approximate dates when they will be provided to NRC.

If you have any questions or if any of the above information is in error, please contact me at 301-415-6522. I will be the NRC point of contact for reviewing the GAN regulations.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Andrew Persinko, Sr. Nuclear Engineer
Enrichment Section
Special Projects Branch
Division of Fuel Cycle Safety
and Safeguards
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

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