



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

MAR 4 1991

Mr. John J. Linehan
Deputy Director
Division of High-Level
Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

Dear Mr. Linehan:

This responds to your December 14, 1990, letter from J. Linehan to D. Shelor regarding two observations made by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) during a quality assurance audit of the Sandia National Laboratories (SNL), conducted at Albuquerque, New Mexico, during August 20-24, 1990. The observations are noted in Section 5.10(a) of the NRC Observation Audit Report No. 90-7 for the Yucca Mountain Project Office Audit No. 90-04 of SNL and are identified as Observations 5.10(a)(1) and (2), as discussed in the next two paragraphs.

Observation 5.10(a)(1) stated that Yucca Mountain Project Administrative Procedure AP-5.8Q, "Reporting and Resolution of Quality Concerns," has not yet been developed and implemented by the Yucca Mountain Project. Thus, it cannot yet have been implemented at SNL. In response, the U.S. Department of Energy has been developing the Quality Concerns program. The program has undergone several iterations as a result of management input. It is anticipated that the procedure will be implemented by April 1, 1991.

Observation 5.10(a)(2) concerned whether audit and surveillance checklists are considered as quality assurance records. In response, the Office of Quality Assurance (OQA), Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management, made a policy decision that the checklists associated with audits and surveillances were not OQA records. The policy would apply to all levels of the program. The SNL program is consistent with this position.

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If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact me at (202) 586-1462.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Linda J. Desell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Linda" and last name "Desell" clearly legible.

Linda J. Desell, Acting Chief
Regulatory Integration Branch
Office of Systems and Compliance
Office of Civilian Radioactive
Waste Management

cc:

R. Loux, State of Nevada
M. Baughman, Lincoln County, NV
D. Bechtel, Clark County, NV
S. Bradhurst, Nye County, NV
P. Niedzielski-Eichner, Nye County, NV
K. Hooks, NRC