



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

AUG 22 1994

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Mr. Ronald A. Milner, Acting Director
Office of Program Management and Integration
Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Mr. Milner:

SUBJECT: OBSERVATION AUDIT OF THE OFFICE OF CIVILIAN RADIOACTIVE WASTE
MANAGEMENT HEADQUARTERS

I am transmitting the Nuclear Regulatory Commission Observation Audit Report 94-09 for the U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management (OCRWM), Yucca Mountain Quality Assurance Division audit of the QA program of the OCRWM Headquarters activities, including the activities of the Energy Information Agency (EIA) which provides support to OCRWM Headquarters. The audit, YMP-94-07, was conducted from July 18-22, 1994, at the OCRWM offices in Washington, DC, and at the EIA offices in Silver Spring, MD. The audit evaluated the adequacy and effectiveness of the OCRWM Headquarters QA program in all applicable QA programmatic areas.

The NRC staff evaluated the audit to gain confidence that the OCRWM Headquarters organization is properly implementing the requirements of its QA program. The NRC staff based its evaluation of the audit process and the OCRWM Headquarters QA program on direct observations of the audit team members; discussions with audit team, OCRWM Headquarters and EIA personnel; and reviews of the audit plan, the audit checklists, and pertinent OCRWM documents.

The NRC staff has determined that Audit YMP-94-07 was useful and effective. The audit was organized and conducted in a thorough and professional manner. Audit team members were independent of the activities they audited. The audit team was well qualified in the QA discipline, and its assignments and checklist items were adequately described in the audit plan.

The NRC staff agrees with the preliminary audit team finding that the overall implementation of the OCRWM Headquarters QA program is effective. Two preliminary Corrective Action Requests (CARs) were discussed by the audit team at the post-audit meeting. Two other potential CARs were acceptably resolved by the OCRWM Headquarters organization during the audit. Neither the preliminary CARs nor the deficiencies corrected during the audit are significant in terms of the overall OCRWM Headquarters QA program. A previous audit had determined that software controls had not been implemented at EIA. Corrective action had not been completed, so this area remained ineffective.

The implementation of the OCRWM Headquarters QA program should be monitored to ensure that the deficiencies identified during this audit and previous audits

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Mr. Ronald A. Milner

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are corrected in a timely manner and that future QA program implementation is effective. The NRC staff expects to participate in this monitoring as observers and may perform its own independent audits at a later date to assess OCRWM Headquarters implementation of its QA program.

A written response to this letter or the enclosed report is not required. If you have any questions, please call Jack Spraul of my staff on (301) 415-6715.

Sincerely,

Joseph J. Holonich, Chief
High-Level Waste & Uranium Recovery
Projects Branch
Division of Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Enclosure: As stated

- cc: R. Loux, State of Nevada
- T. J. Hickey, Nevada Legislative Committee
- J. Meder, Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau
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