



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

May 14, 1997

MEMORANDUM TO: Mr. Michael Bell, Acting Chief
Performance Assessment and HLW Integration Branch
Division of Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Materials Safety and Safeguards

FROM: William L. Belke, Sr. On-Site Licensing Representative for Quality Assurance and Engineered Systems *WLB*

Chad J. Glenn, Sr. On-Site Licensing Representative for Natural Systems and Total Systems *Chad Glenn*

SUBJECT: U. S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION ON-SITE LICENSING REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT ON YUCCA MOUNTAIN PROJECT FOR APRIL 1997

The purpose of this letter is to transmit the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission On-Site Representative's (OR's) report for the period of April 1-30, 1997.

The principal purpose of the OR reports is to alert NRC staff, managers and contractors to information on U. S. Department of Energy (DOE) programs for site characterization, repository design, performance assessment, and environmental studies that may be of use in fulfilling NRC's role during pre-licensing consultation. The principal focus of this and future OR reports will be on DOE's programs for the Exploratory Studies Facility (ESF), surface-based testing, performance assessment, data management systems and environmental studies. Relevant information includes new technical data, DOE's plans and schedules, and the status of activities to pursue site suitability and ESF development. The ORs also participate in activities associated with resolving NRC Key Technical Issues (KTI). In addition to communication of this information, any potential licensing concerns, or opinions raised in this report represent the views of the ORs and not that of NRC headquarters' staff.

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Over this reporting period, DOE completed the construction of the 5-Mile ESF Main Tunnel at Yucca Mountain. The construction of this underground facility is a major DOE achievement that facilitates a variety of ongoing and planned scientific investigations to determine the suitability of Yucca Mountain as a geologic repository. This report highlights a number of ESF and surface-based testing activities of potential interest to NRC staff.

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On April 10, 1997, and April 30, 1997, respectively, the ORs and the NRC Inspector General and staff and NRC Commissioner Kenneth Rogers visited the Yucca Mountain Site. There did not appear to be any outstanding issues raised during either of these visits.

The ORs continue to respond to requests from NRC Headquarters staff to provide various documentation and feedback related to KTIs and their resolution.

If you have any questions on this report or its enclosures, please call William L. Belke or Chad J. Glenn on (702) 388-6125.

cc w/enclosures as stated:

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