

QCNW-0057  
PDR 8/6/93

MINUTES OF THE 44TH ACNW MEETING  
JUNE 25, 1992

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QCNW-7 (ACNW)

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CERTIFIED MINUTES  
Issued: August 3, 1992

MINUTES OF THE 44TH MEETING OF THE  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NUCLEAR WASTE  
JUNE 25, 1992  
KENNEWICK, WASHINGTON

The 44th meeting of the Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste was held Thursday, June 25, 1992, in the Riverside Room, Clover Island Quality Inn, 435 Clover Island, Kennewick, Washington. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss and take appropriate actions on the items listed in the attached agenda.

A transcript of selected portions of the meeting was kept and is available in the NRC Public Document Room at the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. [Copies of the transcript taken at this meeting may be purchased from Ann Riley & Associates, Ltd., 1612 K Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20006.]

Dr. Dade W. Moeller, Committee Chairman, convened the meeting at 1:25 p.m. and briefly reviewed the schedule for the meeting. He stated that the meeting was being conducted in conformance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act. He stated that the Committee had received neither written comments nor requests from members of the public for time to make oral statements. However, he invited members of the public, who were present and had something to contribute, to let the ACNW staff know so that time could be allocated for them to make oral statements.

ACNW members, Drs. William J. Hinze, Dade W. Moeller, and Martin J. Steindler, were present. [For a list of attendees, see Appendix III.]

I. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT (Open)

[Note: Mr. Richard K. Major was the Designated Federal Official for this part of the meeting.]

Dr. Moeller provided a brief history of the Committee's activities since its inception. He also described the local site visits conducted by the members and staff during the previous two days.

II. STATUS OF REMEDIAL ACTIONS AT THE HANFORD SITE (Open)

[Note: Mr. Howard J. Larson was the Designated Federal Official for this portion of the meeting.]

Mr. John Tseng, Director-Hanford Program Office, DOE, introduced the subject and subsequent DOE presenters.

The first presentation was a general overview of the Hanford Tank Waste Remediation System (TWRS). The magnitude of the remediation effort was described as: 177 storage tanks in total (149 single-shell tanks (SST) constructed between 1943-1964; 28 double-shell tanks (DST) constructed between 1968-1986), containing more than 60 million gallons of radioactive waste with approximately 400 megacuries of tank waste and encapsulated material. To date, no leakage from DST has been detected. Mr. Tseng described the origin of, and reasoning behind, the establishment of the TWRS effort. Approximately 50 tanks have been identified as representing the primary safety issues and therefore are the first priority for remediation. Among these tanks are those that have: hydrogen accumulations, ferrocyanide mixtures that could be explosive (24 tanks), organics and nitrates that could react (8 tanks) and one tank (106-C tank) that requires continuous cooling.

A complete proposal is expected to be prepared by March 1993 (with concurrence from the State of Washington) on how to handle the wastes. Before that date, organizational and personnel changes will be made to ensure that a dedicated organization is established and resources are available to meet the technical challenge. Although a cost estimate has not been completed, the TWRS effort is expected to cost "tens of billions of dollars."

Mr. Harry Harmon, Vice-President, TWRS, Westinghouse Hanford Company, described the overall project objectives, which encompass a full range from resolution of the waste tank safety issues, through the characterization, retrieval, pretreatment, disposal of high-level and low-level wastes, and the interim storage of canisters prior to shipment to the repository. After reviewing the organizational structure, he discussed some reasons why the earlier base plan had changed. For example, it is no longer possible to process radioactive materials in the "B" production plant, and volumes have increased due to the leakage from the SSTs.

Mr. Harmon described the design features and some problems encountered (e.g., waste sampling), as well as the waste inventory in the SST and DST. He noted that the last SST was built in 1964 and that no waste had been added to any SST since 1980. Sixty-six tanks are assumed to have leaked approximately one million gallons. In response to questions from the Committee, he stated that, while progress had been made with the tanks containing ferrocyanide, less progress had been realized in developing remediation strategies for the tanks containing organics and nitrates.

The Hanford Waste Vitrification Plant (HWVP) is an integral part of the overall TWRS and is expected to be on-line by December 1999. Ground breaking for this facility was held earlier this Spring. In response to Dr. Steindler's question, although waste blending will be more difficult at Hanford compared to the process at the

Savannah River Plant (SRP) facility, the SRP joule heater-melter has been selected. Dr. Steindler also questioned the schedule for the similar SRP facility and was told construction at that site started in 1983. Dr. Moeller queried whether the relationship in South Carolina with the SRP was similar to the current State of Washington-Hanford interactions. It was explained that, although both relationships are currently similar, when the SRP plant was started in 1983, the interaction with the state was more at arms-length.

It has been projected that approximately 270 grouted waste disposal vaults will be required unless another, more efficient, system is developed. Each of these vaults is projected to contain approximately 1.4 million gallons, of which waste comprises approximately one million gallons with the rest consisting of the grout mix chemicals.

In concluding his remarks, Mr. Harmon reiterated that, although the system is complex for a plethora of reasons, safety is, and always will be, the principal project objective.

### III. STATUS OF IN SITU VITRIFICATION PROGRAM (Open)

[Note: Mr. Howard J. Larson was the Designated Federal Official for this part of the meeting.]

Mr. John Tixier, Battle Northwest Laboratory, was the principal presenter. He was aided by Mr. Peter McGrail. After noting the simple principle involved in the in situ vitrification (ISV) process (application of electricity to the ground through carbon electrodes with the resultant melting of the soil and, upon cooling, the formation of a solid product), he discussed the three scales of equipment utilized in development of the project. A comparison of power supplies provides a relative measure of the final mass of solidified product: engineering scale 10-30 Kw; pilot scale 500 Kw, and large scale 3750 Kw.

Mr. Tixier summarized past test operations at Hanford and the Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) and noted that future test demonstrations were scheduled at Hanford on underground storage, in the trenches located at the ORNL and on buried wastes at the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory.

Dr. Hinze asked about potential problem environments where ISV may not work as efficiently as projected, noting that cobble layers would cause horizontal vs. the desired vertical melting. He was informed that most problems can be engineered around. For example, the addition of chemicals could assist heat transfer into the soil. Electrode layout design and spacing also provide flexibility.

In a follow-up, Mr. McGrail primarily dealt with modeling and test development. He noted that the major current ISV issues were problems associated with the application of conventional theory, the inadequacy of thermodynamic bases and the presence of organics in the waste.

After responses to additional Committee questions (re: modeling, impact of humid locations on the ISV process, differing soil conditions, etc.), Mr. Tseng closed the DOE portion of the meeting. He expressed DOE's hope that their tours and presentations were responsive to Committee interests and noted DOE Hanford would welcome future visits by the Committee.

Dr. Moeller expressed the ACNW's thanks to DOE for their time and effort. He commented that the candor and professionalism provided the Committee with additional insight and understanding of the problems at Hanford and the current level of remediation effort/planning.

V. SYSTEMS ANALYSIS APPROACH TO THE OVERALL HIGH-LEVEL WASTE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

[Note: Mr. Howard J. Larson was the Designated Federal Official for this portion of the meeting.]

Dr. Steindler led the discussion on this topic, noting that after reviewing the Committee "brainstorming" effort during its 43rd meeting, he would like to propose two possible avenues for responding to Chairman Selin's request. One possible approach could be to develop a diagram (which would be indexed to a relevant commentary), while another possible approach could be to list generic relevant activities/headings (similarly annotated). After discussion it was agreed that: (a) a blending of the two approaches would be attempted, and (b) members were requested to provide comments and/or proposed relevant issues (with accompanying prose) to Dr. Steindler at their earliest opportunity.

The agendas for the 45th and 46th meetings are to be arranged to permit concentrated Committee effort on this assignment. It was also suggested that, as the drafting of the report nears completion, the validity of the issues so identified be verified via consultation with knowledgeable sources.

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION (Open)

[Note: Mr. Richard K. Major was the Designated Federal Official for this part of the meeting.]

- A. NRC Staff Review of DOE Early Site Suitability Evaluation  
(Memorandum to B. Joe Youngblood, Director, Division of High-Level Waste Management, dated July 7, 1992)
- B. Report on the Working Group Meeting on the Early Site Suitability Evaluation (ESSE) for the Yucca Mountain High-Level Repository

Dr. Hinze reported on the Working Group meeting, June 17, 1992, to hear the NRC staff's comments on the early site suitability evaluation of the proposed Yucca Mountain high-level waste repository. The Committee approved a memorandum to B. Joe Youngblood, Director, Division of High Level Waste Management.

- C. Site Characterization Plan for Yucca Mountain Prepared by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)

The Committee continued its discussion of a draft report on the DOE's Site Characterization Plan for the proposed high-level radioactive waste geologic repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada. The Committee approved a memorandum to Robert M. Bernero, Director, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, commenting on the slow progress in resolving issues enumerated in the Site Characterization Analysis (NUREG-1347). [Subsequent to the meeting, the Committee decided to reconsider this memorandum during the 45th ACNW meeting.]

During the discussion, the Committee requested a copy of the letter from Dr. Thomas Bjerstedt, Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Project Office, dated August 28, 1991, commenting on the resolution of these issues. Mr. John Linehan, NMSS, offered to provide the letter to the Committee.

D. ACNW Future Activities

- The Committee proposed that the meeting with the Commission, tentatively scheduled during the 45th ACNW meeting, be postponed. Mr. Major will explore whether this would be acceptable.
- The Committee agreed to change the starting time for the open portion of the 46th ACNW meeting from 8:30 a.m. on September 24, 1992, to 1:00 p.m. on September 23, 1992. This change will allow the Committee to adjourn earlier Friday.

- The Committee discussed plans for a meeting with the members of the U.K. Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee to discuss items of mutual interest. The meeting is scheduled for the morning of July 29, 1992. This meeting will be closed to the public.
- The Committee reconfirmed that Dr. David Brown, Connecticut Department of Health, should be invited to brief the Committee during its 46th meeting on the status of Connecticut's development of an LLW disposal facility site.
- Dr. Steindler recommended that the Committee invite Ms. Maria Lopez-Otin, Office of State Programs, to brief the Committee on the recent Federal Ground Water Science and Technology meeting.
- The Committee discussed a proposed agenda for the 47th ACNW meeting, tentatively scheduled to be held on October 21, 1992, in Las Vegas, Nevada. Several items of discussion were proposed, including a detailed review of a DOE Study Plan and a status report on the latest SCP update.

The members discussed proposed visits to the Yucca Mountain site to see the exploratory trenches, drill rigs and sample management facility; Midway Valley trench (if open); and the DOE Yucca Mountain Project Offices to learn about their data management system and geologic information system. Due to time limitations, the Committee decided not to visit the Beatty LLW disposal facility operated by U.S. Ecology. The ACNW staff will complete the meeting dates and agenda with representatives of the NRC staff and the State of Nevada.

- The Committee expressed interest in having an update during the 45th or 46th ACNW meeting on the Supreme Court's decision on the Constitutionality of the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1985.
- The Committee recommended that a briefing be planned to hear about the development of an EPA guidance manual for the disposal of water purification plant wastes, including radioactive sludges, brines and spent activated carbon.
- The Committee recommended that a briefing be planned to hear about recent NRC meetings with several groups relative to the Site Decommissioning Plan, including the

disposal of solid wastes resulting from decommissioning and decontamination activities.

- The Committee expressed interest in being briefed on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Science Advisory Board meeting, June 16-17, 1992, to review issues related to the release of gaseous  $^{14}\text{C}$  from high-level waste disposal and to determine if EPA's documentation is adequate.
- The Committee reconfirmed its interest in being briefed on the NRC HLW staff's position on penetration of the Calico Hills tuff, and the staff's review of DOE's Calico Hills/Risk Benefit Analysis.

E. Future Meeting Agenda

Appendix III summarizes the proposed items endorsed by the Committee for the 45th ACNW Meeting, July 29-30, 1992, and future Working Group meetings. This list includes items proposed by the Commissioners and NRC staff as well as ACNW members.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m., Thursday, June 25, 1992.



With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed exemption involves features located entirely within restricted areas as defined by 10 CFR part 20. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Therefore, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed exemption.

**Alternatives to the Proposed Action**

Since the Commission concludes that there are no significant environmental effects associated with the proposed exemption, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impacts need not be evaluated.

The principal alternative would be to deny the requested action; this would increase the environmental impact by increasing occupational radiation exposure to personnel calibrating the instruments using radiation sources.

**Alternative Use of Resources**

This action does not involve the use of resources not previously considered in the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for TMI-2 dated March 1981 as supplemented.

**Finding of no Significant Impact**

Based upon the foregoing environmental assessment, the NRC staff concludes that this action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed exemption.

For further details with respect to this action, see the letter from GPUN, Request for Exemption from 10 CFR, 70.24, dated May 21, 1987. This document is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street NW., Washington, DC 20555, and at the local public document room located at the State Library of Pennsylvania, Government Publications Section, Education Building, Commonwealth and Walnut Streets, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17126.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland this 6th day of June 1992.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission,  
Seymour H. Weiss,  
Director, Non-Power Reactors,  
Decommissioning and Environmental Project  
Directorate Division of Reactor Projects—III/  
IV/V Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.  
[FR Doc. 92-13968 Filed 6-12-92; 8:45 am]  
BILLING CODE 7890-01-M

**Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste; Meeting**

The Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste (ACNW) will hold its 44th meeting on Thursday, June 25, 1992 at 1 p.m. until 5 p.m., at the Quality Inn on Clover Island, 435 Clover Island, Kennewick, WA. The entire meeting will be open to public attendance. Notice of this meeting was previously published in the Federal Register on Thursday, May 21, 1992 (57 FR 21678).

The agenda for the subject meeting shall be as follows:

A. Address the request from Chairman Selin made on April 24, 1992, for a supplemental report regarding a systems analysis approach for reviewing the overall HLW management and disposal program.

B. Hear a report from the ACNW Working Group Chairman on a recent meeting in which the NRC staff presented the results of its review of DOE's Early Site Suitability Evaluation. A report on this topic by the Committee is expected.

C. Hear a briefing regarding the status of remedial actions at the Hanford site.

D. Hear a briefing and hold discussions regarding in situ vitrification programs.

E. Discuss and consider a draft report concerning progress on the DOE's Site Characterization plan for the proposed high-level waste repository, complementary study plans, and DOE's efforts to resolve the issues raised in the NRC staff's Site Characterization Analysis.

F. Discuss anticipated and proposed Committee activities, future meeting agenda, administrative, and organizational matters, as appropriate. Also, discuss matters and specific issues that were not completed during previous meetings as time and availability of information permit.

Procedures for the conduct of and participation in ACNW meetings were published in the Federal Register on June 6, 1988 (53 FR 20699). In accordance with these procedures, oral or written statements may be presented by members of the public, recordings will be permitted only during those portions of the meeting when a transcript is being kept, and questions may be asked only by members of the Committee, its consultants, and staff. The office of the ACNW is providing staff support for the ACNW. Persons desiring to make oral statements should notify the Executive Director of the office of the ACRS as far in advance as practical so that appropriate arrangements can be made to allow the necessary time during the meeting for such statements. Use of still,

motion picture, and television cameras during this meeting may be limited to selected portions of the meeting as determined by the ACNW Chairman. Information regarding the time to be set aside for this purpose may be obtained by a prepaid telephone call to the Executive Director of the office of the ACRS, Mr. Raymond F. Fraley (telephone 301/492-4516), prior to the meeting. In view of the possibility that the schedule for ACNW meetings may be adjusted by the Chairman as necessary to facilitate the conduct of the meeting, persons planning to attend should check with the ACRS Executive Director or call the recording (301/492-4800) for the current schedule if such rescheduling would result in major inconvenience.

Dated: June 8, 1992.  
John C. Hoyle,  
Advisory Committee Management Officer.  
[FR Doc. 92-13967 Filed 6-12-92; 8:45 am]  
BILLING CODE 7890-01-M

**Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards; Subcommittee on Severe Accidents; Meeting**

The ACRS Subcommittee on Severe Accidents will hold a meeting on June 25, 1992, in room P-110, 7820 Norfolk Avenue, Bethesda, MD.

The entire meeting will be open to public attendance.

The agenda for the subject meeting shall be as follows: *Thursday, June 25, 1992—8:30 a.m. until the conclusion of business.*

The Subcommittee will continue to discuss the revision to NUREG-1965, Severe Accident Research Program Plan.

Oral statements may be presented by members of the public with the concurrence of the Subcommittee Chairman; written statements will be accepted and made available to the Committee. Recordings will be permitted only during those portions of the meeting when a transcript is being kept, and questions may be asked only by members of the Subcommittee, its consultants, and staff. Persons desiring to make oral statements should notify the ACRS staff member named below as far in advance as is practicable so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

During the initial portion of the meeting, the Subcommittee, along with any of its consultants who may be present, may exchange preliminary views regarding matters to be considered during the balance of the meeting.

The Subcommittee will then hear presentations by and hold discussions



Appendix II

UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NUCLEAR WASTE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555

June 18, 1992

SCHEDULE AND OUTLINE FOR DISCUSSION  
44TH ACNW MEETING  
JUNE 25, 1992

Thursday, June 25, 1992, Riverside Room 4th Floor, Clover Island  
Quality Inn, 435 Clover Island, Kennewick, Washington 99336  
(Open Meeting)

- 1) <sup>25</sup> 1:00 - <sup>45</sup> 1:15 p.m.      Opening Remarks by ACNW Chairman (Open)  
1.1) Opening Remarks (DWM/RKM)  
1.2) Items of Current Interest (DWM/RKM)
- 2) <sup>45</sup> 1:15 - <sup>45</sup> 2:15 p.m.      Status of Remedial Actions at the Hanford Site  
(DWM/HJL)  
• Discussion with representatives of DOE
- 3) <sup>45</sup> 2:15 - <sup>3:25</sup> 2:45 p.m.      Status of In-situ Vitrification Program  
• Discussion with representatives of DOE  
(DWM/HJL)
- <sup>3:25</sup> 3:25 - <sup>3:45</sup> 3:45 p.m.      \*\*\*\*\*      BREAK      \*\*\*\*\*  
~~2:45 - 3:00~~
- 4) 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.      Address a request from Chairman Selin for a  
supplemental report regarding a systems  
analysis approach for reviewing the overall  
HLW management and disposal program (MJS/HJL)
- 5) 4:00 - 4:45 p.m.      Working Group Chairman's Report on June 17,  
1992 Working Group on the NRC Staff's Review  
of DOE's (Contractor) Early Site Suitability  
Evaluation  
5.1) Chairman's report (PWP/GNG)  
5.2) Draft Report

44th ACNW Meeting  
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Hanford, WA

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- 6) 4:45 - 5:45 p.m.      Discuss and Consider a Draft Report  
Concerning Progress on the DOE's Site  
Characterization Plan (Open) (DWM/HJL)  
6.1) Introduction (WJH/RKM)  
6.2) Draft Report
- 7) 5:45 - 6:15 p.m.      Committee Activities/Future Agenda (Open)  
(DWM/RKM)
- 8) 6:15 - 6:30 p.m.      Complete ACNW Reports  
8.1) ESSE  
8.2) Progress on the SCP
- 6:30 p.m.                      ADJOURN

**APPENDIX III: MEETING ATTENDEES**

**44TH ACNW MEETING  
JUNE 25, 1992**

<u>ACNW MEMBERS</u>	<u>1st Day</u>	_____	_____
Dr. William J. Hinze	<u>X</u>	_____	_____
Dr. Dade W. Moeller	<u>X</u>	_____	_____
Dr. Paul W. Pomeroy	_____	_____	_____
Dr. Martin J. Steindler	<u>X</u>	_____	_____

<u>NRC STAFF</u>		<u>1st Day</u>	_____	_____
Abraham Eiss	NMSS	_____	_____	_____

**ATTENDEES FROM OTHER AGENCIES AND GENERAL PUBLIC**

Mary Ace	Supply System
Joe Bunting	SAIC
Larry Dewitt	Columbia Basin College
Leif Erickson	DOE
Tom Geer	M&O Duke
Dick Hammond	ANS
Harry Harmon	Westinghouse Hanford Company
Lori Huffman	DOE
Jim Knight	Westinghouse Hanford Company
William McCaughey	Weston
Pat Muser	Tri City Herald
Bruce Nicoll	DOE
Don Provost	Ecology
John Tixier	PNL
John Tseng	DOE
Chris Widrig	Battelle PNL

#### APPENDIX IV: FUTURE AGENDA

**45th ACNW Committee Meeting July 29-30, 1992 (Tentative Schedule)**

Meeting with the Members of the U.K. Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee (RWMAC) (Open/Closed) - The Committee will meet with the members of the U.K. Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee to discuss items of mutual interest.

Draft Technical Position on Repository Design: Thermal Loads (Open) - The Committee will be briefed by the NRC staff on the draft Technical Position on Repository Design: Thermal Loads. ACNW comments are requested.

Radionuclides in Recycled Scrap (Open) - The Committee will be briefed by a representative from the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries on the industry's experiences with contaminated scrap and lessons learned.

Report on the Federal Ground Water Science and Technology Meeting (Open) - A representative of the Office of State Programs will brief the Committee on the recent Federal Ground Water Science and Technology meeting.

Supreme Court's Decision (Open) - The Committee will be briefed on the Supreme Court's decision on the Constitutionality of the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1985.

Comprehensive Systems Analysis of the High-Level Radioactive Waste Management and Disposal Program (Open) - The Committee will continue its discussion on the supplemental request from Chairman Selin, made during the Commission meeting on April 24, 1992, for a functional diagram that identifies the elements the Committee believes should be in a full systems analysis.

DOE's Site Characterization Plant (Open) - The Committee will review and complete a draft report on the DOE's Site Characterization Plan for the proposed high-level radioactive waste geologic repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada.

Committee Activities (Open/Closed) - The Committee will discuss anticipated and proposed Committee activities, future meeting agenda, and organizational matters, as appropriate. Also, the members will discuss matters and specific issues that were not completed during previous meetings.

APPENDIX V  
LIST OF DOCUMENTS PROVIDED TO THE COMMITTEE

A. Meeting Handouts

AGENDA

DOCUMENTS

ITEM NO.

- 1 Chairman's Report
  1. Items of Possible Interest to ACNW Members and Staff, dated June 21, 1992, by Dade Moeller
- 2 Status of Remedial Actions at the Hanford Site (Open)
  2. U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste, dated June 25, 1992 [Viewgraphs]
  3. Introduction to Tank Waste Remediation System, by John Tseng, Director, Hanford Program Office, U.S. Department of Energy, undated [Viewgraphs]
  4. Tank Waste Remediation System Overview, by Harry Harmon, Vice President, Tank Waste Remediation System, Westinghouse Hanford Company, undated [Viewgraphs]
  5. Note to the Committee from R.S. Hammond, dated June 25, 1992, regarding the Monitored Retrievable Storage (MRS) Facility.

B. Meeting Notebook

[Meeting notebooks were not prepared for the members.]