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M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Distribution

FROM: Susan W. Zimmerman *SWZ*
NWPO QA Manager

DATE: February 15, 1991

SUBJECT: State Observation of the DOE-EM QA Audit of the High-Level Waste Division the at Savannah River Plant

On February 4-8, 1991, I attended, as the State observer, the DOE-EM QA audit, No. 91EA-SR-AU-001 of the High-Level Waste Division for the Defense Waste Processing Facility at the Savannah River Plant. This was the first audit of this group that the State has observed.

The Audit Process

Because this was the first audit that the State has observed in this area and by this audit group, I will reserve comment until further audits have been observed in order to get a more complete picture of the typical audit process. I will say that the audit team appeared very qualified for their respective activities.

The HLWD QA Program

It appears that the main role of the DOE-HLWD is to oversee the activities of their contractors, such as Westinghouse, Bechtel, and Stone & Webster Engineering, who performed the actual work. Unfortunately, it also appears that this oversight has not been too effective. The root cause for most of the findings discovered during this audit should be a lack of sufficient oversight by the DOE-HLWD on these contractors. Effective evaluation of these contractors also appears to be lacking. There also appears to be a lack of commitment to timely corrective action on the part of the DOE-HLWD and their contractors. Hopefully, because this is in the

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early stages of the program, the problems found during this audit can be easily corrected and the DOE-HLWD can perform more effective oversight and evaluation of their contractors to ensure that the vitrified waste form meets the necessary specifications.

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