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September 09, 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR: Robert E. Browning, Director
Division of Waste Management

FROM: F. R. Cook, Senior On-Site Licensing
Representative, Basalt Waste Isolation
Project (BWIP)

SUBJECT: OBSERVATIONS, COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
THE PERIOD JULY 2 TO AUGUST 16, 1985

1. During the period I met with various Indian and State representatives and, together with Russell and Bunting (WM), provided orientation to the Nez Perce and Umatilla and updates of BWIP status for the three affected tribes and the State of Washington. All 4 entities, the Indian and State representatives indicated interest in participating in BWIP data/information sharing system described by Bunting and Russell. Both the State and the Yakima Nation indicated significant detailed ongoing

technical work, in some respects more intensive and more detailed than comparable NRC activities. In particular the Yakimas assessment of hydrology and particular geochemistry, as it reveals hydrologic conditions, is comparable if not more intensive than NRC's effort in these areas. Also the State's efforts in identifying geophysical structures through the use of existing geophysical information equals or exceeds NRC staff efforts.

Since significant and competent technical information is being generated by the entities noted above it is prudent to expedite completion of the data/information computerized exchange system described by Russell and Bunting to keep NRC staff abreast of State and Indian technical work and to further foster technical cooperation with these groups.

2. During the period WM (Kennedy, Delligatti and Bell) and NRC consultant (Bland) discussed various QA issues with DOE and RHO representatives. Of most importance is the probable lack of application of sufficient QA procedures to current and past to design activities and manufacturing activities associated with the exploratory shaft, which appears would be necessarily part of the Repository in the BWIP planning. Of key importance is the exploratory shaft's role in effecting waste isolation and design control measures associated with this item. These issues should be addressed at forth coming DOE/NRC meetings concerning the exploratory shaft and in-situ testing.

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3. During the period I provided orientation for Surmeier, Hunt, Shaffner, and other WM personnel in junction with a trip on low level waste matters, consistent with appendix 7 provisions for On-Site Representative interactions with BWIP personnel and activities.

4. I participated in BWIP orientation tours for Davis (NMSS) and Browning (WMSS) and Blackford (WM) on separate occasions.

5. Ash (RHO BWIP Project Manager) retired about August 1, 1985. He has started to work for Rockwell (RHO) in a consulting role in preparing its competitive proposal as a future contractor of DOE's Hanford activities. Given DOE plans to competitively bid the future Hanford operations starting in FY 87 and to transfer reasearch activities to PNL, significant changes may occur in the management of BWIP activities including applicable QA programs. This area of potential change for BWIP should be reviewed with DOE to assure changes do not adversely affect the ability to license a repository if it is selected for site characterization.

6. RHO (BWIP) has recently issued a significant amount of old radio chemical data concerning Hanford Groundwater. This has been issued as Data Package 32. It appears RHO is planning to initiate analyses of the radio chemical data as part of its hydrologic assessment.

I consider such analyses may be useful in determining vertical conductivities in the structures in and around the BWIP reference repository location (RRL), for example, the Yakima Ridge structure extended which exists below the sediments to the South and Southwest of the RHL.

7. RHO removed bridge plugs from RRL-14 to the west of the planned exploratory shaft location. During this operation drilling was necessary to remove a stuck plug and significant drilling fluid was injected into zones in the Grande Ronde. Responses were noted in DC 20 and DC 22 and potentially other monitoring locations. This recent data should be reviewed by Staff in the forth coming BWIP hydrology workshop. S. Strait (RHO) should be contacted for details of RHO's observations.

8. During August, September and October I will have jury duty and will be involved in jury selections on Mondays and potential jury participation during the week. I also have leave planned during the last half of August. My next report will cover a period of time starting September 3, 1985. There will be no report for the latter part of August.

F. R. Cook
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