

AUG 16 1988

NOTE TO: Robert E. Browning, Director
THRU: John J. Linehan, Acting Branch Chief
FROM: Wayne C. Walker, Project Manager
SUBJECT: TRIP REPORT ON DOE DEFENSE WASTE PROCESSING
FACILITY AT SAVANNAH RIVER AUGUST 4, 1988

On August 4, 1988 the Advisory Committee On Nuclear Waste (ACNW) and I were provided an in-depth tour of the Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF) at Aiken, South Carolina. I accompanied the ACNW because of my role as ACNW Liason for the Division of High-Level Waste Management (DHLWM) and as the Waste Acceptance Project Manager for the DHLWM responsible for coordinating interactions and communications between DOE Headquarters (OCRWM) and the NRC concerning Waste Acceptance activities and technical reviews of DOE submissions. The tour was used by ACNW to gather information and discuss the entire DWPF operation as it relates to vitrification of liquid high-level waste and its eventual disposal in the high-level waste repository. In addition to gathering information I used this trip to establish contacts with DOE personnel both from headquarters and at the Savannah River Project who are working on the Waste Acceptance Process.

The tour of the DWPF was excellent and very comprehensive. During the first part of the morning, briefings were presented by the DWPF managers giving a general overview of the entire operation. A key item which surfaced from these briefings was the desire on DOE's part to establish a more active program with NRC before radioactive operations begin at DWPF. The project was especially interested in holding discussions on its plans for integrated cold runs, product control, waste compliance plan and QA program description. The DWPF construction was 51% complete in November 1986, now it is 82% complete with an approximate startup date in September 1991.

The rest of the day was spent touring and receiving on-site briefings on the various parts of the DWPF. We saw the HLW tanks, the LLW burial site, the transuranic burial site, the waste storage site for the canisters containing HLW, the vitrification facility, the laboratory where experiments are being conducted with radioactive samples of glass, and the research facilities.

A public meeting was held with ACNW following the tour. During the meeting an overview was given by DWPF staff of what had been shown on the tour. A question and answer period was held and most of the discussion centered around quality control of the glass form and the need for continued interaction between DOE and NRC. It was stressed by ACNW that DOE Headquarters must assure

that DOE DWPF activities are coordinated internally and DOE Headquarters (OCRWM) has the responsibility to bring project issues to NRC attention. A general consensus was reached by the ACNW that this is a critical time for the Waste Acceptance Process at DWPF and that interaction between NRC and DOE was necessary.

On August 4, 1988, during the briefing on DWPF, DOE Headquarters indicated it would be contacting NRC in the near future to set-up a NRC\DOE meeting sometime in late September 1988 to develop a schedule to assure more active and routine interactions between NRC and DOE.

cc. B.J. Youngblood
R.L. Ballard
R.A. Weller