



**Department of Energy**

Washington, DC 20585

**JUN 23 1989**

Mr. John J. Linehan, Director  
Repository Licensing and Quality  
Assurance Project Directorate  
Division of High-Level  
Waste Management  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Linehan:

During the December 15, 1988, Department of Energy (DOE)/Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) meeting on study plans, DOE agreed that the preparation and review of Site Characterization Plan (SCP) study plans should, in the future, be conducted at Quality Assurance Level I. This was established because SCP study plans serve as a direct link between the SCP and the technical procedures used to implement site characterization activities.

Following the DOE presentation at the December meeting, NRC noted that the five study plans related to Exploratory Shaft Facility (ESF) construction phase testing, were not prepared under Quality Assurance (QA) Level I controls. For this reason, the NRC stated that it would accept the Study Plans for information, but would not initiate a formal review until DOE provided an evaluation supporting its position that the five study plans are of the same technical quality as if they had been prepared under a QA Level I program.

Enclosed, please find the Study Plan Assessment (SPA) which addresses the DOE commitment made at the December 15, 1988, DOE/NRC meeting. The SPA describes the methodology used to review the study plans and provides the results of that assessment.

This assessment documents the actions involved with the review and approval process for the five ESF construction-phase study plans. Documented steps in the preparation and review of these study plans are evaluated against the major program Quality Assurance requirements delineated in the Project Quality Assurance Plan (QAP), Revision 2 (NNWSI/88-9). This revision of the QAP was reviewed and approved by DOE, accepted by the NRC, and formally issued on December 9, 1988. Current Project Office requirements and controls were compared to the process used in development of the study plans to come to final conclusions regarding the adequacy of that process in meeting NRC requirements.

8907050257 890623  
PDR WASTE  
WM-11 PDC

FILE TEXT ASCII SCAN

11/1  
102.8  
NH03  
NM-11

As part of the assessment, each study plan received reviews for technical, regulatory, management, and Quality Assurance adequacy. The final review included a real-time evaluation for adequacy and compatibility with the statutory Site Characterization Plan (SCP).

The assessment concludes that the five ESF study plans fulfill the requirements of the DOE/NRC agreement on content and level-of-detail. The assessment also concludes that the study plans meet all major quality assurance requirements for planning documents and are of suitable technical quality to warrant review by NRC.

Minor inconsistencies found between the procedures in place when the plans were reviewed and the current requirements of a QA Level I activity have been addressed by revisions to both the Project Office and DOE/HQ procedures for study plan review. These inconsistencies were judged not to be quality affecting.

If you have any questions, please contact Gordon Appel of my staff at 586-1462.

Sincerely,

*Ralph Stein*  
Ralph Stein  
Associate Director for Systems  
Integration and Regulations  
Office of Civilian Radioactive  
Waste Management

Enclosures

*See Jacket*

cc: K. Stablein, NRC  
B.J. Youngblood, NRC  
R. Loux, State of Nevada  
C. Johnson, State of Nevada  
D. Bechtel, Clark County, NV  
S. Bradhurst, Nye County, NV  
M. Baughman, Lincoln County, NV