

March 13, 1995

Mr. Robert Loux, Director
Agency for Nuclear Projects
Nuclear Waste Project Office
State of Nevada
Carson City, NV 89710

SUBJECT: IN-FIELD VERIFICATION

Dear Mr. Loux:

I am responding to your letter to Dr. Malcolm Knapp dated February 10, 1995, in which you request information regarding the status of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's verification review of the design activities of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Management and Operating Contractor (M&O). You indicated that it appeared to you that the NRC is delaying timely action and letting events overtake the situation, possibly in the hope of negating the need for any action. You ask: "Does the NRC still plan to perform this verification review and if so, when?"

Although our planned in-field verification has been delayed in order for involved NRC personnel to obtain a better understanding of the ongoing design work, it has not been cancelled nor postponed beyond the date of usefulness. On March 9, 1995, we issued a letter to DOE (Holonich to Milner) that provides the staff assessment of DOE's response to NRC concerns in the design and design QA arena. The letter outlines a three-phase plan to reach closure on the open items. Phases 2 and 3 of the plan each include an in-field verification. The March 9, 1995, letter also included, as Attachment 2, the plan for the first in-field verification which will take place at Las Vegas, Nevada, on April 3-6, 1995. In addition, the staff continues to observe DOE QA audits as a means of determining if the design and design control process are being done in an acceptable manner.

We continue to share your concern regarding the ESF design and related QA matters. In this light, we had an observation audit team at the DOE audits of the M&O on 12/5-9/94, 1/9-13/95, 2/7-10/95, and 2/21-24/95. We believe that the steps we are taking are timely and appropriate. If you have any questions or further comments in this regard, please do not hesitate to contact me on (301) 415-7238.

Sincerely,
JS
Joseph J. Holonich, Chief
High-Level Waste and Uranium
Recovery Projects Branch
Division of Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material
Safety and Safeguards

cc: See next page

Ticket No. D-081

DISTRIBUTION:

Central File

DWM r/f

MDelligatti

S:\DWM\HLUR\JGS\Loux-2.Ltr

PUBLIC

HLUR r/f

MBell

ACNW

RJohnson

JAustin

MFederline

LSS

PBrooks

BMabrito

CNWSA

JBuckley

On-Site Reps

102.3
WM-11
NH/6

OFC	HLUR	C	HLUR	C	HLUR				
NAME	<i>JGS</i> JGSpraut/jk		<i>JOT</i> JOThoma		<i>JOT</i> JHolonich				
DATE	03/10/95	H	03/10/95	H	03/13/95				

9503230197 950313
PDR WASTE
WM-11 PDR

OFFICIAL RECORD COPY

March 13, 1995

Mr. Robert Loux, Director
Agency for Nuclear Projects
Nuclear Waste Project Office
State of Nevada
Carson City, NV 89710

SUBJECT: IN-FIELD VERIFICATION

Dear Mr. Loux:

I am responding to your letter to Dr. Malcolm Knapp dated February 10, 1995, in which you request information regarding the status of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's verification review of the design activities of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Management and Operating Contractor (M&O). You indicated that it appeared to you that the NRC is delaying timely action and letting events overtake the situation, possibly in the hope of negating the need for any action. You ask: "Does the NRC still plan to perform this verification review and if so, when?"

Although our planned in-field verification has been delayed in order for involved NRC personnel to obtain a better understanding of the ongoing design work, it has not been cancelled nor postponed beyond the date of usefulness. On March 9, 1995, we issued a letter to DOE (Holonich to Milner) that provides the staff assessment of DOE's response to NRC concerns in the design and design QA arena. The letter outlines a three-phase plan to reach closure on the open items. Phases 2 and 3 of the plan each include an in-field verification. The March 9, 1995, letter also included, as Attachment 2, the plan for the first in-field verification which will take place at Las Vegas, Nevada, on April 3-6, 1995. In addition, the staff continues to observe DOE QA audits as a means of determining if the design and design control process are being done in an acceptable manner.

We continue to share your concern regarding the ESF design and related QA matters. In this light, we had an observation audit team at the DOE audits of the M&O on 12/5-9/94, 1/9-13/95, 2/7-10/95, and 2/21-24/95. We believe that the steps we are taking are timely and appropriate. If you have any questions or further comments in this regard, please do not hesitate to contact me on (301) 415-7238.

Sincerely,
JOT
Joseph J. Holonich, Chief
High-Level Waste and Uranium
Recovery Projects Branch
Division of Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material
Safety and Safeguards

cc: See next page

Ticket No. D-081

DISTRIBUTION:

Central File	PUBLIC	ACNW	LSS	CNwRA
DWM r/f	HLUR r/f	RJohnson	PBrooks	JBuckley
MDelligatti	MBell	JAustin	BMabrito	On-Site Reps
S:\DWM\HLUR\JGS\Loux-2.Ltr		MFederline		

OFC	HLUR	C	HLUR	C	HLUR				
NAME	<i>JGS</i> JGSpraul/jk		<i>JOT</i> JOThoma		<i>JOT</i> JHolonich				
DATE	03/10/95	H	03/10/95	H	03/13/95				