

United States Government

Department of Energy

# memorandum

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REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: RW-24

SUBJECT: Report of Participation by Carl Newton in WMPO QA Audit  
of USGS - Denver

TO: Jim Knight

Attached as required by Section 6.2.4 of OGR QIP 18.1 is a report of my participation in the quality assurance audit conducted by the Waste Management Project Office (WMPO) of the United States Geological Survey (USGS) the week of March 10, 1986. I would be happy to discuss any questions you might have.

*Carl Newton*  
Carl Newton, RW-24

Attachment

cc w/attachment:  
Sam Singer, SAIC  
Jim Blaylock, WMPO-NVO

WM Record File

102.7

WM Project 11

Docket No. \_\_\_\_\_

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**Report of OGR Participation in WMPO QA Audit of USGS - Denver**

**Auditing Organization:** Waste Management Project Office,  
Nevada Operations Office

**Audited Organization:** United States Geological Survey, Denver

**Dates of Audit:** March 11 - 14, 1986

**Audit Scope:** (1) Programmatic (all 18 criteria)  
(2) Technical (Selected technical reports  
supporting EA)

**Audit Team Members:** Sam Singer, SAIC (Lead Auditor)  
Nancy Voltura, SAIC (Auditor)  
John Estella, SAIC (Auditor)  
Ron Cote, SAIC (Auditor in Training)  
Forest Peters, SAIC (Auditor in Training)  
Ed Oakes, SAIC (Technical Advisor)  
Carl Newton, DOE-HQ (Auditor in Training)  
Paul Prestholt, NRC-HQ (Observer)  
Susan Billhorn, NRC-HQ (Observer)

**Summary of Audit:**

The audit was divided into three teams. The first team, led by Sam Singer, conducted a programmatic audit of criteria 4, 6, 7, 12, 15, 16 and 18. John Estella led a second team in a programmatic audit of criteria 1, 2, 8, 9, 10, 13 and 14. The second team was also responsible for verification of corrective action taken in response to the findings from the previous audit (#85-12). A third team led by Ed Oakes conducted a technical audit in which selected reports referenced in the Environmental Assessment were reviewed for adequacy. The third team also examined criteria 3, 5, 11, and 17 and some selected test procedures.

At the end of the second day of the audit it was apparent to all audit team members that the USGS work was not being controlled by the QA program and that significant problems adverse to quality were prevalent. The team unanimously voted to recommend to the WMPO project manager that he stop work at USGS until the significant problems were corrected.

At the exit meeting the Audit Team Leader reviewed the 25 expected findings from the audit. The most serious, in my opinion, are:

1. The lack of an indoctrination and training program which has led to an ignorance among USGS personnel of quality requirements, such as instrument calibration and the conduct of peer reviews, and an apathy by management and workers toward documentation of quality achievement.
2. The lack of detailed site investigation plans describing the work that USGS proposes to do for WMPO over the next year.
3. The failure to clearly delineate authority and responsibility within the USGS organization and between USGS and other participants, such as the Bureau of Reclamation.
4. The lack of assigned quality levels to the work activities being performed.

Evaluation of Conduct of Audit:

The audit checklist was excellent. The questions were well thought out and thorough. No important areas seemed to have been overlooked and the questions were phased in such a manner that they were readily understandable by both auditor and auditee.

The pre-audit meeting for the audit team was a very good idea and well handled. The conduct and scope of the audit, and use of the checklist was explained well. I also think the daily team meetings after each day's activities were invaluable.

The audit team leader and members were very professional in their conduct of the audit. At the exit meeting one of the NRC observers said she had never seen a team so well prepared. I concur.

Some areas that offer a potential for improvement in the future are:

- 1) An advance copy of the checklist to all team members would have been useful.
- 2) Some time set aside each day to discuss questions of the checklist would be useful - perhaps at the beginning of each day.

- 3) I was sorry to see only SAIC people - no DOE-WMPO representatives were on the audit (except at the exit meeting).
- 4) I was stunned by the "lack of respect" exhibited by the USGS management for the QA Audit - the team was told at the entrance meeting they would be prohibited from interviewing principal investigators because they were working on more important matters. This situation would probably not have been turned around except for the presence of DOE-HQ on the audit and some aggressive intervention.
- 5) The role of USGS observers was not discussed at either the pre-audit team meeting or the entrance meeting and probably should have been.
- 6) There was no schedule for interviews of USGS personnel by WMPO audit teams.
- 7) There was no briefing by USGS on their organization at the entrance meeting. Such a briefing would be helping in determining the responsibilities of those being interviewed in the audit and in how they relate to other departments in USGS.

FOR OCRWM DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Report of WMPO Audit of USGS

ADDRESSEE: J. Knight

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BCC:

D. Siefken, Weston  
L. Skoblar, Weston  
E. Sulek, Weston  
✓ J. Kennedy, NRC

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CONCURRENCES:

C. Newton 4/2/86  
C. Newton, RW-24