



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
[formerly National Bureau of Standards]  
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20899

January 23, 1989

Mr. J. O. Bunting  
High-Level Waste Management  
Nuclear Materials Safety and Safeguards  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555

Dear Joe:

I would like to follow up on our tentative agreement last October that you should make a visit to NIST. If it is possible, I would prefer that you come out on your own, or maybe with Rick Weller or Chuck Peterson, rather than attend a regular review meeting. I will call you in a few days on this.

A couple of other points. First I'd like to say what a nice job Chuck Peterson did in putting together the statement of work for FY89. We were so comfortable with it that Chuck Interrante, our program manager, incorporated it virtually verbatim in our proposal. Peterson has given a lot of thought to the program, and our people are happy with the tasks as defined in the current proposal.

The second concerns our interactions with the Center which, we agreed, will ultimately determine NIST's participation in your program. Interrante and I spent a couple of days there in late November, talking with Prasad and his colleagues and touring the facility. Apart from Prasad's clear intent to eliminate our participation (sic), I feel he is putting together a very creditable effort, particularly in the geochemistry area. The visit confirmed my impression that SWRI is a first rate testing laboratory but that the nature of their business (100% dependence on contracts) has not allowed them to develop a strong science base. In this regard, I believe that NIST can play an important role, and our next step is to define that role. An important step right now is to define realistic environments for laboratory testing, and consequently Ugo Bertocci, our leading electrochemist, is visiting in a week or so for discussion with the Center's geochemists. We expect that our other key workers will visit over the next couple of months.

Sincerely,

E. Neville Pugh  
Chief  
Metallurgy Division

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