



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

October 30, 1997

MEMORANDUM TO: Chairman Jackson
Commissioner Dic'us
Commissioner Diaz
Commissioner McGaffigan

FROM: L. Joseph Callan *Stella*
Executive Director for Operations

SUBJECT: RESPONSES TO REMAINING ISSUES IN STAFF
REQUIREMENTS MEMORANDUM M960729 ON
URANIUM RECOVERY PROGRAM

In a Staff Requirements Memorandum dated August 27, 1996, the Commission documented four staff commitments resulting from a July 29, 1996, Commission Briefing. The four commitments included reporting on: 1) lessons learned in reviewing supplemental standards for groundwater that could be applicable to sites other than uranium mills; 2) lessons learned on the use of the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses (CNWRA) to support uranium recovery work; 3) the details related to concurrent jurisdiction with the State of Utah; and 4) experience with the cost control system being developed for the uranium recovery program. Responses to items 1) and 3) were provided by memorandum dated November 25, 1996. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide responses to items 2) and 4).

Overall, the staff has found that the use of the CNWRA has been extremely beneficial in helping reduce the backlog of work in the uranium recovery program. Specific work accomplishments have included: 1) the review of two license renewal applications for in situ leach facilities; 2) the evaluation of one alternate concentration limit application; 3) support to ten inspections; 4) development of necessary review plans; 5) completion of five license amendment application reviews; and 6) reviews of seismic stability & mill sites and reclamation plans for three mills. Products from the CNWRA have been timely, and technically complete such that only minimal staff effort was needed to turn the CNWRA product into a final licensing document. In addition, the CNWRA staff has been able to work at an efficiency greater than was expected. Because of this, some of the funds originally budgeted for work in the uranium recovery program could be reprogrammed to support other unbudgeted, high priority work on West Valley, and also to make up for a deficit of travel funds.

One challenge has been encountered as the staff seeks to preserve critical skills for future use in the high-level waste (HLW) program under the Industrial Mobilization Exemption by broadening the use of the CNWRA in other program areas, including

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uranium recovery and decommissioning. Careful planning and coordination are required to balance the distribution of critical skills needed in these other program areas. As work in additional program areas, such as the West Valley Demonstration Project and decommissioning, is introduced, it has impacted the high production rate set early in the contract for uranium recovery work. Achieving stable funding in these other program areas would allow the CNWRA more stability in staffing levels.

If the budget for HLW work increases to requested levels in future fiscal years, the staffing levels at the CNWRA do not increase. Given that the first priority of the CNWRA is supporting the HLW program, few staff will be available to work in uranium recovery or other program areas. Therefore, careful planning will be needed to ensure the availability of technical assistance in program areas besides HLW.

With respect to the development and implementation of a cost control system, the staff has worked with the Office of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) to examine the potential of using an existing system with modifications to produce a viable tracking system. Initial efforts to produce a functional report from the existing database have not provided the desired results, thereby causing the staff to reevaluate the system and current requirements. Through this effort the staff's requirements were better defined, with the conclusion that it would be more appropriate to engage in a development effort to create a new system including the use of off-the-shelf software where possible, rather than attempting to utilize an enhancement of an existing system. The resource aspects of the new system must be coordinated with the Chief Financial Officer's (CFO's) STARFIRE system. However, the staff cannot begin to develop a new system without additional funding. The Division of Waste Management (DWM) will work with the CIO and the CFO STARFIRE team utilizing the life-cycle methodology approach, and complete a formal requirements and alternatives analysis and systems definition. To initiate this effort, DWM will reallocate \$30K earmarked for Uranium Recovery Branch casework in Fiscal Year 1998.

Details on the lessons learned from these two activities are provided in Attachment 1 for the CNWRA, and Attachment 2 for the cost control system.

Attachments: As stated

cc: SECY, OGC, OCA, OPA, CIO, CFO

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NAME	RCarlson		EKraus		JHolonich		JGreeves		AGalante	
DATE	9/18/97		8/28/97		9/02/97		9/13/97		9/29/97	
OFC	CFO*		NMSS*		DEDR		EDO			
NAME	JFunches		CPaperiello		HThompson		LJCallan			
DATE	10/14/97		10/15/97		10/29/97		10/4/97			

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With respect to the development and implementation of a cost control system, the staff has found that because of problems with system development, the staff has not yet been able to implement such a system. In addition, after a detailed review, the staff does not believe the system, as envisioned and currently being developed, will be helpful to Project Managers. Therefore, the staff is considering other alternatives that can be more easily implemented using off-the-shelf project management software. Delays in procurement of this software have delayed evaluation of this alternative.

Under the alternative approach, in the short term the staff will explore the use of MS Project Manager combined with data available from the Resources Information Tracking System (RITS) and the contract bills. By using MS Project Manager, the staff would be able to track both resource expenditures and milestones through the same program. In addition, combining the budget estimates in MS Project Manager with data from the RITS and contract bills would give Project Managers a comparison of how effectively staff resources were being used. To date, the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS) has used MS Project Manager in a prototype application for just milestone tracking, and has found the software extremely useful. The Office of Information Resource Management has indicated that the approach outlined above is feasible. The Chief Information Office will report to the Commission on the success of developing this alternative cost control system by January 1998. As a long-term solution, staff will work with the Chief Financial Officer to see if our needs can be met by the implementation of the Agency-wide integrated financial management system.

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DATE	8/12/97	H	8/15/97		8/2/97		8/13/97		8/1/97
OFC	CIO		DEDR		EDO				
NAME	AGalante		HThompson		LJCallan				
DATE	1/97		1/97		1/97				

From: Shelly Shortt
To: TWP7.JJH1
Date: 10/14/97 4:55pm
Subject: COMMISSION PAPER -- SRM M960729

Hi Joe.

The Office of the Chief Financial Officer has reviewed the subject commission paper for resource implications and has no objections subject to the incorporation of the following sentence on Page 2, paragraph 2, after the fifth sentence:

Stall
~~NMSS/DWP~~ will consider the projected financial information capabilities of the STARFIRE system when conducting the alternative analysis and systems definition.

Please contact me on 415-6032 if you have any questions.

Thanks.
Shelly Baggett

CC: TWP7.GDH1, TWP8.WFK, PJR, WND1.WNP1.JLF, JDE, KLO,...

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