

Overview of U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Review of U.S. Department of Energy's Draft Environmental Impact Statement



October 7, 1999
DOE/NRC Technical Exchange on
U.S. Department of Energy's Draft Environmental Impact Statement
for a Geologic Repository of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste
at Yucca Mountain, Nye County, Nevada

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION ROLE

- Nuclear Regulatory Commission Decided Not to Become a Cooperating Agency
 - No Involvement in Development of Draft EIS
 - Nuclear Regulatory Commission Committed to Providing Comments During EIS Development
- Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982, As Amended, Requires Nuclear Regulatory Commission to Adopt Department of Energy's Final EIS to "the Extent Practicable"
 - Decision Whether it is Practicable to Adopt DOE's FEIS Occurs During Licensing Proceedings for Receipt and Possession of Source, Special Nuclear, and Byproduct Material at the Geologic Repository Operations Area

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION REVIEW

- Focus on Radiological Health and Safety, Including:
 - Storage
 - Transportation
 - Decommissioning
 - Disposal
- Comment on Any Issue That Might Render Environmental Impact Statement Defective

EARLIER REVIEW ACTIVITIES

- Prelicensing Interactions on Issues Relating to:
 - Site Characterization
 - Repository Design
 - Performance Assessment
 - Quality Assurance
- Review of Viability Assessment

CURRENT REVIEW ACTIVITIES: TWO PART REVIEW

Completeness Review

- Determine the Completeness of Draft Environmental Impact Statement
- Focus Future Staff Efforts

Evaluative Review

- Detailed Review
- Early Meeting (Technical Exchange) to Help Clarify Information Needed to Resolve Issues

COMPLETENESS REVIEW

Objectives:

- Evaluate Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination
- Ensure that the Draft EIS is Comprehensive in its Consideration of Potential Environmental Impacts

EVALUATIVE REVIEW

Objective:

- Evaluate the Adequacy and Sufficiency of Department of Energy's Assessment of Impacts

Focus:

- Areas within NRC's Special Expertise (Radiological Health and Safety of Workers and the Public)

Range of Comments:

- Any Issue That Might Render Environmental Impact Statement Defective
 - Potential Weakness Upon Judicial Review

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION REVIEW: STATUS (TECHNICAL EXCHANGE)

- Intent of Questions
 - (1) Identify Information Necessary for Staff to Continue its Review
 - (2) Clarify Information that could Remove a Potential Comment
 - (3) Verify Staff Understanding of Information Related to Potential Comments