

MAY 03 1993

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Mr. Leif G. Eriksson
3080 Pillement Place
Alpharetta, GA 30202

Dear Mr. Eriksson:

SUBJECT: FOLLOW-UP RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR INPUT TO THE BIENNIAL REPORT ON
GEOLOGICAL DISPOSAL OF RADIOACTIVE WASTES

I am responding to your letter, dated March 9, 1993. In your letter, you stated your concerns regarding the following: (1) quality assurance (QA) and its implementation in the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management (OCRWM) program; (2) the time-consuming and costly OCRWM program activities resulting from the maximum 1,000 years groundwater travel-time (GWTT) criterion of 10 CFR Part 60.113 safety enhancing criterion; (3) and the apparently conflicting NRC and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations pertaining to this issue. The NRC staff's position on the concern about QA was addressed in a letter to you from Joseph J. Holonich of my staff, dated March 19, 1993. These comments were based on your December 21, 1992, letter to Robert M. Bernero requesting NRC input on the biennial report you were preparing. I hope that you found these comments helpful in assisting your writing efforts to update this report.

With respect to your concern about GWTT and the EPA standard, it should be noted that the recently enacted Energy Policy Act of 1992 (EnPA) requires the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) to conduct a study and make a recommendation on reasonable environmental standards to EPA. Within one year after the NAS recommendation is made, EPA must promulgate new standards consistent with this guidance. EnPA also requires NRC, within one year of the promulgation of the EPA standards, to amend its regulation to be consistent with EPA's newly revised standards. In addition, the staff is independently reviewing the subsystem performance objectives in 10 CFR Part 60 to determine if any changes are needed to them. As information developed by the staff and Commission become publicly available, you can obtain copies of this material through NRC's Public Document Room.

If you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact Mr. Holonich of my staff. He can be reached at (301) 504-3387.

Sincerely,

Is
B. J. Youngblood, Director
Division of High-Level Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety and
Safeguards

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