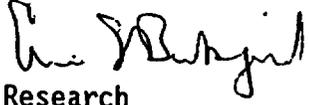




UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

March 29, 1995

MEMORANDUM TO: John C. Hoyle
NRC Member
LSS Advisory Review Panel

FROM: Eric S. Beckjord, Director 
Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research

SUBJECT: RES COMMENTS ON LSS PARTICIPANT COMMITMENTS

In response to your memorandum of March 3, 1995, my staff has reviewed the HLW License Support System (LSS) Participant Commitments that were attached to the memorandum. The commitments appear generally to be sound and would enforce good practice by the LSS participants in maintaining the LSS.

We have two comments on the commitments related to their long-term usefulness. Given the current climate of rapid changes in computer technology, it is important that the commitments not be bound to particular technologies, and generally they are not. Two possible exceptions in the commitments are related to the conversion of all text to ASCII format and the requirement on page 19 that "Digital images ... be submitted on 5.25" WORM disks using CCITT Group IV compression."

Care has to be taken when converting a file to ASCII format that there be no loss of emphasis that a document's authors have indicated, for example with italicized, underlined, or bold text or with different font sizes. Losing this emphasis could adversely affect the discovery process that the LSS is supposed to support. Additional care is needed in this conversion process that documents submitted with graphics and tables embedded in them electronically not become disaggregated when the conversion takes place. Finally, allowance may have to be made for the possibility that the ASCII text code itself may become subsumed in a larger character set such as Unicode by the time the LSS is in place.

While it is desirable to require submission of documents in a compressed format on large-storage-capacity media, the requirement on page 19 that they "be submitted on 5.25" WORM disks using CCITT Group IV compression" may not be feasible when the LSS becomes operational because the specified drive and compression technologies may be obsolete by then. This requirement should be generalized so that the LSS and its users can adapt to the technologies that are available when the LSS becomes operational.

If you have questions on these comments, please contact Dr. John Randall of my staff at 415-6217 or by electronic mail at JDR.