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

SECRETARY

December 11, 1998

MEMORANDUM TO: William D. Travers
                 Executive Director for Operations

                 Anthony J. Galante
                 Chief Information Officer

                 Jesse L. Funches
                 Chief Financial Officer

FROM: John C. Hoyle
                 Secretary of the Commission

SUBJECT: LICENSING SUPPORT NETWORK ADMINISTRATOR

As a follow-on to the EDO's memorandum of November 30, 1998, regarding the placement of the Licensing Support Network Administrator (LSNA), I have the following comments and recommendation, along with a listing of the pros and cons of placement of the LSNA within SECY (attached).

There appears to be no single-office business sponsor within NRC for the Licensing Support Network (LSN) project, although the concept for a licensing support system has existed in one form or another since the mid-80's. The Licensing Support System (LSS) was conceived initially by a senior OGC attorney as an essential project to help this agency meet its statutory responsibility to complete the licensing of the HLW repository in 3 years. DOE was to become the business sponsor of the LSS. It was to provide the funding for design, development, and operation of the LSS as a large, central search/retrieval system housing the relevant documents of all parties. The primary users of the Licensing Support System would be DOE, the NRC staff, the Licensing Board and the parties to the HLW proceeding. Delays in the repository project, however, caused delays in the need for the LSS and in the timing of the HLW licensing proceeding. These delays ultimately prompted the staff to recommend, and the Commission to approve in November 1998, the current Internet-based system (LSN) with NRC as the business sponsor. The LSN is described in rule changes to Part 2, Subpart J. The goal of the LSN is similar to that of the LSS - to be a primary aid to assist the Commission in meeting its statutory, three-year licensing responsibility.

Within the NRC, the primary beneficiaries and users of the internet-based LSN system described in the new rule will be the same as those of the LSS - namely, NMSS and OGC staff, and the Licensing Board, starting with the pre-license application phase of the HLW proceeding. None of these offices, however, is the actual sponsor of the system. SECY, while not a primary user, will be required by the rule to assure that documents on the LSN can be found in the electronic docket established by SECY for the proceeding, if they are brought into the proceeding. The proceeding will begin when the Director of NMSS has accepted the HLW application, the application is available on the electronic docket, and the Notice of Opportunity for Hearing has been issued.

Although there is no particular office for which this system is being created, the office for which it may be of most benefit at the outset of the HLW proceeding is the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel (ASLBP). Since a principal goal of the system is to assist in the discovery of documents before the license application is filed, the Licensing Board will have great interest in seeing that discovery is done properly and that discovery issues will not lead to significant delays in the conduct of the proceeding. It might be appropriate, therefore, to assign sponsorship for the project and the functions of the LSN Administrator to the Licensing Board Panel if given the appropriate resources. The Panel would necessarily need the continuing, direct support of OCIO and would need to coordinate its LSN activity with NMSS, OGC and SECY.

Alternatively, sponsorship for the project might be assigned to a joint sponsor team composed of representatives of the primary NRC users; NMSS, OGC and ASLBP. The team would be responsible for setting requirements for the LSN and the protocols necessary to standardize access to the individual databases of the LSN participants/parties to the HLW proceeding. The CIO could be tasked to perform the LSN Administrator duties to assure that all technical aspects of the project are accomplished. The technical components include accessibility by all participants to the individual dispersed databases, compatibility with the electronic docket, and viability of the system as a robust, user friendly support tool for the HLW proceeding.

Attachment:
Pros and Cons

cc: OGC
    ASLBP
    NMSS

LSN ADMINISTRATOR
PLACEMENT IN SECY -- PROS AND CONS

PROS

- SECY is an independent organization -- not a party to the proceeding

- SECY is sponsoring the development of the Electronic Hearing Docket (EHD), which OCIO has incorporated into ADAMS -- LSN will need to be coordinated with the EHD effort

  -- Once the director of NMSS has accepted the HLW application, and the Notice of Opportunity for a Hearing has been issued, some of the HLW documents will be submitted to the EHD.

CONS

- SECY will not be a primary user of LSN -- that will be the Board and Parties

- SECY does not have responsibility or experience of ensuring that discovery is done properly

- As indicated in OCIO FY-2000 budget submission, work that needs to be completed is technical:

  In FY-1999 activities include technical planning for development of LSN

  In FY-2000 implementation activities include:

  -- development of LSN home page and search interfaces
  -- establish and test linkage from NRC home pages maintained under ADAMS
  -- implementation of hardware, software
  -- development of an operating program for automated auditing of participant operated home pages

  SECY does not have underlying technical knowledge or expertise on staff to perform these key parts of the LSN activities.

- SECY does not have the resources (FTE, funding); it is our understanding that 1 FTE is budgeted for FY-1999 and 2 FTE's are budgeted for FY-2000 -- even if SECY is given 1 FTE in FY-1999 for LSNA there would have to be a dedicated FTE in OCIO for the Technical Project Leader and to manage the technical contract

- SECY does not have responsibility for providing public access to NRC information/documents, that rests in the OCIO:

  -- Internet access to the NRC Home Page

  -- management of the Headquarters Public Document Room (PDR) and Local Public Document Rooms (LPDRs)

  -- development of ADAMS

  (LSN will provide public access to NRC's high level waste documents electronically as part of ADAMS)