

November 5, 2004

Mr. Joseph Ziegler, Director
Office of License Application and Strategy
U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Repository Development
1551 Hillshire Drive
North Las Vegas, NV 89134-6321

Subject: DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM

Dear Mr. Ziegler:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is conducting a Science and Technology (S&T) program that aims to investigate a wide range of topics related to the potential repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada. Although DOE has stated that the S&T program will be conducted separately from the repository program and that information from the S&T program will not be used in a possible license application, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has a regulatory interest in the program.

Our interest in the S&T program is grounded in 10 CFR Part 63. 10 CFR 63.21 requires that any license application for a geologic repository operations area must describe any plans or programs for developing additional information related to that repository. Such information may include research and development programs to resolve safety questions, confirm the adequacy of design, conduct various tests and experiments, and the overall program of performance confirmation. Timely information on the DOE S&T program would ensure that NRC is aware of emerging issues and potential changes, and allow NRC to provide guidance to DOE (e.g., about quality assurance standards for any DOE S&T work). This would support our safety role and inform NRC staff activities in evaluating an application for a construction authorization, license to receive and possess, or any amendments to a construction authorization or license, if issued.

As a starting point in our interaction on this important subject, please provide information on the process for determining what elements of the S&T program could influence repository design, construction, operations, or performance; and the mechanism for transferring information from the S&T program to the repository program. We would also appreciate being placed on the

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S&T program mailing list. We will consider whether a periodic status briefing on the S&T program would be appropriate.

If you have any questions about this letter, please feel free to contact Mr. Gregory Hatchett, of my staff, by telephone at (301) 415-3315 or by e-mail to gxh@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

C. William Reamer, Director
Division of High-Level Waste Repository Safety
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

cc: See attached list

Letter to J. Ziegler from C.W. Reamer, dated: November 5, 2004

cc:

A. Kalt, Churchill County, NV	A. Elzeftawy, Las Vegas Paiute Tribe
R. Massey, Churchill/Lander County, NV	J. Treichel, Nuclear Waste Task Force
I. Navis, Clark County, NV	W. Briggs, Ross, Dixon & Bell
E. von Tiesenhausen, Clark County, NV	M. Chu, DOE/Washington, D.C.
G. McCorkell, Esmeralda County, NV	G. Runkle, DOE/Washington, D.C.
R. Damele, Eureka County, NV	C. Einberg, DOE/Washington, D.C.
L. Marshall, Eureka County, NV	S. Gomberg, DOE/Washington, D.C.
A. Johnson, Eureka County, NV	W. J. Arthur, III , DOE/ORD
A. Remus, Inyo County, CA	R. Dyer, DOE/ORD
M. Yarbro, Lander County, NV	J. Ziegler, DOE/ORD
S. Hafen, Lincoln County, NV	A. Gil, DOE/ORD
M. Baughman, Lincoln County, NV	W. Boyle, DOE/ORD
L. Mathias, Mineral County, NV	D. Brown, DOE/OCRWM
D. Swanson, Nye County, NV	S. Mellington, DOE/ORD
M. Maher, Nye County, NV	C. Hanlon, DOE/ORD
D. Hammermeister, Nye County, NV	T. Gunter, DOE/ORD
M. Simon, White Pine County, NV	A. Benson, DOE/ORD
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T. Story, NV Congressional Delegation	S. Cereghino, BSC
R. Herbert, NV Congressional Delegation	N. Williams, BSC
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S. Lynch, State of NV	R. Boland, Timbisha Shoshone Tribe
P. Guinan, Legislative Counsel Bureau	R. Arnold, Pahrump Paiute Tribe
R. Clark, EPA	J. Birchim, Yomba Shoshone Tribe
R. Anderson, NEI	R. Holden, NCAE

cc: (Continued)

R. McCullum, NEI

S. Kraft, NEI

J. Kessler, EPRI

D. Duncan, USGS

R. Craig, USGS

W. Booth, Engineering Svcs, LTD

C. Marden, BNFL Inc.

J. Bacoach, Big Pine Paiute Tribe of the.
Owens Valley

P. Thompson, Duckwater Shoshone Tribe

T. Kingham, GAO

D. Feehan, GAO

E. Hiruo, Platts Nuclear Publications

G. Hernandez, Las Vegas Paiute Tribe

K. Finrock, NV Congressional Delegation

P. Johnson, Citizen Alert

A. Capoferri, DOE/Washington, DC

J. Williams, DOE/Washington, DC

A. Robinson, Robinson-Seidler

M. Dayton, City of Las Vegas

D. Wilson, Sen. Reid's Office

L. Lehman, T-REG, Inc.

J. Donnell, DOE/ORD

C. Meyers, Moapa Paiute Indian Tribe

R. Wilder, Fort Independence Indian Tribe

D. Vega, Bishop Paiute Indian Tribe

J. Egan, Egan, Fitzpatrick & Malsch, PLLC

J. Leeds, Las Vegas Indian Center

J. C. Saulque, Benton Paiute Indian Tribe

C. Bradley, Kaibab Band of Southern Paiutes

R. Joseph, Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Tribe

L. Tom, Paiute Indian Tribes of Utah

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D. Irwin, Hunton & Williams

L. Alfano, Lincoln County

M. Henderson, Cong. J. Gibbon's Office

D. Duquette, NWTRB

R. Murray, DOE/ORD

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Sincerely,

/RA/

C. William Reamer, Director
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Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

cc: See attached list

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