



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NUCLEAR WASTE
WASHINGTON, DC 20555 - 0001

ACNWR-0229

October 27, 2005

The Honorable Nils J. Diaz
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

SUBJECT: PROJECT PLAN FOR THE YUCCA MOUNTAIN LICENSE APPLICATION
REVIEW BY NRC STAFF

Dear Chairman Diaz:

The NRC staff briefed the Committee regarding the development of a project plan for the Yucca Mountain license application review on September 20, 2005. The Division of High Level Waste Repository Safety staff provided an overview of the project plan, including the project management approach and the license application review process. The staff indicated that NRC will use robust and sound project management practices and will leverage best practices from other NRC licensing programs. The project plan includes cost, schedule, and control capabilities of information management tools aimed at supporting a defensible licensing process.

The Committee believes that the project plan will be effective in supporting a potential license application review and will provide timely and quality information to NRC management regarding:

- Work breakdown structures,
- Integrated schedule,
- Resource planning and management,
- Project risk management,
- Change assessment and management,
- Communications,
- Records management, and
- Performance measures.

The Committee believes the project plan will be valuable to license application reviewers from NRC and the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses. The staff developed the project plan from the requirements set forth in applicable statutes and regulations, as well as the Yucca Mountain Review Plan. The staff considered the schedule and content requirements for the Safety Evaluation Report. The staff also anticipates using the project plan to support Atomic Safety and Licensing Board hearings and other needs.

The Committee agrees with the staff that there is a need to develop performance measures for monitoring and assessing plan implementation. The staff also has developed a number of contingencies to address potential problems such as loss of key technical staff or technical issues arising during review, and the staff has a clear strategy and approach for managing the review of a potential license application.

The Committee believes that the staff is well positioned to begin the review of a potential license application and to keep management informed in a specific and timely way regarding the progress of the review.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Michael T. Ryan
Chairman

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Sincerely,

Michael T. Ryan
Chairman

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