

February 2, 2006

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

SUBJECT: U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION OBSERVATION AUDIT REPORT OAR-06-01, OBSERVATION AUDIT OF U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND OFFICE OF CIVILIAN RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT, AUDIT 06-DOE-AU-001 FOR THE SAVANNAH RIVER OPERATIONS OFFICE, SAVANNAH RIVER NATIONAL LABORATORY, PLUTONIUM VITRIFICATION PROJECT

Dear Mr. Williams:

Enclosed is the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Observation Audit Report OAR-06-01 of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) audit 06-DOE-AU-001, conducted on December 5-8, 2005, at the DOE facilities at Savannah River National Laboratory (SRNL) in Aiken, South Carolina.

The DOE audit team assessed the effectiveness and implementation of the quality assurance program requirements applicable to the DOE Plutonium Vitrification Project (PVP) that impact waste treatment to support inclusion of the vitrified plutonium waste form in the planned Yucca Mountain Repository License Application. At the conclusion of the audit, the DOE audit team presented its findings at an exit briefing with DOE and SRNL management. Based on the results of its evaluations, the DOE audit team's conclusion was that the overall performance of audited activities was satisfactory. In addition, the DOE audit team found that SRNL satisfactorily and effectively implemented the examined sections of the DOE/RW-033P, Revision 16, Quality Assurance Requirements and Description (QARD), with minor exceptions.

NRC conducted an audit observation of DOE's audit in accordance with NRC Manual Chapter 2410, Conduct of Observation Audits. The NRC observers determined that the DOE audit team members performed effectively. The observers agreed with the audit team's conclusions and findings.

A written response to this letter and the enclosed report is not required. The staff will continue to interface with DOE and follow the action that you take to address the issues identified during this audit. If you have any questions, please contact Wilkins Smith at 301-415-5788.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Elmo E. Collins, Deputy Director
Licensing and Inspection Directorate
Division of High-Level Waste Repository Safety
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Enclosure:

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Observation Audit Report OAR-06-01,
Observation Audit of U.S. Department
of Energy, Office of Environmental
Management and Office of Civilian
Radioactive Waste Management,
Audit 06-DOE-AU-001 for the Savannah
River Operations Office, Savannah River
National Laboratory, Plutonium Vitrification
Project

cc: See Attached List

Letter to Michael L Ulshafer from Elmo E. Collins dated: February 2, 2006

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	R. Murray, DOE/ORD
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
L. Klusmire, Inyo County, CA	R. Dyer, DOE/ORD
M. Yarbro, Lander County, NV	J. Espinoza, GAO
J. Donnell, DOE/ORD	A. Gil, DOE/ORD
M. Baughman, Lincoln County, NV	W. Boyle, DOE/ORD
L. Mathias, Mineral County, NV	M. Ulshafer, DOE/OCRWM
D. Swanson, Nye County, NV	S.A. Wade,, DOE/ORD
M. Henderson, Cong. J. Gibbon's Office	C. Hanlon, DOE/ORD
D. Hammermeister, Nye County, NV	T. Gunter, DOE/ORD
M. Simon, White Pine County, NV	A. Benson, DOE/ORD
J. Ray, NV Congressional Delegation	N. Hunemuller, DOE/ORD
D. Cornwall, NV Congressional Delegation	P. Harrington, OPM&E
T. Story, NV Congressional Delegation	M. Mason, BSC
R. Herbert, NV Congressional Delegation	S. Cereghino, BSC
M. Murphy, Nye County, NV	B. Gattoni, Burns & Roe
R. Lambe, NV Congressional Delegation	E. Mueller, BSC
K. Kirkeby, NV Congressional Delegation	J. Gervers, Clark County, NV
R. Loux, State of NV	D. Beckman, BSC/B&A
S. Frishman, State of NV	L. Rasura-Alfano, Lincoln County, NV
S. Lynch, State of NV	J. Kennedy, Timbisha Shoshone Tribe
P. Guinan, Legislative Counsel Bureau	B. Durham, Timbisha Shoshone Tribe
R. Clark, EPA	R. Arnold, Pahrump Paiute Tribe
R. Anderson, NEI	J. Birchim, Yomba Shoshone Tribe

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. Bacocho, 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

M. Williams, DOE/ORD

J. Williams, DOE/Washington, DC

A. Robinson, Robinson-Seidler

M. Plaster, City of Las Vegas

D. Wilson, Sen. Reid's Office

L. Lehman, T-REG, Inc.

B.J. Garrick, NWTRB

T. Feigenbaum, BSC

M. Urie, DOE

J. Brandt, Lander County

B. Sagar, CNWRA

R. Holden, NCAI

C. Meyers, Moapa Paiute Indian Tribe

R. Wilder, Fort Independence Indian Tribe

D. Vega, Bishop Paiute Indian Tribe

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

E. Smith, Chemehuevi Indian Tribe

D. Buckner, Ely Shoshone Tribe

V. Guzman, Walker River Paiute

D. Eddy, Jr., Colorado River Indian Tribes

H. Jackson, Public Citizen

J. Wells, Western Shoshone National Council

D. Crawford, Inter-Tribal Council of NV

I. Zabarte, Western Shoshone National Council

S. Devlin

G. Hudlow

D. Irwin, Hunton & Williams

P. Golan, DOE

M. Rice, Lincoln County, NV

G. Hellstrom, DOE

S. Joya, Sen. Ensign's Office

J. Saldarini, BSC

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Sincerely,

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Elmo E. Collins, Deputy Director
Licensing and Inspection Directorate
Division of High-Level Waste Repository Safety
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
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Enclosure:
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Observation Audit Report OAR-06-01,
Observation Audit of U.S. Department
of Energy, Office of Environmental
Management and Office of Civilian
Radioactive Waste Management,
Audit 06-DOE-AU-001 for the Savannah
River Operations Office, Savannah River
National Laboratory, Plutonium Vitrification
Project

cc: See Attached List

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