

February 8, 2006

Mr. Kenneth Bromberg  
Acting Assistant Deputy Administrator  
for Fissile Materials Disposition  
Department of Energy  
National Nuclear Security Administration  
Washington, DC 20585

SUBJECT: PRE-CONSTRUCTION SITE PREPARATION INSPECTION ACTIVITIES FOR  
THE PROPOSED MIXED OXIDE FUEL FABRICATION FACILITY (DOCKET  
NO. 70-3098)

Dear Mr. Bromberg:

Thank you for your letter dated October 21, 2005, on pre-construction site preparation activities for the Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility (MFFF). The information in the letter has been useful in planning the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) review and inspection resources. The NRC is committed to supporting this important initiative and is looking forward to working closely with the Department of Energy and Duke Cogema and Stone & Webster to ensure that the necessary reviews and inspections are conducted in a timely manner.

The Special Projects Branch, Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, in Rockville, Maryland, will continue to have overall responsibility for overseeing this project. Our Region II office in Atlanta, Georgia, will carry out selected oversight activities such as onsite inspections.

We note that you define the beginning of construction of the MFFF as the placement of engineered backfill. We agree that most NRC oversight activities will take place after this point, but some inspections may be conducted earlier. For example, the NRC may inspect the applicant's oversight of examination and mapping of the excavation to ensure an adequate understanding of the foundation under the backfill. As you stated, it will be important to keep the NRC informed during the site preparation activities. Doing so well in advance of the anticipated placement of engineered backfill will ensure a smooth transition.

If you or any member of your staff have any questions regarding this matter, please call me at (301) 415-7800 or Dave Tiktinsky, of my staff, at (301) 415-6195.

Sincerely,

*/RA/*

Jack R. Strosnider, Director  
Office of Nuclear Material Safety  
and Safeguards

Docket: 70-3098

cc: WTravers, RII

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